NEPAL AND THE GOSPEL OF GOD

NEPAL AND THE GOSPEL OF GOD

by Jonathan Lindell
for the
United Mission To Nepal

Cover
and
Drawings
by Hem Poudyal

Published by the United Mission to Nepal
in collaboration with
Masihi Sahitya Sanstha. 1979

This special Jubilee Edition of *NEPAL AND THE GOSPEL OF GOD* celebrates the 25th anniversary of the founding of the United Mission to Nepal which took place on March 4–5, 1954, in Nagpur, India. The book is owned and published by the
UNITED MISSION TO NEPAL
P.O. Box 126
Kathmandu, Nepal.

The printing and distribution of this Jubilee Edition has been undertaken in collaboration with the
MASIHI SAHITYA SANSTHA
(Booksellers and publishers of
Christian Literature)
70-Janpath
New Delhi-1, India.

5000 copies printed in February 1979
by H.K. Mehta at Thomson Press (India) Limited, India

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Board of Directors of the United Mission to Nepal decided to have this book written and asked a member of the Mission to write it. A small committee has offered guidance in its preparation. Colleagues and friends have critically read the text and offered helpful suggestions and corrections. Volunteers have typed the manuscript. These people have believed in this book project and have freely helped to make it possible. In this respect the book is a product of the Mission. Sincere thanks are expressed to all who have shared in its creation.

The author has drawn extensively on the contents of two books by Fr. Fulgentius Vannini, A.F.M., Cap., especially in preparing Chapter 1, and is grateful for permission to quote from these books.

Thankful acknowledgement is also expressed to the Christian Literature Society, Madras, for permission to quote from their book the passage about Sundar Singh in Chapter 3.

The quotation in Chapter 9 from the speech of Dr. D.R. Regmi has been taken from its source by kind permission of HMG, The Institute of Education.

Quotations from the New English Bible, Second Edition (c) 1970 are used by permission of Oxford and Cambridge University presses, London.

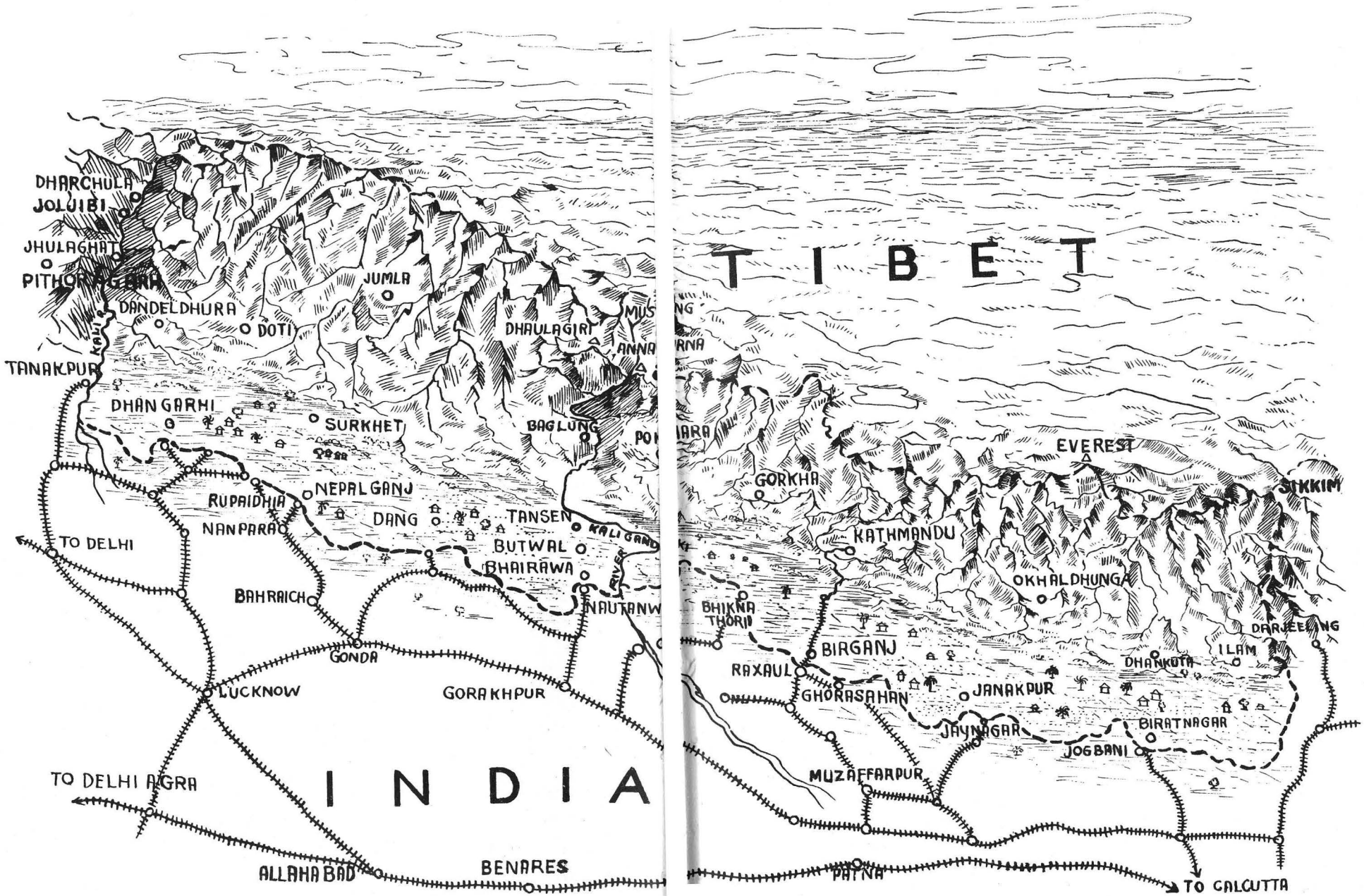
The author gratefully acknowledges the use of numerous books and sources to which he has had access, as listed in the bibliography, as well as materials which he has gathered over the years, together with helpful correspondence and interviews with friends and colleagues, both Nepali and foreign, all of which have been very helpful in planning the drawings and writing the text.

The artist, Hem Poudyal, is a Nepali resident in Kathmandu. He has taken the subjects defined by the author and turned them into the cover painting and the numerous drawings which are used throughout the book to further convey its message. The author gives special thanks to this friend.

CONTENTS

1. Men in Beards, Hoods and Robes, 71
2. Language, Books, Message, 39
3. People Who Seek, Find, Tell, 63
4. People Who Preach, Teach and Heal, 91
5. End of the Ranas, Revolution, New Nepal, 117
6. Bird Trips, The Dikshit Letter, A New Mission, 133
7. Riding the Tide Into Nepal, 151
8. Into the Hilly Regions, 183
9. Development Is A Many-Faceted Process, 211
10. Inside the United Mission, 243
11. Nepal And The Gospel of God, 265

Bibliography and Source Materials
Appendix I—Member Bodies of The United Mission, 269
Appendix II—The General Agreement, 270
Appendix III—Profile of U M N Personnel, 271
Appendix IV—Projects of the United Mission, 273
Source Materials, 275


TIBET
INDIA
DHARCHULA
JOLJIBI
JHULAGHAT
PITHORAGARH
DANDELDHURA
DOTI
JUMLA
DHAULAGIRI
TANAKPUR
DHANGARHI
SURKHET
BAGLUNG
NEPALGANJ
RUPAIDHIA
NANPARA
DANG
TANSEN
BUTWAL
BHAIRAWA
KALI GANDAKI RIVER
TO DELHI
BAHRAICH
GONDA
LUCKNOW
GORAKHPUR
TO DELHI AGRA
ALLAHABAD
BENARES
EVEREST
GORKHA
SIKKIM
KATHMANDU
OKHALDHUNGA
BHIKNA THORI
BIRGANJ
DARJEELING
ILAM
DHANKUTA
RAXAUL
GHORASAHAN
JANAKPUR
JAYNAGAR
BIRATNAGAR
JOGBANI
MUZAFFARPUR
PATNA
TO CALCUTTA

CHAPTER 1

MEN IN BEARDS, HOODS AND ROBES

The Great Himalaya Mountain Range is the earth's most severely buckled piece of crust. The range is an incredibly rough and jumbled wall of peaks and mountains, 100 miles wide, 5 miles high and 1,500 miles long. This huge barrier curves between Afghanistan and China, across the under-belly of Asia, separating the interior of the continent from the southern Hindustan peninsula.

From ancient times the people living within the mountains found ways to move around among the deep valleys and tempestuous rivers, along the sides of the ravines and through the high passes between the snowy peaks. They found passages at a score of places where they could make their way from one side to the other of the 100-mile wide barrier. Their narrow paths became routes over which traders and travellers passed back and forth between central Asia and Hindustan. The mountain peoples controlled these roads and made a living from them.

Our story begins on one of those ancient roads that winds through

the mountains at just about the middle of the long range. A small group of travellers has been moving for 35 days across the northern Gangetic plain of Hindustan (present day India), through the jungles and up over the middle Himalayas and has entered the Nepal Valley. Excitement is mounting among the people in Kathmandu as the news spreads about the approaching caravan. There is added curiosity because it has been reported that there are strange European people among the travellers. Toward dusk the caravan straggles from the east across the valley, crosses the Bagmati River, past fields and scattered farm houses, and passes into a gate and down the street of the city. Some stop at travellers' open resting shelters, and others go on to enter the low tunnel-like doors into the inner courts of the houses of the city. Among them, watched by curious eyes from doorways and upper windows, strode two extra-foreign men. They wore full-length dark-brown robes, gathered at the waist by a rope-belt and topped with a pointed hood over their heads. Their beards were black and full. They carried staves and walked in sandals and their porters followed them with loads of baggage. They were obviously attached to some merchant because they followed him into a tunnel-doorway of a house and were lost to sight.

This caravan travelled in the late winter, when weather conditions were favorable. According to the old Hindu calendar of the local people they had arrived in Kathmandu in the eleventh month, Fagun, in the year 1764. The Europeans wrote in their journals that they arrived according to their Gregorian calendar on 21st of February, A.D. 1707.

This cool and dry season of the year was the best time for trade and travellers to move over the Himalayas. The route which passed through Kathmandu was one of the major roads. This city had a remarkable location. It was situated in a wide oval valley, shaped somewhat like a bowl, sunk deep and back in the central Himalayas. Like an oasis is to travellers in the desert, so this town and valley were to travellers coming over weeks of the most arduous kind of travel from either side of the mighty Himalayan barrier. Approximately mid-way on the route was this blessed valley of cultivation, civilization, protection. Here the weary traveller could rest and find renewal; here were facilities for living; here he could re-pack, re-stock, re-organize and strike out again on the on-going laps of his journey, whether to the north or the south. The city-kingdom of Kathmandu controlled that stretch of the road which passed

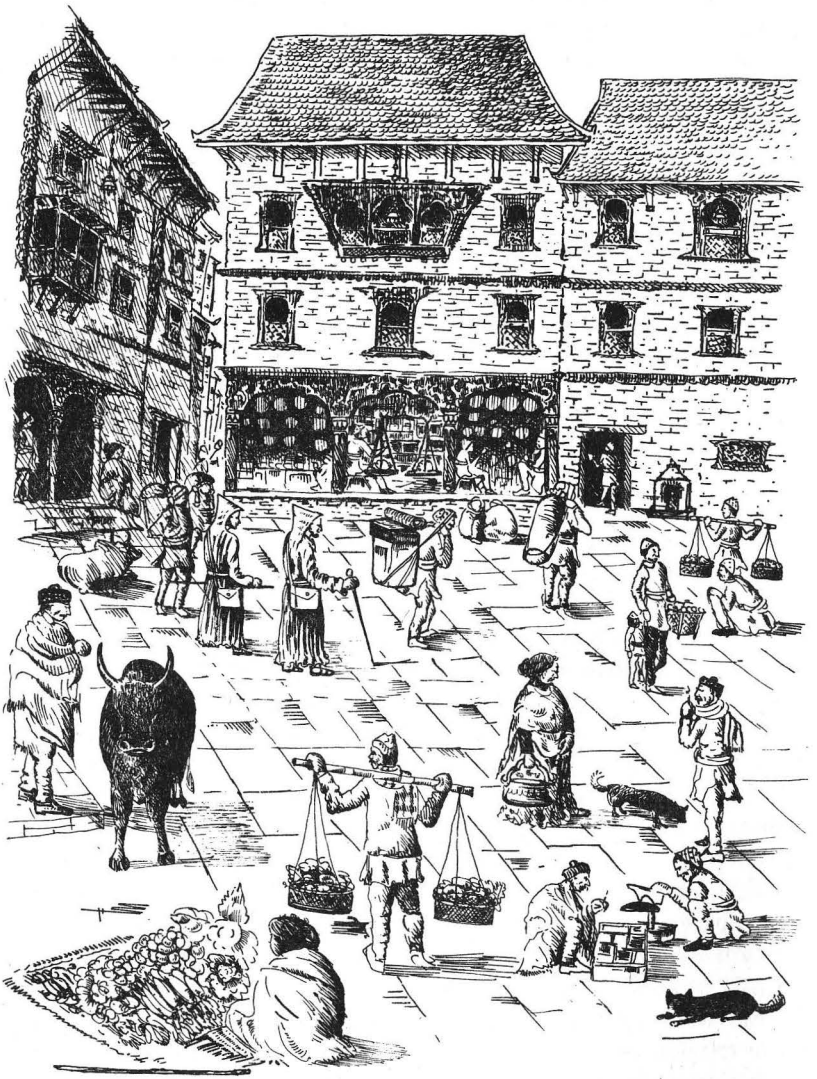
through its territory and taxed travellers and goods. People of the tiny kingdom worked as porters for the travellers. Merchants in the town were go-between bankers and traders with shops and warehouses stocked with merchandise.

In these times the inhabitants of Kathmandu saw strangers from China, Turkistan, Tibet, on the north side, and a variety of peoples from the kingdoms of the Moghul Empire and Hindustan on the south side. Muslims from Kashmir and the Punjab had been invited from earlier times to trade and establish residence in the city, so their kinds of people were familiar. These Muslims did much of the trade—caravan travelling. Though traders and pilgrims made up the majority of the travellers, there occasionally were officials and emissaries of kings who travelled through. And some folks even told of the one or two strangers from the far-away and little-known lands of Europe who had passed through in times past.

These were unsettled and rough times. The Moghul Empire, of Muslim rulers, over a basically Hindu population, was beginning to disintegrate. The last great Emperor, Aurangzeb, died in this year that our story begins. Subject kings and governors across north India were growing more independent and stirring around to serve their own interests. Talk in the houses of Kathmandu was about the growing presence of Portuguese, French, Dutch and English people who were coming to the coastal towns of Hindustan and moving more and more into the interior. The foreigners were setting up compounds for their dwellings, warehouses and offices and making deals with the Emperor and governors. They brought along their own guards and soldiers. The people of Kathmandu gleaned from the caravan travellers all the news they could about the goings-on across the vast plains of Hindustan.

For our two men of the beards, hoods and robes there followed many busy days of negotiating with officials over tax and permits to proceed on their way, of re-packing luggage, exchanging money, talking over news and views, and getting acquainted with the Valley and people. They made their appearance often in the streets and out in the country-side. Everybody had an opportunity to see them. Little by little their story was pieced together by the inhabitants. They were Capuchin missionary Priests of the Christian religion, the religion of the far-away lands of the West. They belonged to the Capuchin Order of their Roman Catholic Church, and hence wore the garb of that order. The missionary agency of their church, called the Congregation of Propaganda, at its headquarters in

Rome, had decided to sponsor a mission to Tibet and these men were on that assignment. For them it had already been an exceedingly difficult assignment, testing their faith, dedication and physical strength to the limit.



Among the caravan members who entered Kathmandu were two strange foreigners—men in beards, hoods and robes.

They had started out together as a band of six men, three years before, all appointed to this same mission in distant central Asia. They sailed from Italy on May 6th, 1704, to Turkey, then trekked through west Asia to the Persian Gulf, took passage on a sailing vessel which rounded India into the Bay of Bengal. Finally they sailed up the Hooghly River to the French settlement at Chandranagore (above the present-day Calcutta). From here they proceeded inland by foot to Patna in Bihar and, joining the caravan, crossed the plains and jungles and climbed the mountains into the Nepal Valley. Early in the journey one member had been left behind at Cyprus due to illness, two died while on the road through west Asia, one was left sick at Chandranagore, and these two were now in Kathmandu.

When a new caravan was compositioned, with the Capuchin Fathers as members, it left the pleasant Valley and proceeded over the steep mountains of the Kathmandu kingdom to the border pass at Kuti and moved on into Tibet. The Fathers reached Lhasa, their destination, on 12th of June 1707. It had been a journey of over three years. Now they engaged in their work as Christian missionaries and the mission continued for four and a half years. But their mission gradually weakened and finally closed. This was due to the long distance from their home base, difficulties of communication and transport, lack of funds, real starvation, insufficient personnel, and physical weakness.

This kind of missionary interest by members of the Roman Catholic Church had been going on toward Asia for some time. Jesuits had stations in India. They had also been making journeys into Interior Asia through the 1600s and learning about peoples and conditions there.[1] When it came time for attempting a permanent official mission, with defined commitments of money and personnel, the mother Church assigned the job to the Capuchin Order.

---

[1] Jesuits in interior Asia in the 1600s.

Throughout the 1600s the Jesuits based at the Court and in other places in the Moghul Empire across the Indian sub-continent, sent out at different times at least five groups of travellers to learn more about the countries and peoples of interior Asia. They especially wanted to find Christians who were rumored to live in large numbers in those parts.

These travellers, generally with servants and luggage, usually joined themselves to larger caravans of traders, diplomats and pilgrims and then moved over the wild, dangerous and rough routes of those days. Along with the other travellers they experienced the vicissitudes of such times and places: heat, cold, the hardest kind of geographical conditions, tolls and taxations, privations, robbers, sickness, and death.

(continued on next page)

The first attempt of the Mission, as we have just watched, stopped a while in Nepal, and then moved on to Tibet, where it weakened and closed. From the outside it looked like a loss and failure. But there remained within the men of the mission themselves strong vision, hearty dedication and many lessons learned. The remaining Priests at their base in India gave themselves to thought, prayer and discussion about how such a mission as theirs could be attempted successfully. With their ideas they sent one of their number back to their headquarters in Rome to plead for the making of a new attempt with new resources.

Out of this study came a strong re-organized plan for the Tibetan Mission. According to this plan there should be a complement of at least twelve Fathers, plus lay Brothers, on the roll of the Mission. There should be established a chain of five inter-connected, communicating, supportive stations from the coast to interior Asia, manned by at least two men each. These stations were to be at Chandranagore, Patna, Kathmandu, Lhasa and Tron-gne. According to this strong plan new men were chosen, and sent on their way with fresh equipment and money. They went at their assignment with such vigor that by the autumn of 1716 this plan was fully implemented, with missionary Priests posted in each of the five stations and going to work.[2] Through the years the link

---

They travelled on several of the major routes over the trans-Asian mountains, such as those that pass through Afghanistan, Kashmir, Garwal, Nepal and Sikkim. In interior Asia they journeyed in Turkestan, Tabete (Tibet) and to the edge of Cathay (China). One group returned from Tibet to India via the Nepal Valley. They found no Christians anywhere in these wide travels and established no stations of work. They learned much about the lay-of-the-land of central Asia, information which would later be of help to missions of their church when they were to be established.

[2]The Tibet Mission.

We have already recorded the first phase of the Tibet Mission (1707–1711). It closed because of insurmountable difficulties. The re-organization plan of 1714 initiated the second phase. It brought considerable logistical strength, a full complement of man-power, with sufficient means for living and work. All five stations in the chain carried on reasonably well until into the 1720s. Then they began to slowly run down because of local wars, sickness, physical weakness, privations, and death. Means and men to keep up the defined quota of strength dwindled and went unfulfilled from the home base. By 1734 the three upper stations were closed, and there remained but three Priests at Patna and Chandranagore in India. During this second phase of the Mission's work, there had been two Priests resident in the Nepal Valley by assignment, while others passed through from time to time on their way to their posts.

As conditions came to such a low ebb again their leader sent to Rome to plead for renewed support. The result was that the earlier 1714 Plan was re-activated and

of this chain at Kathmandu and in the Nepal Valley grew considerably and for all practical purposes developed into a mission of its own. We must leave the story of the larger Tibetan mission and follow that portion of the work of the Capuchins which continued in Nepal.

At the time of our story there did not exist the Kingdom of Nepal as we know it today. Instead, across the Himalayas, chieftains and petty kings ruled over isolated tribes and peoples in tiny kingdoms. In those days the name 'Nepal' was used to designate that central valley through which the trade route ran which was used by the Capuchins. In this Nepal Valley there were three main towns, each the capital of a tiny citystate. Each of these little kingdoms

---

a full team of men and money was sent out in 1738. Again they followed the long and arduous route over sea and land and up into the five stations of the Mission. Priests re-entered Lhasa in January 1741, with others in the other stations. In Lhasa they were well received and given a "Decree of Liberty of Conscience" which allowed preaching, converts and government protection. A chapel and hospice were built and used. Several new converts were baptized. A printing press was transported in and put to work. Then came severe opposition from the lamas, with reversal of the Regent's favor. The Christians were publicly flogged as criminals. Some Priests left. Instructions were sent to the border post at Kuti to forbid the entrance of other Priests. As the opposition grew and threatened violence, the remaining three Fathers decided to leave. They said farewell to the remaining 24 Christians who were forbidden to leave the country. On 20th April 1745 the Fathers left and moved down to Nepal. Shortly after they left, all buildings and property of the Mission were totally destroyed. No missionaries of this group have ever returned to this day. Though the name of the Mission continued for many years to include the word "Tibet" it was not possible to place missionaries in that land. A large, inscribed bell of the Mission has been seen years later by several European travellers installed in a temple of Lord Buddha.

The resident work in Lhasa had been done in three phases of $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, 20 years, and $4\frac{1}{2}$ years, spanning a stretch of 38 years (1707–1745). In Lhasa, according to permits and licenses, they bought land and constructed a chapel and an adjoining monastery which contained a dispensary and living quarters with a kitchen for the Fathers.

In all, ten expeditions of missionaries were sent to Lhasa, of this Tibet Mission, totalling 49 missionaries. Of these, 15 actually reached Tibet and lived and worked in Lhasa. These figures help to tell the story of the sheer rigor and hardship of undertaking a mission of this kind in this time and place. The biographies of the missionaries include these phrases, full of meaning: died, worn out by hardship and fatigue; worried about the state of the mission and run down in health; unable to proceed due to illness and war; died in Turkey en route; died at sea rounding the Cape of Good Hope; being all the time sickly and unfit for work; died in Kathmandu of sheer exhaustion, aged 40; broken down in health, died in the Dutch Factory in Patna; died, scarcely 3 months after his arrival; died on the way to Patna, aged 35; disembarked at Chandranagore and died there, aged 30; ship-wrecked and died at sea; sick and tired left the Valley of Nepal and died at Bettiah (India); died at Bettiah of over-exertion.

For a full story of this Mission read "The Bell of Lhasa" by Fr. Fulgentius Vannini, 1976, 473 pages.

consisted of the town and its surrounding farming villages in a part of the valley plus some portion of the neighboring mountains with its scattered villages. The old-time names of these three city-states were Kantipur (Kathmandu), Lalitpur (Patan) and Bhaktapur (Bhatgaon). In the 1400s a dynasty by the name of Malla had come to power over the peoples of the Valley and at times had only one ruler over the whole. But over the generations the rule shifted to two or three or again one ruler. By the time the Capuchin Fathers came to the Valley there were three distinct, independent thrones, ruling jealously, sometimes warring, over their little kingdoms. The people of the Valley were Newars, skilled in farming, in hand crafts and arts and in merchandising. The Capuchin Fathers, during their 55 years of residence in the Nepal Kingdoms, had close dealings and agreements with all three of the kings and with their people, and lived and worked in each of the kingdoms. Kathmandu Kingdom was richer and stronger. It governed the important trade road that passed through the Valley and for some distance in the mountains.

It was the pattern all over the world in those days, as it still is today, with varying forms of administering, that strangers entering or leaving a king's territory must get permission to do so, and must get added permission to reside in his kingdom. This law was practised by the kings of the Valley just as thoroughly on 100 travellers a year coming into their territory 250 years ago as it is practised today by his Majesty's Government of Nepal for one hundred thousand visitors.

This feature of 'permission letters' was so important and prevailing in kingdoms in those days that it deserves our attention and understanding. There were good reasons for it. To begin with, the general populace of those parts, in mountains or plains, were quite stable. People generally stayed put. The common people seldom left home or land to go travelling around. Most of them hardly ever went to the other side of their mountain and certainly not three mountains away. Farmers who had products to trade or sell carried them to nearby markets and did their business and then quickly returned. Among the upper classes there were some who travelled long distances, such as from one kingdom to another. These were merchants or traders and also government agents or officers. Each of these had servants and porters and guards travelling with them. Often they travelled in large caravans. Occasionally there would be religious pilgrims on the trails. Once in a decade

an adventurer from unknown distant lands would pass over the road and on again to places unknown. Of course Kathmandu and the Valley were much more used to movement of people since they straddled and controlled a substantial trade and business route through the Himalayas.

Other distant areas were little known and generally considered unfriendly and even dangerous. Outsiders who came into a com-

These were the men whom the Nepalese admitted to their society.

munity were strangers, and in a sense misfits. They upset the balance of things. They were automatically suspect. Why has this person come here? What is his hidden motive? What personal gain is he seeking from us? Is he fleeing from enemies or the law? Is he a spy or agent of an outside power? Will he deceive, play tricks, steal?

The strongest reason, and very alive, was the plain fact of history, world without end: that peoples have gone out raiding, looting, warring, killing, and conquering other peoples. People have been among the unpredictable forces of nature that fall upon people and destroy.

The Capuchins were doubly foreigners, strangers, suspects. They were not from some kingdom or people of Asia but from away overseas. The natives on the docks of Chandranagore watched them as they disembarked from the sailing ships and tried to figure out what manner of men these were in their peculiar garb, with their bales and bundles and boxes of equipment. The peasants and shop-keepers along the highways of Bengal and Bihar saw them trudging along among the animals and porters of caravans moving northwestward, and wondered. Patna saw them in its streets, and turned to look. They were among the luggage, noise, dung, animals, palanquins and milling peoples of the caravansaries on the stages to Bettiah. Police and officials examined their 'permission letters' at border check posts as they came within view of the mountains.

The natives in the passes and on the ramparts of the mountains looked away down and saw the travellers toiling like tiny ants on the winding trail among woods and rocks and streams. In the backs of their mind was the thinking that these are our mountains; they are the walls of our fort, the roof of our house, the shield of our armory. We can see who is coming and we can control them. We can say to them 'Come' or 'Go'. We can allow them to pass through on our roads with their goods to buy and sell and trade; we can tax their goods and gain wealth; and we can also do business and grow rich. So let them come, but they must obey us. We will do with them as suits us best.

The Capuchin missionaries knew this well. They could not have crossed this much of the earth without living according to 'permission letters' a dozen times. So when the new Fathers of the reorganized plan of 1714 reached Kathmandu with the intention of taking up permanent residence there, their first concern was to seek permission of the king to do so. Accordingly they followed the customs of the court and sought an interview with His Majesty.

Having been granted a time for an audience the Fathers prepared themselves and on the appointed day made their way through the narrow streets of the town toward the palace area. Kathmandu town was old, small and walled, with the result that the contents were quite tightly packed together. Within these conditions the palace area was rather limited and closely confined by the surrounding town houses and shops. This palace area, as indeed the whole town, was dominated by the soaring roofs and steeple of the temple of Taleju Devi, the guardian god of the Malla kings. It stood upon a high and wide platform, a kind of altar, or a man-made hill in the middle of town, the platform being as high as the surrounding palace and town buildings. In this way the temple stood lifted up, free and open, above the rest of the town. Pressed in close to the temple and under its shadow stood the palace buildings, and on their other side, in the open or public area immediately beside the palace were other temples, small and large, more than a dozen, each raised upon its platform and built in the style of Taleju.

The main gate into the inner palace area was guarded by several powerful deities represented by stone-carved images, chief among them being Hanuman, on a high stone pedestal. He was there to protect the whole palace and to bring victory in time of war. Within, and in the various courtyards and among the royal buildings were more shrines and images of other deities as well as more small temples on the ground floor and placed at some corners on the roofs. Certainly the dominant feature of this royal area was the heavy weight of divine presence with which royalty and people had surrounded and fortified themselves.

There was a most striking character in these buildings, unlike anything on earth. For here the artisans of the Valley had taken the clay and timber and stone of their neighborhood, with creative imagination, fine skill and the inspiration of their environment and hand-built this complex of buildings with originality, beauty and unity. The walls were of tightly fitted and shiny red brick. The wooden lintels and frames of windows and doors were loaded with intricate and varied carvings. Roofs of tile swept out in wide eaves supported with thick struts covered with more carvings. The temples lifted up roofs, tier upon tier, festooned with bells and ribbons and topped with gilded steeples.[3]

[3]In *An Introduction To Hanuman Dhoka*, by Tribhuvan University, this observation about the palace area is given, page 1, 2 and 3, "One of the first things to note about the Hanuman Dhoka complex is the fact that the architecture, the decorations,

(continued on page 14)

The town of Kathmandu was dominated by the soaring roofs and steeple of Taleju temple. Pressed in close stood the palace buildings of the Malla kings.

It is hard to guess how much pause the foreign visitors could give to observe these features around them. Certainly they had not seen the like elsewhere in their travels. Their minds were probably preoccupied with the purpose of their visit and when they were admitted through the Hanuman Gate they were immediately in an inner open courtyard and standing before the open side of the king's audience hall. A large assemblage of nobles and officers was crowded into the small hall and court and close to the space to which the visitors were ushered. After their introduction they presented their gift to His Majesty.[4] This caused a stir of excitement because such foreigners would surely present some never-heard-

---

and the size of the buildings are all intimately one with the realities of the life in the hills. The materials used and the way they were used is totally in keeping with the life style of the society that evolved in these hills in response to the limitations that geography and economics imposed on it. There is nothing pretentious or grandiose about either the complex itself or the buildings that comprise it. In a word, they fit. They belong to the hills of Nepal as the hills of Nepal seem to belong to them. Yet within this narrow sphere, limited by what the economy could afford, what nature provided, and what society would accept, Nepali craftsmen turned their skills towards the most beautiful works that they knew how to produce. The result is the harmony we see today. Despite the fact that the major buildings in the complex were built over a two hundred year period, the ability of each succeeding generation of local craftsmen to use their traditional crafts within the limits imposed on them by nature, economics, and society and, within those limits, to produce quality work has blended the disparate buildings, regardless of their respective ages, into one ..... There is nothing that can quite compare with the visual impact of the palace area. It is age; it is timelessness. It is that special blend of artistic skill and reverence that bares the soul of a nation in a cultural profusion that is rich beyond measure."

Taleju Temple stands over 120 feet high, resting on a 12-stage plinth. Sixteen small temples surround it on the plinths. In the Malla days it was considered inauspicious to build a house higher than this temple. The main gate to the palace was called Hanuman Dhoka, after the guardian deity, and is also used as the name for the whole palace area. Distances over the roads of the kingdom are measured from this gate. The 'palace' at the time of the Malla kings and the Capuchin Fathers was not a single building but a group of buildings close together and built around central courtyards, called *chowks*. Two *chowks* behind the audience hall, which are closed to the public today, contain fine works of sculpture and craftsmanship. The carved woodwork in the Basantapur Chowk is probably the best in the country with respect to intricacy, variety, skill and profusion. Coronations of the kings of Nepal, to the present day, are held in one of these old *chowks*, even though the kings have long since moved to modern palaces and spacious grounds. Following the Malla era, the Gorkhas repaired damages from age and earthquakes, and added other buildings to the royal area. Most prominent among these is the Basantapur Tower of 9 storeys built by Prithvinarayan Shah. If there ever was 'the heart of a country' this Hanuman Dhoka area is the heart of Nepal. Present-day visitors to Nepal would do well to begin their viewing and learning about the country at this place.

[4]Gifts given on other occasions were a microscope, scissors, writing paper, compass, strings of amber, figurines, field-glass, small silver horse that could walk.

of exotic thing. And so they did. Out of their package they unwrapped a wall clock made in Europe and presented it to His Majesty. They were then permitted to sit on the cushioned floor and engage in friendly conversation. The Fathers told about themselves and from where they had come and about their long journey and thanked His Majesty for giving them passports into his country. Then they came to their point: would His Majesty be graciously pleased to grant them permission to reside in his kingdom as Christian missionaries; to live under the vows of their Order and in a righteous manner of life; to serve people with medical care and social uplift; and to teach the Gospel of God for the salvation of souls?

In those days this was an attractive prospect. Here were men of the outside world, men of knowledge and skills, medical doctors who could help them, having things and wealth. Such men under patronage of the king would be an attraction in the kingdom and bring prestige to the court. The religious part was an unknown factor and could do little harm, and the men seemed righteous and good.

So His Majesty welcomed them in a friendly way, gave them permission to live in his realm and to go about their activities, and gave them a rent-free house to live in. The officers of the court and the people of the city showed them friendliness, respect and kindness. The missionaries took up residence in the house and started their life under the patronage of the 'Raja' of Kathmandu.

On this kind of footing these "strange men from the West" came by sea and land and took up their missionary life in the kingdoms of Nepal. Across the span of 50 to 60 years, during this 18th century, the Capuchin Order sent some 20 expeditions of missionaries to this mission. They came in groups of two or three and up to six at a time, and one expedition had 10 members. Each in turn waited at the border until it had entrance permits, and then upon reaching the capital, sought residence permission. In the beginning they sought to reside in the kingdom of Kathmandu because the trans-Himalayan road passed through that kingdom and was controlled by it. But in the course of the years the Fathers negotiated similarly with the Rajas of the neighbouring kingdoms of Bhatgaon and Patan in the Valley and received similar permissions to reside and work in those cities. There were times when the Mission had resident missionaries in all three city-states of the Valley and there were times when they had none. Toward the end of the period

of their presence in Nepal they received requests to send their Priests to other kingdoms of the mountains to the west: Gorkha, Tanahu, Palpa, Kaski and Lamjung. They were able actually to place a missionary in Nuwakot of the Gorkha kingdom for a short time.

The presence of the missionaries in Nepal fluctuated greatly. A graph showing their attendance would be a series of highs and lows across the century. Having once begun, it was not all easy to continue. It was very like mountain climbing expeditions today trying to keep men on the mountain. There are massive logistic problems of communication, supply, movement, health, weather and the mountain itself to contend with. So it was for this Capuchin Mission. Fresh money and men took one or two or three years to reach a station. Business in a letter took two years to get a reply, if at all. One Father got the notice four years later of his appointment as Prefect, or leader, of the Mission. There were great fluctuations in the physical factors of food, health, facilities, money, and necessities of life. The attitudes of the royal courts and the people fluctuated and permissions changed. The home-base at times grew inert, at other times very active.

In the archives of the Church there are thousands of pages of letters, journals and reports which give details about all aspects of the Mission. These give the dates of the comings and the goings of the missionaries. For our purposes it is not necessary to go into the detailed chronology of the mission's history. We want to get an overall view of the effort as a whole and of its setting. In this view we have seen the first missionaries come into Kathmandu, stay a few weeks, and depart for Lhasa (1707). Then some eight years later three came and received permission to reside in Kathmandu. Their members continued (1715–1722) until they were expelled because they were suspected of being spies, of causing plagues and of being religiously inauspicious. The Fathers had been in touch with the King of Bhatgaon and had requests from him to send someone to his kingdom, so now when they could not continue in Kathmandu, they moved to Bhatgaon. Here they stayed until their strength dwindled and they closed and left. There followed six years with no-one of the Mission in Nepal. In 1737 there came a spurt of strength and upon invitations the Fathers entered Bhatgaon and Kathmandu again and seven years later, by similar invitation, went into Patan. Thus they continued until their evacuation from the Valley in 1769. In the closing years of the century, three Priests

were sent into the new Gorkha-Nepal of the Shah dynasty, during 1786–1797, to keep in touch with the authorities and to keep open the line of communication. One of these three returned again, not under assignment but as a run-away from the discipline of his Order, and spent the last 13 years of life in Kathmandu where he died in 1810.

Over the span of the 54 years of the active work of the Mission in the Nepal Valley, 29 Capuchin missionaries lived there (1715–1769). Their terms of service varied from one to sixteen years. Six of them died while in Nepal. These men came from middle and lower-middle class families of their home country. Education was not widespread in their communities but they received what there was. Their degree of education and social position in their communities can perhaps be understood if we compare them to the educated Brahmins of the Nepal villages today. These men, out of their prevailing Christian faith, chose to enter the Capuchin Order of their Church, studied and prepared themselves for the priesthood, and volunteered for the assignment in the mission to Asia. This order of the Roman Catholic Church is an off-shoot of the Franciscans, adopting a life of austerity, simplicity and poverty. Their chief work is missionary. It took extraordinary faith and dedication for men of their status to give their lives to this mission.

We should take up their story at 1737. After a stretch of six years when there had been no missionaries in Nepal, some new recruits arrived in Patna, at the base in India. News of this reached the Nepal Valley and the Rajas of both Kathmandu and Bhatgaon sent letters, with delegations, to Patna asking for missionaries to come to their kingdoms. In support of the Raja of Kathmandu there was also a letter from the Raj Guru (the royal priest, or religious head and advisor to the throne) urging the Fathers to do their utmost to respond favorably to the request. The Raja of Bhatgaon was so determined to get Fathers again in his kingdom that he instructed his envoy not to return without them though he should have to stay and wait two or more years. So the missionaries went, and others followed, and they received the necessary permissions, and rent-free houses, and took up residence and work in both Bhatgaon and Kathmandu, and a few years later in Patan also. These were strong years for them. They worked hard at a variety of endeavors. They pressed ahead with language learning, literature production, preaching and teaching, conducting religious services, care of converts and practice of medicine.

But in spite of times of favor, the status of the missionaries was always uncertain. The business of the permission was an unsteady thing. As time passed there became a larger and heavier bag of factors that influenced that document. This paper could be written, altered, rescinded, or renewed at the will of the ruler. Many things pressed on him to influence his decision. The degree of his own strength of character, his own wisdom and desires and ambitions played into the picture and these characteristics differed considerably with different rulers. But he was certainly not a sole decision-maker. Around him and in his court were the pressing voices of interested individuals and groups from the body of the kingdom: men of business, of wealth, of land, position, power, and most of all men of religion. There were also wider considerations that came out of the bag at times: political, national and sometimes international. And of course there were things within the foreigners themselves to consider: who they really were; what they knew and could do; their possible foreign connections; and the big factor of their religious beliefs and activities.

If we shake out the contents of this bag and look closely at the ingredients that went into the mix of permission-making and unmaking, we can peel back the facades and insignias and faces of men and find the inner human being; and there, within the personality or the heart, are those inner resources, both strong and good and noble as well as broken and corrupted and evil, which rise to the surface and make the words and deeds of men. So it has been since the beginning of the world, and so it is true of each of us today. It was one of the teachings of the religion of those missionaries that God created mankind to be like himself in that inner being, saw it break and fall and corrupt, and ever since has been working to restore and re-make it to be like Himself again, and to live as a redeemed humanity again with Him on earth and in heaven forever. The story of how God is doing this in the earth is what these Capuchins crossed sea and land to tell. They called it the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If we go back 250 years and sit with the Nepalese we can see with them the beards and robes of the missionaries, the tools of their religion, hear their poor language, read bits from their book, and wonder about their foreignness. From our viewpoint today we may think we see adulterations and weaknesses in their manner and message. They were, to use a figure from the Bible, earthen vessels, bearing in their earthenness the great treasure of God's Gospel. Blessed is he who takes not the vessel but the treasures within.

I found the travelling for these missionaries to be of special interest. Of course from the viewpoint of the natives living along the way it was nothing unusual. It was in the everyday course of life for them. But we present-day foreigners who have followed in the footsteps of those earlier Capuchins, and are in the same business, and who have gone into many of the very same places and even among the same buildings, find it extremely interesting to see how they did it. It tells us something.

In those days Europeans could travel to India by two routes and both were equally used and equally bad. When the colonial powers of Europe were at war with each other, which was frequently, and when piracy flourished, the seas were more dangerous and the land route was more used. The land route meant over West Asia to the Persian Gulf and from there by sea. The sea route meant by sea around the bottom of Africa. More than twenty Capuchin expeditions went by both routes but mostly by sea.

Of course in the 1700s thousands of all kinds of people moved over these great routes every year. Most of them were in the business of travel, such as sailors, soldiers, business men and traders. They learned how to 'live on the road' and endure it. But it was an exceedingly tough business, whether you were a 'city-dweller' or an 'old hand at the game'. The Capuchins said it was more irksome to get into Lhasa than to live in Lhasa, and Lhasa in those days was difficult in the extreme. This travel alone, as nothing else could, measured a man's physical, mental, moral and spiritual strength. It consisted of two to three years packed with grinding hardships, nerve-racking perils, galling stumbling-blocks and frustrations that sucked at the last juices of a man's sanctification. Every section of the journey had its own peculiar difficulties; at sea, in the desert, in the jungle, in the mountains.

Those who took the land route sailed from Italy to Turkey or Syria in the eastern Mediterranean, usually in a slow, safe and rather easy stage. Having disembarked they contracted to join a caravan which travelled only at certain seasons of the year overland to ports on the Persian Gulf. There were northern routes through the mountains and then desert and along the Tigris River. There were southern routes through the Syrian Desert to the Euphrates and down to the Gulf.

These caravans were large, well-organized affairs. They usually contained hundreds of camels and hundreds of people. The leader contracted to supply the 'passengers' with food, water, a tent and means of transport. They moved like an army, with discipline,

outriding patrols, signals by drums to start and stop, and sentries at night. Food was rationed, perhaps dry bread at noon and some rice at night. Water was often muddy and polluted. The caravan had to protect itself against robber bands. Thieving and fighting within the caravan was common. If someone fell sick he tried to drag along somehow or stop off at some habitation and join the next caravan, if he lived. The Christians had their peculiar problems because they were passing through non-Christian lands and they were considered fair prey for hatred and robbery. They often travelled disguised as Arab traders. This kind of travel was endured for weeks, in dry, withering heat and barrenness, in thirst, hunger and fatigue. The average time from Italy to the Persian Gulf port was five or six months if all went well. Then they had to wait for the right season for ships to sail to India. Dutch, French or English ships took travellers in three months into the Bay of Bengal and ports like Chandranagore where the Capuchins went. In all it was a trip of 20,000 kilometers.

Travellers by the sea route could go by vessels of any of the mercantile nations: Portugal, France, Holland and England. The Capuchins usually went on French vessels, or Portuguese, and latterly English. After arranging travel passports and tickets they set sail from west European ports for an average eight months' sail to the Bay of Bengal. It was a "voyage of horror, dreaded like the gates of hell", made on small, crowded and uncomfortable ships. They bounced and danced like fragile egg-shells. Fifty to one hundred people were packed into a ship along with tons of firewood; farm animals of all kinds for meat, milk, eggs; food stores, liquor, cargo. All these, jammed together, lived with noise, smells, leaks, illness, drunkenness, storms, threats of pirates or drowning, bad food and water. The most dangerous places were rounding the Cape of Good Hope of south Africa and entering the Hooghly River near their destination. Ten percent of these ships were lost at sea by forces of nature, but a much higher number were captured due to war and piracy. No trip was made without some deaths. Travellers leaving the ship at Chandranagore felt as if they had been released from a confining prison sentence of those times.

Up in the Hooghly River (where present-day Calcutta is situated) were ports of trade where Europeans had warehouses, dwellings and forts. The French had theirs at Chandranagore until the British captured it in 1757. The Capuchins established a hospice there for

their Fathers. Here they rested, renewed their minds and bodies, were oriented to language, customs and peoples of this strange land. The Father posted here had the job of general services officer to those in the outposts. He received and sent equipment, luggage, mail, money, arranged for transport by sea and land, and often cared for sick and dying brothers.

To move inland from this coastal port through the province of Bengal to the large inland city of Patna, capital of the province of Bihar, was a journey of 600 kilometers and could be covered in about 30 days. The road crossed flat lands of the great Gangetic plain, traversing open fields and villages as well as heavy jungles. Along the road were interesting people, occasional wild animals and maybe bands of dacoits (robbers). There was exposure to cholera, smallpox, plague, dysentery and malaria. But it was a welcome change to the life at sea or in the caravan. Bullock carts and the 'dhooly' (a carried chair) were used by those sick or weary. Patna was a large city and capital of a huge kingdom under the overlordship of the Moghul Emperor. In the city were large compounds of the French, Dutch and English traders and business men. Here also the Capuchins built a regular missionary post, which in time became a large center of Catholic work in north India. In the days of our story it was an important 'home base' for the advance posts and at times was the seat of the Prefect (leader) of the whole Mission.

The last lap of the journey to Nepal lay across the remaining plains and up into the Himalayan mountains. If all went well it could be covered in about 20 days. The Fathers, as well as others, usually joined small caravans for this trip. Pack animals and porters carried luggage. Sometimes there would be a guide, some servants; the company would be small. The road in the plains was usually good and comparatively easy.

The greatest difficulty on this journey was the numerous checkposts and toll barriers. They appeared almost daily from Patna to Kathmandu. Through this region were small territories of petty 'rajas' and sub-chiefs. Each ruler set up barriers to tax men and goods going through his territory. The methods of collecting were without rhyme or reason, really a kind of legal robbery. Travellers were subjected to humiliation, harassment, search, wrangling, quarrels and the highest possible payments. In total these experiences were an exasperating nightmare. Foreigners were especially hard hit. Everyone thought that Europeans were endlessly rich and

therefore could pay anything. Some went through this gauntlet and had nothing left at the other end.

Getting nearer to the mountains the road came into a wide belt of dense forest (or jungle as it is called in India), which ran all along the immediate base and feet of the Himalayas. Here and there it was broken by small farming communities, by stretches of house-high elephant grass, by rock-strewn stream and river beds. This plains-belt was called the Terai and could be 10–15 kilometres wide. It was little inhabited and greatly dreaded. People travelled through it only during the dry and cool season of December to March and then as quickly as possible. The greatest danger was the peculiarly severe malaria fever that caught and killed people. In those days people knew it as "a pestiferous exhalation from the forest which was inhaled by people". One European described it in this way: "In damp and confined places, where decomposition of vegetable matter, water, and earth abound, there is given rise to carbonic acid, and other deleterious gases, more than the living vegetation can absorb, and malaria is generated". Travellers hastened through it as rapidly as possible and did all in their power not to spend the night in it. Of those who went into the Terai during the forbidden season hardly 10% survived. There were also dangers from robbers and wild animals in this kind of country. Travellers caught in it at night sat up keeping fires burning, shouting, beating drums or firing guns. The dangerous animals were tiger, rhinoceros, wild buffalo, elephant.

The road of the plains became like a goat track in the mountains: narrow, steep, rocky, unkept, with surrounding expansive forests of ancient trees, and the deep valleys cut at the bottom by swift and tempestuous rivers, to be forded or crossed on grass, rope, or wooden bridges. Two or three days trek in the real mountains brought one into the Valley, that emerald bowl of the Himalayas which has never ceased to thrill the traveller who comes upon it from any direction of the mountains.

It was men who passed the test of this kind of travel whom the people of Nepal admitted to their society. But the travel was incidental. It was only a means to an end. If these men were not travellers and explorers, what then were they? What was their purpose? What did they do during their 55 years in the Valley kingdoms?

These men were two things: they were monks and then they were missionaries. By the rules of their Order they gave much time to private meditation, prayers, and readings in their cells and in

chapel. In their manner of life they practiced celibacy, obedience and poverty. They were also missionaries. They believed in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, who governs all, who speaks and acts among men. Their purpose out among men was to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to seek the salvation of souls according to the truths of the Bible as their Church understood it in those days. They sought to convert people to this religious faith. They believed that all men were sinners against God, therefore were guilty and judged and separated from God; that God in grace had arranged to forgive and be reconciled to men through the life and death of Jesus Christ; that God wanted to help all people to live new and holy lives according to his commandments. They believed that these truths were universal, for all men, and ought to be spread among all peoples of the earth and obeyed by them.

These men believed these truths themselves and this was what motivated them to join the Capuchin Order and then later to traverse sea and land to preach them in the Himalayas. Others of their Order were doing the same thing in other places in the earth. They made their purpose and message clear to everyone where they went. Their garb, manner of life, pictures on their walls and objects in their houses said the same thing. With much zeal and earnestness they preached from place to place: to kings, nobles, Brahmins, to all classes and to common and poor people. They travelled to some extent westward and preached where they went. They endeavoured from the start to gain a hearing from the ruling class, expecting that if the rulers would convert to Christ the rest of the populace would readily follow.

In their houses they had one room turned into a chapel where they conducted daily worship services. They built two church buildings, with a cemetery and buried their dead. On the top of their four-storey house in Bhatgaon they fastened a large iron cross to speak its message. On one occasion they erected three large crosses on mountains around the Valley, pointing to Christ the Saviour of the world. The Priests exchanged letters between the Pope and kings, which related to their Mission and its work. On occasion the priests prepared carefully written treatises in the Newari language about the Christian message and presented these to kings and nobles and urged upon them acceptance of this teaching.

The Fathers moved around among the people, socializing, being friends, helping, teaching. They worked for social reforms; helped in abolishing some superstitions; in several cases reconciled

husband and wife who had been separated; prevented some cases of wives from immolating themselves on the funeral pyres of their dead husbands. On certain occasions they reprimanded kings, nobles and common people for their unjust deeds, cruelty and sin, while exhorting them to repent, seek God's forgiveness, and live a righteous life. They helped to negotiate peace between warring Kathmandu and Bhatgaon. Some of the Fathers, who had picked up some medical knowledge, brought medicines with them and gave free treatment to all who sought it. They treated royalty and commoner alike. In times of devastating epidemics they worked hard to alleviate suffering.

These Fathers had scholastic trainings in differing degrees. Some had abilities and interests in literary and academic subjects. Over the years they studied and learned, wrote hundreds of pages of personal journals, sent regular and detailed reports to their superiors, wrote dictionaries of the language and journals about the religion and customs of the people. They wrote about what they observed of the events and region around them. In connection with their Christian teaching they composed and used in Newari several apologetic and catechetical books, hand-written and reproduced by hand.

Over the years they instructed and then baptized those adults who believed and requested it. They baptized thousands of children whom they visited in connection with severe illness and when they were on the point of death. They performed nine Christian marriages. The Priests led these Christians in worship, in the use of the sacraments; shepherded them in life's way; interceded to the king on their behalf when they were ostracized and helped them to get leased land to work. The Fathers led in a considerable controversy to try and allow Christians to retain their caste positions and facilities; this was unsuccessful.

Their physical and material conditions fluctuated considerably. There were times of sufficient and comfortable circumstances. At other times they were out of money and means to sustain their work and life itself. At some times they had very little to eat and really starved. On occasion they borrowed money and food until such time as they could later repay. Sickness and death befell them. Perhaps the most distressing conditions were the times when they simply did not have anyone to man the posts and carry on their spiritual and physical work. On occasion their numbers dwindled and the remaining one or two or three became exhausted

and simply unable to carry on and they had to lock up the house and drag their way down to the plains and to their base in India and hope for reinforcements.

Such were the men whom the Nepalese admitted to their society; this is what they heard from them and what they saw of them. And how did the Nepalese respond to, relate to and re-act to these foreigners? Broadly speaking they treated them in two ways: over the 55 years there was a mixture of friendliness with generosity on the one hand and suspicion and animosity on the other. These reactions fluctuated and swung to one hand and then to the other, and back again.

By and large the rajas favored the Fathers. They gave them audiences. They invited them and gave them permission to reside in their kingdoms. To reinforce this they assigned to them houses free of rent (which was the custom in those days). In Kathmandu and Bhatgaon they did the unusual thing of making a permanent gift in writing of the house to the Fathers. One house deed was written in a copper plate (permanent) and the other on a palm leaf (during the life-time of the giver). The king of Bhatgaon also presented to them a 30-kilogram bell with the names of Jesus and Mary inscribed around the base.

Shortly after the Priests had come again in 1737 to both Bhatgaon and Kathmandu the kings of both cities gave them in writing a remarkable document called a "Decree of Liberty of Conscience". The decree from the King of Bhatgaon was dated on the 18th of November, 1737, and reads as follows:

> "We, Jaya Ranajita Malla, King of Bhatgaon, in virtue of the present document, grant to all European Fathers leave to preach, teach and draw to their religion the people to us subject, and we likewise allow our subjects to embrace the Law of the European Fathers, without fear or molestation either from us or from those who rule in our kingdom. Nor shall the Fathers receive from us any annoyance, or be obstructed in their Ministry. All this, however, must be done without violence and of one's own free will.
>
> Krishna Simha Pradhan, Prime Minister, is the witness to the document, and Sri Kasi Nath is the scribe. Given on the 11th day of the month Margasira, in the year 861 of the Nepalese era; may the day be auspicious."

In personally giving the Decree to the Fathers the Raja told them, "I give you this document, but I want from you another document whereby you pledge yourselves to stay forever in Bhatgaon".

In response to this act of royal trust and generosity the Fathers gave a written statement in which they gave thanks for actions taken toward them for the house and for the decree; and then they stated that, to the best of their ability, they pledged that some missionaries of the Capuchin Order would always reside in Bhatgaon, so long as the gift of the house and the Decree of Liberty of Conscience remain in force.

The King of Kathmandu likewise received the Fathers with friendly conversations (1737) and in his eagerness to have them in Kathmandu gave them a house for residence (a permanent gift), transit facilities through his kingdom, and a written Decree of Liberty of Conscience. In this Decree His Majesty declares himself free of any malicious accusations given to the Fathers in the past (when they were expelled earlier), to have examined their religious books and declared them to be good. Then he states that no-one shall harass or harm those who, of their own free will, embrace the way of life professed by the Priests.

It was not until a few years later, in 1744, that the Capuchins could place Priests in the kingdom of Patan, on the Raja's invitation. He gave them a gift of a house, on a permanent basis with the deed in copper, and gave them orally a Decree of Liberty of Conscience.

Under such highly favorable royal attitudes, the Mission Prefect, Father Francis Horace, in 1740, prepared a treatise written in Newari which he presented in a formal audience to the Raja of Bhatgaon. In this document he outlined the essential teachings of the Christian religion and urged His Majesty to give serious consideration and acceptance to this Way. The Raja was open and sympathetic but pointed out that he could not at this time give due consideration to such a weighty matter because he was occupied with disputes and wars with his neighboring kingdoms. In an exchange of correspondence with the Pope two years later, the Raja wrote, "I have thought over your letter which has been sent to me by Your Highness. In regard to the Law (that is the invitation extended to the Raja by the Pope to embrace the Christian Law) I am not in a position to follow it at present; as for my subjects, I do not know what to say. I have ordered the Father to see if my people have a right disposition to embrace it; if they do, the Priests have only to endeavor to make them embrace it. Besides, I have told the Fathers to speak freely about their religion anywhere in this country and whoever, of his own accord, will receive it, I have given my word that he will not be molested".

A few days after presenting his Treatise and challenge to the

Raja of Bhatgaon, Father Francis Horace received an audience with the Raja of Kathmandu and presented to him the same paper and urged upon him a positive response to the message of Christ. The Father received more or less the same answer, setting aside the issue.

The same favorable attitudes from royalty were shown farther afield as well. Rajas in kingdoms to the west of the Valley learned about the Fathers during their strong years in the 40's and 50's and tried to get Priests into their territories. Thus King Prithvinarayan Shah of Gorkha, who later was to be their enemy, requested them to come to his territory and offered facilities of house, land and servants. He repeated this request some years later when a Priest spent some days in the King's center at Nuwakot. In 1755 and again in 1776 Fathers made lengthy trips westward. Father Tranquillus spent many days in the hospitality of the King of Tanahu in his summer residence at Devghat where the Kali and the Trisuli rivers meet. They had long discussions about the outside world and about religion. They studied a book concerning the teachings of Christianity. The king and his prime minister were much impressed and wrote a letter to the Pope asking for missionaries and promising that they could propagate their religion freely. The letter was accompanied by a rhinoceros horn as a gift of good will. On another trip in the same year the Father revisited Gorkha and Tanahu and went on to visit the King of Lamjung to the north. In all these travels he used Christian literature and talked to people about the Christian gospel. Even in the 1770's and 80's after the Gorkha conquest of the Valley, the new Shah Government invited the Fathers to come and live under the new regime. But the fact of the matter was that the Capuchin Order did not have men to assign again to the mountains.

On the side of favorable attitudes must be mentioned the fact that there were some, a few, who heard this Gospel of God as true for them and decided to receive it and follow the Christian way. There are records of some leaders, such as Bahadur Shah, who showed favor and agreement, but took no formal steps to become Christians. We do know that there were about 80 adults, over the years, who requested admission to the Christian church and were instructed and baptized. We know little about them. One was a merchant. Some, very likely most, were peasant farmers. These Christians practised the forms of worship and manner of life taught them by the Fathers.

While there were generally favorable attitudes by the kings

toward the Fathers and their religion, it is probably true that the missionaries were mainly wanted for material reasons. These men were knowledgeable, had special skills, were 'doctors'; they could help the society in several ways. To some extent foreigners offered prestige and were a curiosity to the court and kingdom. They occasioned a certain amount of European things and wealth to come into the kingdom, and other Europeans might come in larger numbers and increase trade with consequent profit. More Europeans might bring other skills and knowledge to the kingdom, as they were doing in the courts and cities in India: in the fields of mathematics, science, astrology, literature, and architecture. Thus, if there were no evident reasons for suspicion, and while they were well-behaved, they were welcomed, accommodated, and unless it proved really to be a problem, allowed to practise and propagate their religion.

So, on the one hand, there were these favorable attitudes. But, on the other hand, from time to time, there were attitudes and incidents which arose, often gathering support among the people, which led to disfavor and active opposition. There were incidents of house robbing when the Fathers lost most of their goods. There were incidents of court charges against the Fathers, followed by arrest, trial and serving prison sentences. There were occasions of mob anger when the Fathers had to stay inside or seek the King's protection.

Then there was, in the minds of the populace in general, a smoldering dislike for persons belonging to another religion. This was largely directed toward Muslims because of their conquests of Hindu and Buddhist societies, their desecration of temples and forceful conversions. It also came from the knowledge which spread even as far as the Himalayas, of the atrocities inflicted by the Portuguese on Muslims or Hindus, wherever they went, and the degenerated and sometimes wicked form that their Christianity took.

But even if these inexcusable behaviors were discontinued the religionists were foreign—foreign in the sense of a stone in your rice, or of a cinder in your eye. These foreign elements did not mix or fit in a truly Hindu land and society. There was considerable practice of Buddhism in the Valley but the form was akin to the dominant Hinduism of the rulers and Brahmins. Foreign religionists could be allowed and accommodated on the side, to live apart, observing certain restrictions as to how far they could go in touch,

presence and fraternizing with the Hindu society. But they were apart. This was so because Hinduism embraces everything and makes all sacred: the land of the country, water, house, animals, people, government, the throne. Nothing is secular. The people of the society have the duty to so live as to keep it undefiled, to keep themselves undefiled, and to keep the favor of the deities who rule over them and their land.

In such a 'closed society' the foreign element among them could be considered the cause of trouble. For example, on the occasion of a frightful epidemic of smallpox the borders were closed and the people forbidden to move about. It was reported that 20,000 people died. The missionaries and their religion were accused of causing the displeasure of the Hindu deities which brought on the epidemic. The Priests were in danger of being lynched. The Brahmins resorted to the national oracle to get support against the missionaries, but in this instance it preferred to remain silent. The Raja had to intervene in behalf of the Fathers and save their lives.

There was a particular feature about the Capuchins, which may seem small, but which was a foreign element that didn't mix in this 'sacred society'. The beard and garb of the Fathers seemed to have caused offense. The dark brown of their habit was an inauspicious color and offensive to the gods. Their beards caused them to be mistaken for the detested Muslims. People made fun of the cord-girdle because it reminded them of the girth of a donkey's pack-saddle, and their hoods looked to people like the muzzle of an elephant. The court tried several times to get them to change to a white garb, the color worn by people of the court, but without success. Finally the Raja of Bhatgaon called them into a full court one day and after speaking about how much they were appreciated he asked them to change into the new white garb, without hoods and with a wide sash-girdle, which he had prepared for them and then presented to them. They made the change and went home in their new dress, but with reservations.

The presence of the foreign Christians could have been tolerated and arranged for in the society, as with Muslims, so long as they refrained from causing caste or other forms of defilement. But the conversion of Hindu citizens to Christianity was all but impossible to accommodate or tolerate. True, the 'Decree of Liberty of Conscience' had been given by the King, but when it came to a showdown, Hindu law prevailed and those who converted did so with very severe consequences. Hindu religious law was supported

by the government; it was civil law; religion and state were one. Behind and above the throne ruled Hinduism through the hands of the Royal Priest and the privileged and powerful Brahmins.

For his own spiritual good, and for the spiritual good of all his fellows, each individual in the Hindu society was required to follow carefully the rules. We need to understand the meaning of this position in order to appreciate the difficulty of what the Capuchin missionaries expected to accomplish. Consider that the individual person is 'bound to the wheel of life'. His 'being' has been moving along through unknown time, taking one form of life after the other, birth after birth after birth, transmigrating into life after life after life. Thus a being is born into a form of life, perhaps an animal or a human, and if a human being then into a certain caste and circumstance. The person must faithfully live out that form and die in it. In future births one may hopefully be born into a higher caste and better circumstance. It cannot be altered during this life. The great impersonal principle of cause and effect turns the wheel of life to which all are bound and metes out existence, from which one seeks to be delivered by eventual absorption into the Eternal Being. An individual can hope to alter the course of rebirths for the good by careful adherence to religious rules, by devotions, pilgrimages, social service, and the like.

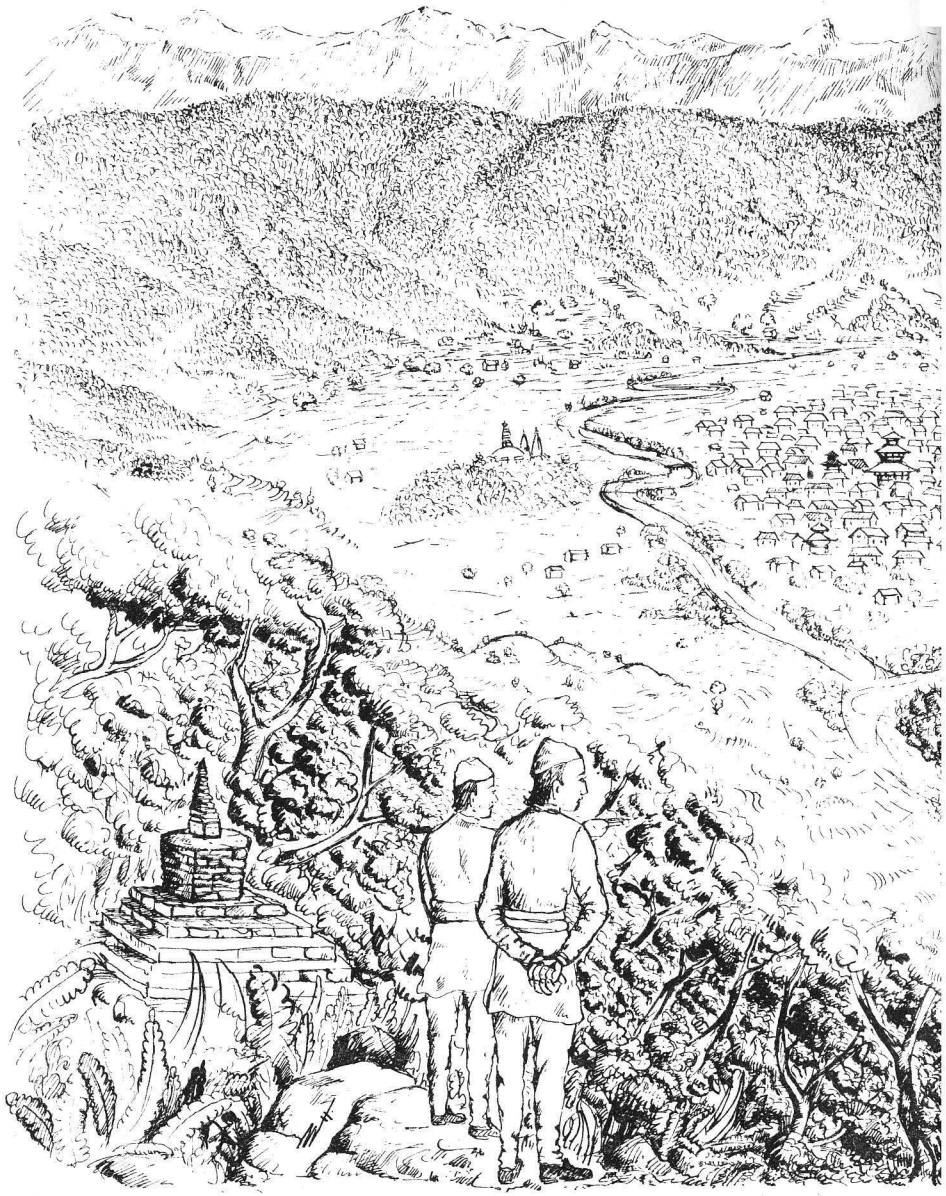
If a person could go his individual way according to his faith in these matters it could be considered possible for another person in his family or a neighbour down the street to go on the road of a different religious faith and live in peace together. But this is not the case. Each person in the family and in the caste and in the society is intricately bound to all and all to each on the wheel of existence. They walk their road together, not alone, influencing and supporting each other. According to the religious laws they step together through the stages of life from birth to death; they raise, prepare and eat their food; they care for their bodies in health and illness; they conduct their social intercourse in the work of society. When one breaks caste he defiles himself but he also defiles the house and water and fire and food and people of his family, and that defilement may spread to neighbors and the society. His breach of conduct adversely affects the others. Further, if one leaves off performing his duties in a joint circle of religious ceremony, it may leave the others unsupported in their spiritual need.

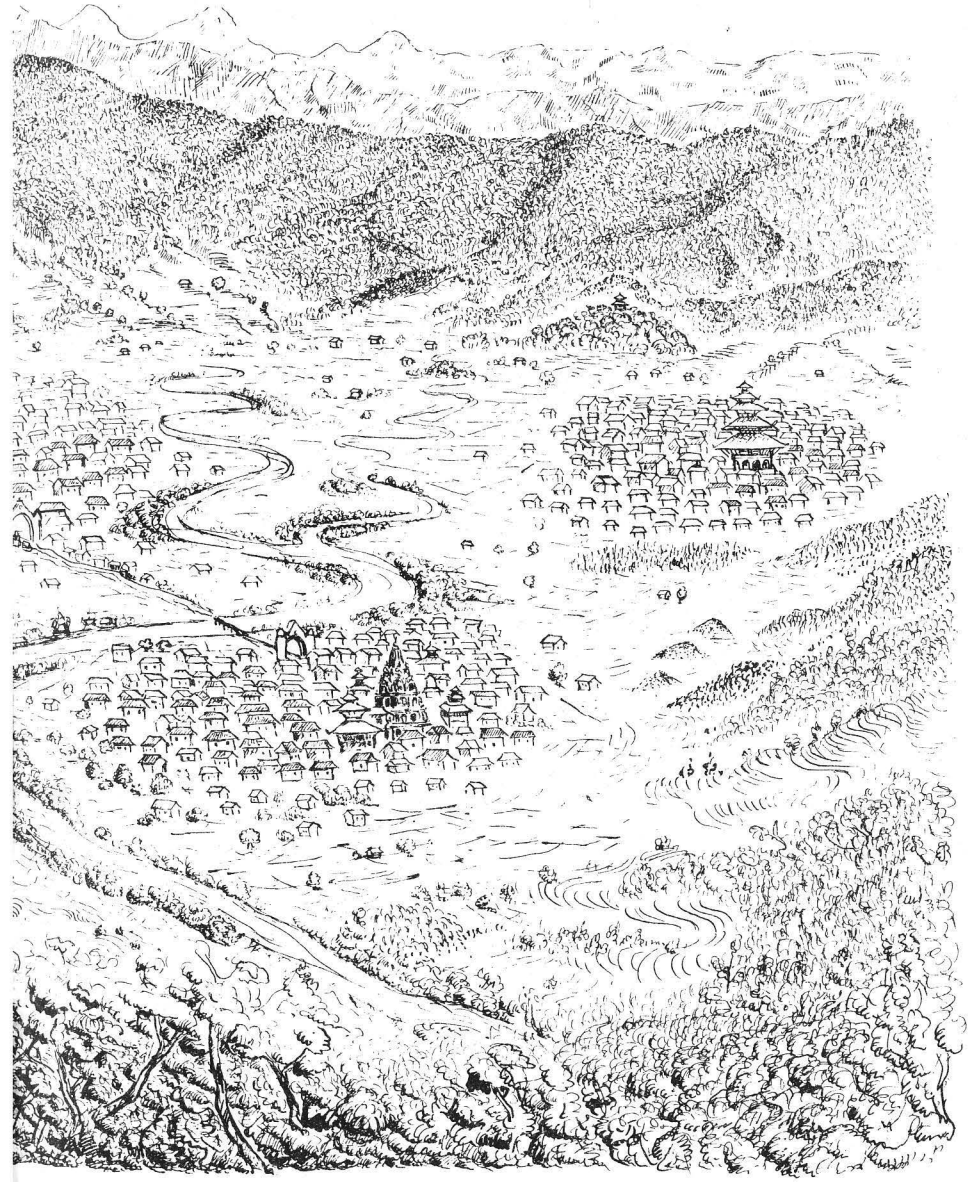
Surrounding the travellers on the wheel of life are an innumerable host of deities to whom the people must also relate. There

are individual, household, local and national deities. Their help must by prayed for in times of need, their ill-will propitiated and their good-will sought. And then there is the realm of evil spirits, hovering nearby, unpredictable, who need to be guarded against. Overall the Brahmins keep watch on the populace to see that they keep the caste rules and then serve people in the priestly functions. Some breaches of the rules are dealt with severely; some can be treated lightly or even overlooked. There are ways by which a 'defiled person' can be purified and restored through ceremonies, fees and the service of the Priests. In those days, to leave Nepal soil and travel to India or elsewhere was a form of defilement and travellers on their return stopped at the border for purifying ceremonies.

In such a society where everything is sacred and nothing is secular, and every person is inter-dependent with the others, there is little place for the deviator. How could you accommodate a person who left Hinduism and became a Christian? In Muslim society of those times they often put to death any of their people who changed religion. Here they did just about everything short of that. The few in the Valley who converted to Christianity, never mind the method or motive, were, in the logic of the beliefs, considered as being dead; therefore, they no longer had house, family, property, inheritance or caste; they could only be put outside the fold; in varying degrees they were boycotted and harassed. The extent to which the 'out-casting' took place depended on the zeal of the society and the pressure of the Brahmins. Usually it was sufficiently applied so that the convert had to go out and find a new way to make a living in another place. Obviously this was not easy. Understandably, opposition was directed toward both the convert and the converter.

Another kind of ill-favor and opposition which developed in varying degrees and from time to time arose because the Capuchins were Europeans. Being such they were open to the suspicion that they might be politically connected with European powers which had ambitions for economic and political aggrandizement in Asia. The thought was always in the back of the mind that these Europeans might be spies, confederates and fore-runners of enemies which might come in due time. There were never grounds for such suspicion in the case of these Capuchins, but the possibility for such suspicion had plenty of grounds. This is understandable; it was the usual reaction in similar situations by any people anywhere.





When King Prithvinarayan Shah of Gorkha looked upon the Nepal Valley the vision came to him to conquer those city states and other petty states of the mountains and unite them all into one strong, viable and glorious kingdom which would be beneficial to all.

Though the Nepalese were distant and isolated in their mountain fastnesses, they knew some things about the movements of Europeans in Asia. Travellers on their roads brought some news. And they had their observers who went out into the plains to see for themselves and gather news about events farther afield in Asia. Portuguese, Dutch, French and English were going into all the coasts and nooks and corners of the continent and islands. In some places Europeans had already established colonial rule. The Nepalese, from their mountain ramparts looked down and saw the foreigners spreading across Hindustan with their professions, storehouses, offices and compounds, and then forts and guards. They had special *firmans* or agreements from native rulers allowing them to do this. By the middle of the 1700s, when the Capuchins were receiving the Decree of Liberty of Conscience in Nepal, the British were driving the other Europeans off the sub-continent so as to give themselves the monopoly for trade and business. About the same time the British East India Company was taking the first steps toward becoming part-ruler of the huge province of Bengal and shortly after of Bihar, by appointment under the Mughal Emperor. They had not yet started on the road of taking over political power and becoming rulers. They were a strong business organization within the territories of native rulers. To obtain the products of the countryside on a large scale for both internal and external sale they developed a network of agents, buyers, warehouses, transport, docks and sailing vessels. Guards and soldiers and forts were needed to protect this large organization. The Company was always looking for new sources of trade. It sent investigators and agents in many directions to make new deals and even used its army to help native rulers in their wars if the Company saw some business advantage for itself in such a venture. The Company gradually became so strong that it could operate in business as it pleased and by force of arms obtain such treaties as it desired from native rulers. At this stage the Company was a kind of government of a huge business concern, operating within and under the native government of state. The next step, under the pressure and demands of the big business, was almost unavoidable, when the Company also took over rule in the territories where its business was established. But this came later.

At the time of our story the British in Bengal and Bihar were one among the powers in motion on the north India plains. While political shifts were taking place in this region, similar political

changes were taking place up in the Himalayan mountains and in the Nepal Valley. In the early stages these expansionist movements in the mountains and in the plains went each its own way but eventually they clashed with each other. The few Christians of Nepal, together with the Capuchin missionaries and their mission were caught in these tumultuous times and ground between the millstones.

It so happened, in the middle of the 1700s, that a very unusual man came to the throne of the tiny kingdom of Gorkha in the mountains west of the Nepal Valley. This king's name was Prithvi-narayan Shah. There were in him rare gifts of vision, leadership and organizing ability. His vision was to conquer the small Valley kingdoms and other mountain kingdoms and form a single, strong and glorious kingdom in the mountains and out on the adjacent plains. There was in this vision a pursuit of goals which would be beneficial for all the tiny states by forming them into one larger, viable nation. The way he went about forming and administering this emerging nation, and his written instructions to his successors, reveal the high qualities of statesmanship in him. His people see him as a singular instrument of history and honor him with the titles of 'Father of the Country' and 'The Great King.'

In pursuit of this vision he was at war for 25 years. Over the years of this long campaign he captured and annexed to his kingdom all the territories surrounding the Valley. He blockaded the Valley and eventually, step by step, captured each of the city-kingdoms in turn. In the closing stages of this long war the defending King of Kathmandu called on the British in Bengal to come and help him drive away the Gorkhalis. The British sent an expedition (1767) under Captain Kinloch which was decimated by the Terai conditions and driven off by the Gorkhalis. It is the observation of historians, incidentally, that, had the British been successful on this occasion to enter Kathmandu and drive off the Gorkhalis, the kingdoms of the Valley and eventually the surrounding mountain territories would very likely have in time become princely states or districts of provinces in the British Indian Empire. It is interesting to speculate about some point among the stones, the steel and shouts of this battle in the foothills around the forts at Sindhuli and Hari-harpur where the onward course of British empire building was stemmed and turned to flow elsewhere in its inevitable course.

This British interference caused the Gorkhalis strongly to suspect the Capuchin Fathers of complicity in trying to get the British help.

There is evidence that the Fathers also wrote to the British urging their assistance to save the Valley from the Gorkhalis. This letter cannot be construed as an act of political complicity. In the Nepali culture the Brahmins were always deeply involved in political activities and the Nepalese doubtless felt that religionists of the Europeans were of the same kind. Historically, of course, they often have been. Furthermore the Gorkhalis could hardly be expected to know about all the divisions, animosities, intolerance and wars which existed between the peoples of Europe. As a matter of fact the British of the East India Company at this time were strongly forbidding the presence of any missionaries in their territories, and certainly had no dealings with Italian Catholics. The fact is that the Capuchins were not involved with the British in any way. But the suspicion of foreigners hardened more and more in these war years and developed into a policy, in King Prithvinarayan's time, of firm exclusion of Europeans and even Indians from the new, young Gorkha Kingdom.

The circumstances of the Fathers and of the Christians became extremely difficult during the final months of the conquest of the Valley cities. They were resident in all three cities and moved from here to there and back again among the sieges and battles. The new regime of the Gorkhalis took away the leased lands of the Christians so they had no way of making a living. The Fathers were under heavy suspicion and disgrace and were unable to do their usual work. They were cut off from communication and support from their colleagues in India. One Father reported that the new Gorkha Governor in Kathmandu maltreated the missionaries and tortured Christian converts. For a while King Prithvinarayan held the Fathers as hostages against a further possible attack by the British. The grants, decrees and facilities which the Mission experienced under the Malla kings were now no longer valid. Under these circumstances the Fathers came to the decision to leave the country; the Nepali Christians made the same decision. Consequently they sought permission from the new regime to evacuate to India. Permission was granted and in February 1769 a company of about 60 Christians with one Father made its way over the mountains and out onto the plains, crossing the border and coming to settle in land near the town of Bettiah about 3 days from the border. The remaining Fathers were shortly after released from hostage status and allowed to leave. The clear intention of the Christians was to again return to their native land as soon as settled conditions

of the new regime would allow. But such a return never happened. As we have already seen, Capuchin missionaries did return on several visits, some of considerable length of time, but not to stay or take up their work again.

So it was that during these years of the 18th century the people of Nepal saw the representatives of the Gospel come among them. They heard and read the message of the Gospel of God and made their response to it. The Capuchins considered their mission in Nepal largely a failure. With the passing of the years practically all the remains of their presence in the Valley disappeared: houses, gravestones, crosses and the like. It is reported that there are extant in Kathmandu manuscript copies of the Capuchin's books. From time to time people have looked for evidences of that early mission but with very little success; some day more may be found.

One thing more needs to be said about these Christian missionaries who came into Nepal. They were people, in their time and place, who belonged to the ages-old mission of God among the inhabitants of the earth. They form one of the verses in one of the many chapters in that mission about which the Apostle Mark wrote in a manuscript in the first century A.D. in these words:

> "And after this (that is, after his resurrection and ascension), Jesus himself sent out, by means of his disciples, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation."

CHAPTER 2

LANGUAGE, BOOKS, MESSAGE

When we look across the centuries of human history the large configurations which usually appear are of armies and wars that build up kingdoms and empires, then appear later to break them down and in a similar process build others. There are, of course, local variations in the rise and fall of these large movements, the colors and shapes changing among peoples, places and times. But the motion is much the same, like the forces and processes of nature: the cycles of the seasons from fresh-flowing spring, to abounding summer, to mature and fruitful autumn, and in to quiescent and then decadent winter. There is a commonness in the powerful inner forces at work in the people who bring about these motions. From within, out of the nature of man, arises the need to sustain life in a better way, a craving for the goods of the earth, an ambition for power, all strangely colored by that spiritual element which expresses itself in a myriad, religious forms.

At the time of our story the Himalayan region of Asia was

experiencing such large, fresh movements—the rising passions of men, the march and clash of armies, the fall of old kingdoms and the rise of new empires. The times were strongly and violently on the move. People in a 2000-mile wide 'fruit-basket-upset' were scrambling to find new places. The people of our story must now be followed in this tumultuous stage, pushed and pulled within the inexorable clutches of the powers that be, much like the sands of the seashore are lifted and cast hither and yon by dashing waves and rolling tides.

At the heart of the new power in the central Himalayas was King Prithvinarayan Shah. We have already seen him as the warrior with the vision to conquer and unite. By the time of his death in 1775 he had realized a large portion of his vision but not all of it. However, his successors, without pause, kept up the momentum of the expansionist vision until they had spread the new kingdom of Gorkha across 800 miles of mountains and onto a goodly portion of the adjacent plains. In this process the Gorkhalis conquered and annexed more than 80 small kingdoms. Their state policy during these 35 to 40 years (1775–1815) was to maintain a strong army and to expand territorially, especially toward the land-rich plains to the south. Surprisingly enough, during this period these 'jungly' hill people, as many thought them to be, developed and maintained probably the strongest fighting force on the whole sub-continent, that is, among the states that could oppose the on-coming British.[1]

By the turn of the century, and into the 1800s, the British were similarly expanding. By now they were letting loose the full force of an imperialist policy and by great strides were overrunning the states of the vast Gangetic plain and moving into the south-land, replacing the crumbling Mughul Empire with their own new rule. The British and the Gorkhalis watched each other warily, in their similar roles, and inevitably clashed. The clashes over territory and trade were repeated and finally resulted in war.[2] In the Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814–16 the British fumbled and failed and tried

---

[1] See L.F. Stiller, "Rise of the House of Gorkha" for a full account of this kingdom-building.

[2] It is of interest to note that local interpreters define the conquests and annexations of King Prithvinarayan Shah and the Gorkha government as a legitimate and beneficial bringing together of unfortunately separated members of a family of peoples who are in the vast majority alike in geography, history, race and culture. On the other hand, the conquests of the British are defined as illegitimate, evil, imperialistic empire building by an alien people.

again and succeeded in driving back the Nepalese. By the terms of the resulting treaty sections of Gorkha-Nepal, about one-third of its territory on the India sides, were annexed to British India. This left Nepal in approximately the size and shape that it is today. The strong and able resistance to the powerful British preserved to Nepal its independence and earned respect from its neighbor, India. The war experience also occasioned the bringing to full maturity the wall of isolation and closed-ness which Nepal had been building around itself.

The attitude of the Gorkhalis toward foreigners evolved considerably during these years of shifting thrones and boundaries. The mixed friendliness and suspicion shown earlier to the Capuchins and to others hardened more and more until it became finally a firm policy of absolute exclusion of all foreigners from the country. From seeing how the Europeans operated in Hindustan and in other parts of the world, the mountain people determined that the first defense against them was not even to allow one of them to come into their land. This policy was applied to all manner of people, to government officials, traders, scientists, professionals, missionaries. For a hundred years Indian traders were not allowed to stay overnight in the country (until after a treaty of 1923).

The policy was supported by the powerful and politically influential Brahmins who wanted to see their country and society remain pure and free from the defilements of foreign presence and ways. It was further supported by the viewpoint that if any trade was to pass through Nepal it should be handled entirely by Nepalese, thus keeping the profits within the country as well as keeping out questionable strangers. King Prithvinarayan Shah urged also the related practice of developing local cottage industries so that Nepal would not need to import outside goods, a kind of defense against foreign economic entanglements.

Beside the wall which the Nepalese built around themselves, the British from India built an added wall of a similar nature. Following the Treaty of Sagauli of 1816 the British maintained a Legation in Kathmandu and imposed certain restrictions on Nepal. For 130 years, from India and from their Legation in Kathmandu, the British controlled the foreign relations of Nepal. They developed the 'buffer regions' policy whereby British India controlled the foreign relations of certain independent territories on its frontiers and encouraged their 'quiet, closed regimes'. This policy prevailed between British India and Nepal. It was to the advantage of the

British to keep foreigners out of their neighboring states. Hence, for as long as the British ruled India no foreigner could enter Nepal without permission from the British Government in India. They restricted foreigners to such an extent that Perceval Landon in 1928 could publish in an appendix of his book the list of names of all entrants up to that date.[3]

Whereas this position of extreme isolation initially saved the independent life and character of the country, with the passing of time the walls kept out more than the possibility of foreign armies. They also excluded knowledge, growth and fraternity with the world family of nations. While the rest of the world moved on for a century and half in rapid currents of socio-economic change, Nepal was left far behind. It stood still in deepening and darkening 18th century medievalism. So extreme was the isolation that few people of the world knew the country existed and probably the majority of the people in the country hardly knew the names of their king and country. Even as late as the time of the revolution which took down the walls in the winter of 1950–51 the main way for a traveller to move around within the country or enter and exit was by foot. If Nepalese wanted to communicate with people in other lands their postage stamps would carry their letter only as far as India.

As we have noted, this excluding policy of course applied to foreign missionaries. Also the law took further steps with regard to the Christian religion. It forbade the sale or use of the Christian Bible and related literature. It went on to forbid Christian people, whether foreign, Indian, or their own nationals, to reside in the country, whatever their work or connections (excluding, of course, members of the British Legation). Nepal took radical action toward the Gospel of God and anything connected with it throughout this long period. To the Christian community and its missionary movement in the outside world, Nepal now became known as 'a closed land' on the borders of central Asia. It was so for 150 years.

This attitude of linking Christianity with colonialism and excluding it is a major part of our story. We need to look more closely into the facts of Christian missions and colonialism in the subcontinent; and with the looking draw more careful and particular, rather than generalized, judgments.

---

[3] P. Landon, "Nepal", Vol 2, page 298. Between 1881 and 1925, in the course of 44 years, about 153 persons visited Nepal, excluding official Legation members.

As the people of Gorkha-Nepal looked from their mountains onto the Indian plains in the 1700s, 1800s and 1900s they saw two things coming at them which gradually took firm shape. They were European colonialism and Christian missions. To some extent they were mixed and in other major respects they were separate and two entirely different things. The hill-people observed and experienced these institutions and evolved the judgment that they belonged together, served each other, were undesirable and therefore erected a wall against them.

They observed that in the century of Portuguese colonialism in India (1500s) these Europeans considered that it was their one and the same duty to both Christianize and rule over the people in their territories. Therefore a Christian ruler caused his subjects to convert by whatever means were effective to produce the desired ends. The age was a dark age and the religion of the Portuguese was equally dark. They helped to spread across the sub-continent the idea that someone who converts to Christianity does so because he is caused to do so—by poverty, or by pressures and inducements, or by tyrannical force of government. Hindustan found that Europeans used forceful methods just like the Muslims had done among them. To religiously convert came to have a bad meaning.

In the 1600s more Europeans came, the English, French, Dutch and Danes. The populace watched these traders develop compounds and forts which grew into towns and suburbs and sometimes with considerable populations under their rule. They observed that these Europeans brought chaplains to minister to their own people, and in some limited cases to seek to Christianize slaves, servants and people of mixed blood who lived under their jurisdiction. But they noted that there was no idea among these merchant-rulers to do Christian missionary work among the general Indian population. These European business men tried their best to maintain good relations with Indian rulers, upon whose good will their residence and work depended. They did not want any religious issues to arise which would interfere with their business.

In the 1700s there came the first Protestant missionary efforts—one or two or three—and definitely separate from the European trading stations. One of these efforts was the mission sponsored by the King of Denmark in Tranquebar, south India. Its missionaries preached, gave Christian instruction and offered material service to people, without using objectionable methods in conversion. Perhaps the greatest of Protestant missionaries in India, Christian

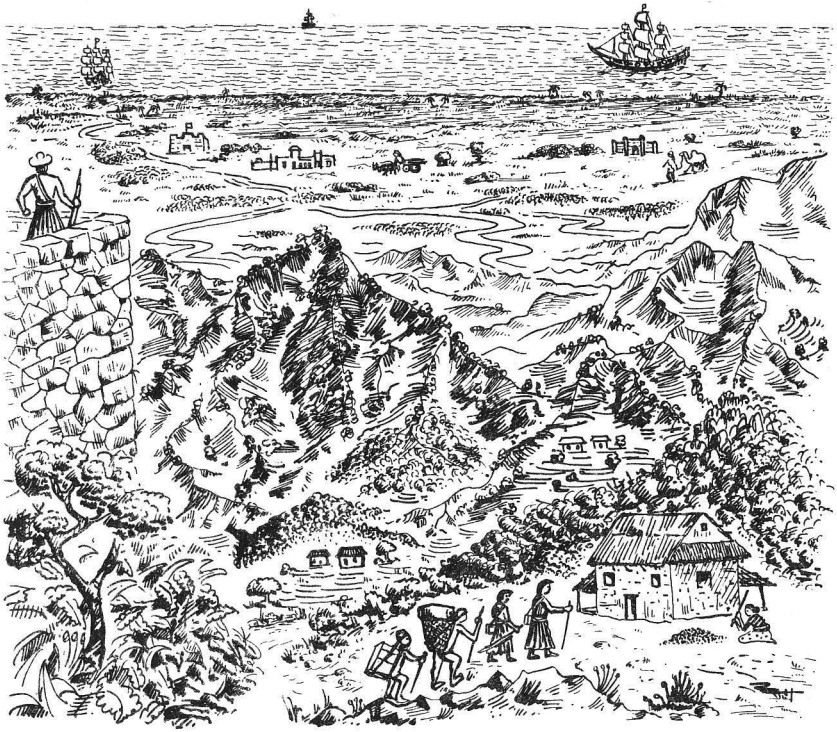
Friederich Schwartz, was of this mission and worked there for almost 50 years. His work was clean from political connections, selfish motives or coercive methods. To a remarkable degree, considering, the time lapse of 1,700 years, Schwartz worked in the motives, spirit and way of Jesus Christ in the Bible.

By the end of the 1700s the British merchants had eliminated the other Europeans and turned into a colonizing power. In its role as ruler the British East India Company took the policy of not interfering with the customs and religion of their subjects. One meaning of this was that they forbade missionaries in their territories. This attitude of hostility to Christian missions continued, though with some modifications, up until 1858 when the Company terminated and the British crown and parliament took direct rule. There are plenty of speeches, letters and documents expressing the Company's position, one of which holds, "the sending out of missionaries into our eastern possessions to be the maddest, most extravagant, most costly, most indefensible project which has ever been suggested by a moonstruck fanatic. Such a scheme is pernicious, imprudent, useless, harmful, dangerous, profitless, fantastic. It strikes against all reason and sound policy, it brings the peace and safely of our possessions into peril".[4] The fear was that the teachings and works of the missions would upset society and cause political unrest and possibly rebellion. British government in these years upheld the Hindu custom of out-casting Christian converts from home, inheritance, property, status in society and legal equality. Such converts were not allowed to take government jobs.

Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858 changed this. It granted equal opportunity to all for the practice of any religion and for holding government service. This situation fully opened the way and hundreds of missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, British and others, entered India. Government and its officials, as such, were neutral and took no part in religious affairs. The law and order which prevailed for 100 years under British rule provided a favorable situation for the conduct of missions, the conversion of people and the growth of the Christian church.

The missionaries, out of intense study of the Scriptures and debate, evolved the content of their mission and went about preaching, church building, and engaging in education and forms of social

[4]Quoted in J.S.M. Hooper, "Bible Translation in India, Pakistan and Ceylon", p. 30.



As the people of Gorkha-Nepal looked from their mountains onto the plains of Hindustan they saw coming toward them .... European colonialism and Christian missions.

service in thousands of places in the country. Christians numbered 8 million by 1950. The attitudes between Christians and the British government were 'a mixed bag', especially in the 1900s and during the growth of nationalism and the independence movement. Controversies arose over questions such as: Do missions promote western culture, and their religion as a part of it, or preach a pure Gospel of God? Are missions the left hand servant of the Government, or separate from it? Do people convert because of benefits from the rich and powerful foreigners, or because of heartfelt faith? Are Indian Christians 'running dogs of the imperialists' or true nationalists? To these questions and allegations no wholly satisfactory answer is possible. Perhaps the best reply comes by observing the missions and the Christians in the generation following independence. Free from the foreign imperialist government the true nature of Christianity can be seen more clearly. The Christian missions stayed on, their motive being to serve Christ and the well-being of India. The Indian Christians have shown themselves to be loyal, serving, mature and responsible citizens of their country. The church in India has grown to manage and carry its own work, and foreign missions relate to it as a secondary agency.

We have reviewed this development of colonialism and missions in India so that Christians, as well as the people of Nepal, might be better able to distinguish between and separate the two, and even more when looking at the missionary movement to sift out of its many parts that which is of God's pure Gospel for the good of all men.

Within this settling we have followed our story into the 1800s when Gorkha-Nepal was closed toward the Christian mission and its Gospel. Because of this condition we must take up the next details from the outside.

In the year that the Christians evacuated Nepal (1769) a young man began preaching in England. He was of the Baptist denomination of the Protestant side of the Christian church and his name was William Carey. His deep cravings for learning and his desire to improve himself for his work led him to studies of Biblical and European languages and also to reading about world geography. He became strongly awakened to the Biblical teaching that it was the duty of Christians to bring the Gospel of God to all peoples of the earth. He offered to go to India as a missionary. A society was formed which sent him. Because the British East India Company was against missionaries it refused him passage on its ships and

residence in its territories. So he sailed on a Danish ship and found temporary residence in British Calcutta, but with restrictions on missionary work. Later he moved to the Danish part of Serampore, up the river from Calcutta. Here missionaries were allowed to do their work.

William Carey, a remarkably gifted man, put in 40 years of vigorous and productive work. The group of missionaries to which he belonged did preaching and teaching but they are distinguished because of their work on the Bible. They believed that over a span of hundreds of years of history God inspired and caused certain men to write various materials and then, after the time of Christ, God caused these certain materials to be combined into one holy Bible; that in this book God speaks to men; that therefore it is the Word of God; that it contains all that is necessary for man's salvation; that it teaches the essentials about the way men should live in relation to God and to each other; that this book is God's main vehicle for conveying these truths to the people of the world. Therefore this book ought to be available to everybody to read in their mother tongue. So these earnest, dedicated missionaries applied their best gifts and energies to the work of translating, printing and distributing the Bible to the peoples of many places. By teams of workers they translated and with their press printed the Bible or its New Testament into 35 languages of the Indian sub continent. The Serampore Press also edited and published the Bible in 10 other languages of Asia.[5]

The Serampore missionaries reckoned that the language of the Gorkha-Nepal people was one of the major languages in their region

[5] These Serampore missionaries were not original in their beliefs about the Bible. This is basically the belief of the Jews about the Old Testament of the Bible, and of the Christians with regard to both the Old and New Testaments. Before the time of the printing press these holy scriptures were greatly revered, carefully copied and multiplied, read and taught in the religious services of believers and in private homes. The history of the book bears very strong witness to its nature. At some times it has been all but lost but then found and opened and spread again. All manner of men have tried to destroy it, by words and actions. It has brought enlightenment, assurance of salvation, comfort and strength to countless people of the earth. It has a universality among diverse races and cultures as no other book. Especially after the development of printing and in the work of missions in the past 300 years this book has been used in more than 1200 languages. Millions of copies are now sold world-wide every year. There is one place in the Bible which explains God's purpose through this book in a nutshell in these words, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work". II Tim. 3:16–17.

of concern. As they studied into it they probably learned that there were three main dialects of Nepali in use among the people of this kingdom. These were (1) the dialect in use in the eastern parts which may be called Nepali or Gorkhali or Parvati; this would include the Nepali spoken in the areas of the Valley and Gorkha where our story has already taken place. (2) Westward there is another dialect spoken in the areas of Pokhara, Palpa and Jumla. (3) In the far west of the country is the dialect spoken in Doti and Baitadi and may be called Dotyali.

In the time of the Serampore translators nothing had yet been printed in Nepali or in any of its dialects, except J.A. Ayton's "A Nepali Grammar" which was published in India in 1820. This was probably the first time that Nepali words had been put into print by a press. Furthermore there was little or no real literature in the Nepali language at this time. Poets and writers in the kingdom felt that a more suitable medium for writing was Sanskrit. Written matter in the Nepali dialects of those times appeared in the form of letters, government documents, land deeds, vouchers, court records, monuments, and the like. The scribes who wrote these items had their own kind of penmanship and had a peculiar kind of 'document language' which they used. This old-fashioned way of writing has continued right in to the present day and is still in fairly common use by scribes in local offices. Most modern college graduates are unable to reliably read or understand this kind of old Nepali writing.

The language was young; it had derived from Sanskrit. It used an alphabet called Deva Nagri also derived from Sanskrit. Nepali was spoken in small areas here and there in the mountains, right next to a score of other small languages of the numerous tribes in the region. It happened to be the language of the court of the king of Gorkha and when that kingdom conquered and unified the many hill states it promoted Nepali as the government and national language.

The Nepali language received a great and needed service from a patriot who lived after Carey's time, too late for him to benefit from this man's work. This Nepali was an educated Brahmin, by the name of Bhanubhakta Acharya, whose home was in Tanahu West No. 3 District. Bhanubhakta became Nepal's most famous poet; his name is known in almost every home, of literate or illiterate people. This gifted man translated one of the Hindu scriptures called 'Ramayana' into Nepali. It has been printed in

Scribes wrote in an old-fashioned kind of 'document language', used even today, but which college graduates find very difficult to read and understand.

many editions and widely read across the country. Bhanubhakta wrote several other books, but his account of how Rama went to war and won back Seeta has been most popular. This book was really the first piece of proper literature that people could read in Nepali. It did a great deal to popularize the language and also to stabilize its form. It served to build up the spirit of nationhood and furthered unity among the many diverse parts which had been drawn together into the new nation. The picture of Bhanubhakta, wearing the typical hat of that era, is recognized in every nook and cranny of the country. That Rana-era hat, because of that picture, has received the nickname of the 'Bhanubhakta hat'.

Following Bhanubhakta, other able writers did their work in Nepali and during the past 100 years the language has solidified and greatly strengthened. During this process some leading literary men came out with grammars, dictionaries and spellings which

attempted to settle on 'authorized' forms. Government Committees work on these problems too. The evolution in the details of language can be seen in such places as the writing on postage stamps published from 1884 to the present. The matter of language, with its host of details and problems, has come to adult maturity especially in recent time with the launching of the National Education System Plan far and wide across the country (1971). This huge effort is giving textbooks, examinations and materials of all kinds through one national, standardized Nepali language.

Poet Bhanubhakta translated one of the Hindu scriptures called 'Ramayana' into Nepali and thus gave the language its first book of proper literature.

But back in the Serampore days it was not so. Those men did their best to find informants through whom they could learn and try to sort out the Nepali dialects, and with whom they could translate the Bible. The early on impression of the Serampore men was that the languages of north India were largely variations and dialects of one basic language, and could be understood and handled by rather similar structures. The great root and trunk was Sanskrit. So in the early stages they worked hard and produced the Bible in Sanskrit. Then their method was to employ 'pandits' who knew Sanskrit and Nepali to translate the text into Nepali. This text the missionaries then carefully revised, studying the language with the 'pandits' meanwhile, and finally printed it in bound volumes at

their mission press. They had a planned schedule to follow in translating and printing the many different languages. In each of the languages they started with the New Testament which is at the end of the Bible but contains the life of Christ. When they finished this they printed it in one book and on the first page they printed "Vol. 5", intending to produce the beginning and longer part of the Bible later as Volumes 1 to 4.

In keeping with their plan they designed and made letter type, experimented and then made a factory which produced suitable paper from indigenous products, set type, printed and bound the books. Many people were employed in this 'Bible factory'. Their first book came out in 1801, the Bengali New Testament. By 1832, that is in about 30 years, they had produced more than 212,000 volumes in 40 different languages. Among these was the New Testament in Nepali, or what they called 'Nepala', in 1821. Some years later (1832) volumes of the New Testament came out in another dialect of Nepal called 'Palpa'.

Their idea in Serampore was to go ahead and produce Bibles in as many languages as possible, not necessarily because there was at the time any way of distribution or even demand by anyone, but on the faith that the day would come when the occasion for use would arise. In the 1820s there were very few Christians or missionaries living in some of these language areas, and especially across north India. The East India Company was doing all it could to keep them out of its territories. The result was that the work of the Serampore missionaries in much of their Bible producing was ahead of their times and consequently very little used.

The Nepali and Palpa New Testaments were in their sentence structure, grammar and some words mixed and influenced by other languages with which the translators were dealing. They were stilted and awkward and some students say not fit to be called Nepali. We know little or nothing of how much the books were used. If these two books were reprinted today they would be unusable because of the language. The Nepali language, from their time, kept on evolving; its literature has, of course, greatly expanded; it has stabilized and been regularized. And the translating of the Bible into Nepali has moved also, carried on by others, in later times and other places. The Serampore men acted in whole-hearted faith and dedication to Christ and His saving mission in the world. They exercised an age-old principle of missions: do the best you can with what you've got; leave it for those who follow to do better.

A generation later the others had come upon the scene and were setting their hand to do it better. They came into a different India. By their time the rules of the East Indian Company had gradually changed and missionaries were allowed to come into their territories. As we have earlier noted they came gradually and then in a strong current, from many lands, though mostly British, and spread across British India. Especially after the Sepoy uprising of 1857, and under the benevolent umbrella of the 'British Raj' the missionary movement swelled to a river of hundreds of missionaries, with all their organized means and ways of conducting their work, touching hundreds and hundreds of towns and villages of the sub-continent. Their efforts resulted in a large network of mission structures and churches. In a stretch of 1,900 years of Christian missionary history, this 19th century was the greatest. It is known in the books as "The Great Missionary Century". A large share of this movement went into India.

In the early 1800s the powerful East India Company, by now spread over the vast stretches of north India, and with its capital at Calcutta, was looking for a place in some cool, hilly spot where it could establish a European settlement for rest, recuperation and recreation. Its agents travelled due north into the Himalayas and found such a hill in the kingdom of Sikkim. This kingdom had been inhabited by the Lepcha race for hundreds of years, then conquered by Tibet and the people converted to Buddhism. Later still it had been over-run by the conquering Gorkhas, annexed for a few years, and then given up. The Sikkim territory is akin to Nepal and is the continuation of the Himalayan mountains to the East.

One of the early British agents to travel in these Sikkim mountains has left his ecstatic feelings in eloquent words in a letter to a friend. To read extracts from it will give us an introduction to the roots and background of the area where much of our continuing story takes place. He writes:

> "We may take a glance at the people and country of the Lepchas, and the state in which I found them (early 1830s?). They appeared in the most simple, primitive state, living in the midst of the vast, wild, magnificent forests, old as the hills themselves, and each family residing by itself, having no villages or communities, and but little intercourse with each other; thus they dwelt in pretty cottages, around which they cultivated their plot of ground, which afforded them rice—their staple food; —grain of different sorts; cotton, from which they spun their cloth; seeds from which they pressed their oil, etc. From the forests

they obtained fruits of numerous descriptions, edible and otherwise useful; thus all their wants were supplied. They knew no care, and but little sorrow, cheerful as the birds, and sturdy as the trees around them, they roamed through the forests inhaling health. They understood little about medicines and had not much use for them, sickness being almost unknown among them, but they possess some very efficacious roots, etc., with which I believe Europeans are unacquainted. Their religion was particularly simple; they believed in one Good Spirit, and innumerable evil spirits; to the former they conceived their worship was due, and to Him they offered their prayers and thanksgivings; the latter they considered prowled about, and haunted every spot; to them they attributed whatever sickness or misfortune befell, therefore deemed it requisite to propitiate them, which they did by offerings of rice, etc. The first fruits of the season they always offered to the Good Spirit".

In an unpublished article the same writer gives his views and opinions about the area in these words:[6]

"Sikkim, after the Nepalese had been driven out, ought to have been restored to its original and rightful owners, the Lepchas. Their sway and natural innocence and purity ought to have been beneficently upheld. The magnificent forests of Magnolia, Rhodendrons, and rare and valuable trees ought to have been carefully guarded. For they, —with mountains, compared with whose high altitude the Alps shrink into insignificance, on whose lofty summits, towering above, in everlasting snow, no human foot has ever tread, their dazzling whiteness and unapproachable exhaltation, sublimely representing the purity and power of the Omnipotent, —all formed a scene unrivalled in grandeur; a scene, which a traveller, who had visited all parts of the world, on arriving in Dorjeeling and viewing, in rapture exclaimed, in the words of Simeon of old, 'now let me die in peace, for I have seen the Glory of the Lord'. Dorjeeling, truly was a very garden of Eden, a spot which God has blessed with transcendent loveliness, and such ought to have been most religiously preserved from the desecrating hand of man. It was a special spot, where the careworn, and those weary with the hollowness and vanities of the world, might have turned to, and returned refreshed and invigorated, ennobled, to the true duties of life; a spot, on beholding which, the haughty and discontented alike, would have comprehended their own littleness and unworthiness, and would have bowed down in homage to, and adoration of, the Almighty Creator."

---

[6]The author of this letter and article is unknown. His article was written in 1875 but his experience in the area reaches back 30 years before that. A copy of his materials are in the possession of the author.

The Court of Directors of the Company appreciated the advantages of such a position and instructed that overtures should be made to the Sikkim ruler for the cession of the hill of Darjeeling. In due course the Rajah of Sikkim presented the southern mountains of his kingdom as an unconditional present to the East India Company out of his friendship to the Governor General. It became known as Darjeeling District. Without delay the Company appointed a Superintendent of the District and moves were made for the construction of roads, the building of the hill-station and the development of the district. Peoples from any direction were encouraged to enter the district to take up labor in construction works and to exploit the resources. They came in droves from eastern Nepal and other parts as well. Virgin forests were cut, burned and cleared, cultivation begun, roads constructed, towns and villages built. It was found that the slopes of the Darjeeling hills were ideal for raising tea plants. Laws were enacted for the obtaining of land; the rush was on; they say it grew to a passion, a mania, which infected all classes. More great and ancient forests were destroyed and tea plantations were developed on the mountain sides. Companies were formed, lands exchanged hands at exorbitant prices, the money not flowing into Government coffers but into the pockets of speculators who retired with large fortunes. Recruiters went into the eastern mountains of Nepal and called out hundreds and hundreds of villagers who migrated into the plantations to work the plants and pluck the tea. The word spread to Kathmandu and people left house and family to seek their fortune in this new neighboring land. The dominant population was soon Nepali, a kind of offshoot of the mother country in a foreign land. In time the sizable Nepali community of the district was recognized as a minority community in the country and received certain rights and privileges. By now it has become fully integrated into the life and politics of India.

The people who came after the Serampore missionaries to work another stage on the Nepali Bible were British 'padres' of the Church of England. They went into this attractive 'hill of Darjeeling' to work mainly as chaplains among the British community working on tea plantations, in business and in government service. They lived among a predominantly Nepali population and took an interest in sharing the Gospel of God among them. We do not know whether or not they used the Serampore New Testament. In any case one of their number, Rev. W. Start, made new translations of LUKE's

Gospel and of the book of ACTS in Nepali and these portions were published in 1850 and 1852. Ten years later another member of their church, Rev. C.G. Niebel, revised these two books and they were again printed in modest editions.[7]

Next, strong and continuing work on the Nepali Bible was to come from another source, the Church of Scotland. That Church had a missionary at Gaya in Bihar who proposed moving up to Darjeeling and opening new work in preaching and education in the vernacular languages. His church backed this Rev. William Macfarlane and sent him in 1870 to this new place and work, with others who followed. Very early on they revised the Nepali LUKE and ACTS and used these new small books in their work. Then missionary A. Turnbull and a Nepali convert, who had come as a boy from Kathmandu to Darjeeling, by the name of Ganga Prasad Pradhan, worked together on the Nepali New Testament. When it was printed by the Bible Society in Calcutta it was put into immediate use. These two men pressed on with the work of translating the Old Testament, Turnbull being replaced by Rev. R. Kilgour, and under steady, disciplined work, over a span of 15 to 20 years, they sent their manuscripts to the Society. As different portions came to hand they were published, one after the other, and when the whole was finished it was finally published in one volume in 1915.

This date is a high point in the publication of the Bible in Nepali. It had been a long, hard climb over a span of half a century to reach this point. The job was passed on from one to another on up the hill. Padre G.P. Pradhan carried on the load for the longest stretch of years. The Bible is a very large book, divided first into the two parts of the Old and New Testaments. They in turn are made up of 39 and 27 smaller 'books', some only short letters and other quite long histories, collections of songs, or religious exposition. The whole, in the two Nepali volumes, contains more than 2,000 pages. Christians commonly consider the most strategic portions of the Bible to be the four gospels that were written by disciples to tell about the life, teachings and work of Jesus Christ. So when one

[7]The Anglican Church (Church of England) continued for more than 100 years in the district, ministering primarily to the Anglican community. Its main church, St. Andrew's of Darjeeling, was first built in 1843, destroyed by lightning and built again in 1873. The Anglicans have had small chapels in the district. An important institution of the church is St. Paul's School, established first in Calcutta in 1845 and moved to Darjeeling mountain top in 1860. A missionary effort of the local church has been directed toward Nepal since 1957 with a medical-evangelistic post on the east border.

portion only can be put into a new language for new people it is usually thought best to publish one of these Gospels.

During these 50 years while the Bible was slowly taking shape in Nepali, portions were published in small, handy and cheap books. There were thousands, very likely well over 100,000, small portions of the Bible printed in these times. They were used among the growing numbers of Nepali Christians, particularly in Darjeeling District, and then distributed widely among Nepalese residents in India and those travelling in and out of Nepal at a score of places along the border. All through the years numerous and continuing efforts were made to share the Gospel of God with the people of Nepal. They lived behind their closed gates and walls and steadfastly resisted this message, no matter how it was offered or by whom. They wanted nothing to do with this "European religion".

A gentleman of Leeds, England, made one of the attempts in 1887. He wrote to the Scottish missionaries in Darjeeling with a proposal which we can quote from his letter:

> "My dear Sir, ... What I have on my heart is particularly to offer John's Gospel, and Luke's Gospel, with the Acts, in print, to the Nepaulese, in their own principal towns throughout the country. Could you after prayer and the realization of God's approval—if you joyfully find it your experience—write to the proper authority of the capital—Catmandoo, I think it is named—and obtain leave for a properly qualified person, a holy man, to visit all the principal places of Nepaul, and (to ensure attention) sell the said Scriptures, and perhaps Genesis? If you do thus arrange with a man truly happy and earnest to go on such a blessed work—he having the felt and filial prayers of the real Christians with you while he is away—how much money should I send you? ..."[8]

Missionary Turnbull from Darjeeling took up this request and wrote two letters, one to the British Resident at the Legation in Kathmandu and the other to the Private Secretary of the Prime Minister of Nepal, making the gentleman of Leeds' request made known to them. The British Resident in his reply opined that Nepal, being a strictly Hindu state, would not comply with such a request and declined to forward the matter to the Durbar, instead advising Mr Turnbull to make the request direct himself to the Government of Nepal. In due course the reply came from the Government and contained the following message:

[8]This correspondence is recorded in "Mission Local Supplement", Oct. 1887, of the Church of Scotland Mission.

"Nepal, 11th September 1887. Sir, —In reply to your letter of the 25th ultimo, I am indeed sorry to state that the permission asked for therein for selling the Christian Shastra, being against our Hindu religion, as a matter of course would not be granted by the Nepal government. Consequently, I am not in a position to move in the matter. I have etc., (Sd.) Bulban Singh, Secretary to the Government of Nepal."[8]

Another instance of trying to bring the Bible to Nepal occurred in 1908 and illustrates the policy of the Government. A colporteur of India passed the required medical examination, obtained a passport and proceeded to Nepal. He took with him 700–800 Scripture books in Nepali and Hindi. At the customs post he paid the octroi of one pice per book. Travelling by cart and 'dandy' he proceeded across the plains and via Bhimphedi up over the mountains. Once in the capital city he sought out and rented a shop from a Muslim and spread out his books for sale. In the first few days there was little business. In Nepal of those days there were not many people who were able to read. Besides tending the shop he also moved out into the street and offered his books to passersby and made sales. He was visited in his shop by Nepali men and women of the upper classes who made book purchases.

It happened one evening that a noble-woman was passing the stall and saw a young man of an aristocratic family reading a book which was Genesis of the Old Testament. The lady called the young man to her and examined the book. She wanted the book so paid the young man for it and told him to go and buy another for himself. He bought LUKE's Gospel.

In this way this colporteur sold about half his stocks, experiencing friendliness and helpfulness from the people around him. One day he was summoned before the authorities and was questioned about his person, his connections and his books. Learning that he was a Christian and that he was selling the Christian scriptures he was ordered to sell no more books and to leave the country. He was treated kindly but firmly. So he packed up his remaining books and made his way out again to India.

Around the world, throughout the modern missionary movement of the 1800s and the 1900s, the usual pattern has been that Bible Societies have undertaken the specialized job of translating and publishing the Bible in different languages and making the books available to missions and churches and the public for their use. Certainly there have been instances of individuals and missions doing translation and publication work on their own, for one

reason or another. But the great bulk of the work has been done by the Societies and this has been very beneficial and desirable.

Translating and publishing the Bible into Nepali didn't start with the Bible Society, as we have seen, but the job was soon taken up by it after the Society came into existence and then was carried by the Society up to the present time. In the years after the publication of the whole Bible in 1915 the Society made slight revisions and printed new editions as there was need by the missions and churches which used the books.

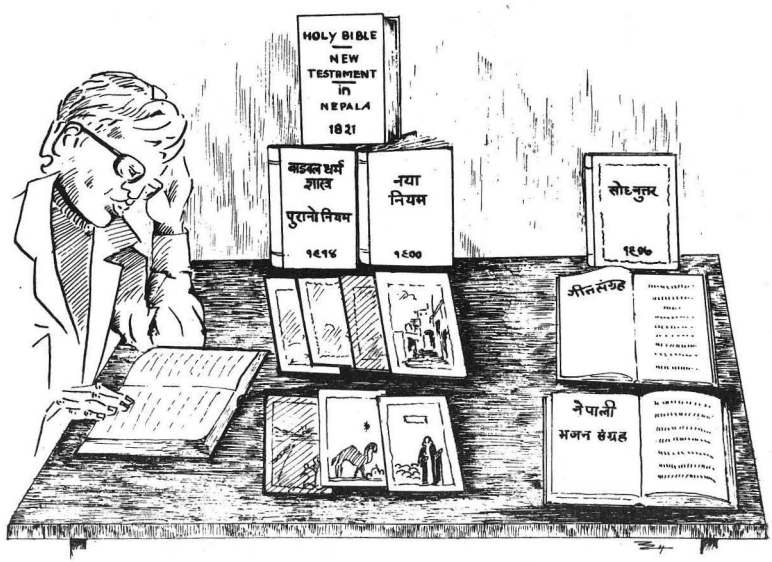
In the 1940s and '50s complaints were growing that the Bible was written in too old-fashioned Nepali and there were requests that a new translation be made in more suitable language. At least two groups published their own translations of MARK and of JOHN to show what could be done and to push for official revision work.[9] The Bible Society's Auxiliary in Calcutta moved in this regard and appointed a revision committee to go to work, this time drawing on personnel also from inside Nepal. Out of this effort the revised New Testament with Psalms was published in 1963. The revision committee continued with its work and as more portions of the Old Testament were completed they were published in small books. Finally the whole of the revised Bible, both Testaments, was completed and printed in one volume in the late summer of 1977. The Old Testament of 1915 had been out of print and not obtainable for a generation so this newly revised one-volume Bible has been an event of joy in Christian circles.

In these same recent years several people have put their hearts and hands to work on the Bible. One Nepali gentleman has put a portion of the Bible into the traditional poetic-religious form of verse for reciting orally. This has been quite effective. Another Nepali citizen translated and published one of the Gospels in the old Newari language of the Nepal Valley, one of the largest written languages in the country. The Bible Society published this JOHN in Newari in 1970 under the title "The Way of Life". Others have had a strong 'feel' for the village and less educated people and for school children. So they have written and published a simple 'villagey' Nepali of LUKE and ACTS, in some editions with the English on one side for the benefit of students learning that language. For many years the Scripture Gift Mission has published selected

[9]The World Mission Prayer League (USA) published the Gospel of Mark in Nepali in 1947. The India Bible Christian Council published the Gospel of John in 1954.

Verses from the Bible on particular themes and made these available in large numbers for free distribution.

The task of putting a book like the Bible into the language of a country, for example Nepal, is very difficult. The book has a specialized subject and has a very wide and varied reading public. It should be read by children, at least parts of it. It should be read by barely literate people, by some who use Nepali as their second language, by the general public and also by educated and professional people. That's a very wide span. It is an intricate problem, calling for constant care and improvement, so that the Book will be kept in a form which will fulfil its purpose.



The task of putting a book like the Bible into the Nepali language is an intricate and very difficult task. It may well be asked: "Why do people do this?"

To bring the story of the Nepali Bible right up to date at our time of writing (1977) we must relate that there are groups now preparing and publishing four different translations of the Bible in Nepali. The Catholics in Darjeeling have a New Testament for sale and the Old Testament is in the process of publication. The Bible Society has its recently published one-volume Bible in its revised version in standard form. The Society is at the same time working on a

'common language' Bible, in somewhat more every-day speech, and a few portions of this translation have been published. Then recently the 'Living Bible' organization has begun work to translate and publish this version. And this is certainly not the end. The work will go on, generation after generation, trying to offer the Bible in current speech and as intelligible as possible.

Some people, and among them Nepalese, may rightly ask: What is the meaning of all this? Why do people put so much attention and work into a strange book for strange people? To those who revere the book the meaning is rather simple and straightforward. It means that Christians consider the Bible to have been brought into existence by God as a vehicle through which He has spoken to all peoples of the world and that God wants this message to be heard by all. The next question then is: What is so critical about what God says to mankind in this book? What is its content that it has to be treated like this? The Bible is a large book, with 2,044 pages in the Nepali text. It is not always easy to read and summarize such a large book with widely varied content. Thoughtful readers find strands and morsels which speak to them personally, but also find in common the large and main messages. Here is what one leading student of the Bible and participant in the Christian mission has written in trying to give in succinct form the pertinent message of the book:

> Man is depraved and lost.
> Man is created for fellowship with God.
> God therefore seeks to save man and enable him to live in the regenerate state as the child of God.
> God accomplished this saving work through Jesus Christ.
> God, in Christ, meant the new Christian community to be a fellowship of believers rooted in God and in his divine redemptive order and therefore committed to the service and the salvation of the world. [10]

The universal testimony of Christians through the centuries, from all races and languages and places, is that the basic source of their religious experience is what they have found in this book. The Bible revealed God to them. It spoke God's Law to them. In

[10]Taken from the writing of Hendrik Kraemer by Rolf A. Syrdal in "To The End of The Earth", pages viii and ix.

the book they learned about God's climactic act in the life and work of Jesus Christ for their salvation.

We may well wonder why God has chosen such a method to convey his message through the ages to men. To carry it in a book, which is written and translated and printed by men, makes it highly vulnerable to interference by the weaknesses and prejudices of men. And indeed, while men have been, in God's order, the instruments in making and bearing the book, they have at times also been deformers and be-clouders of the book. Herein lies a miracle. Somehow, in and around and through the book, *God does meet and speak to men* in their places and times, and they meet God.

This is the meaning of people preparing the Bible in the Nepali language and trying to share it with Nepalese—that God may meet and speak to them and they may meet God.

CHAPTER 3

PEOPLE WHO SEEK, FIND, TELL

During the decades of the Gorkha-Nepalese expansion there had been set loose fresh springs of energy and creativeness among the mountain people. But when wars and resulting treaties blocked the possibility for the further spread of the nation in any direction, Nepal erected its excluding walls and turned in on itself. The leading families and followers went through a generation or two of ingrown frustration, conflict and jockeying for position and power. A kind of settledness came when the throne turned over the authority for governing the country to a Prime Minister and his line in perpetuity.[1] Thus began a stretch of 105 years, under the rule of the Rana family, to which history has given the name of the Rana Regime (1846–1951).

During this century the lamps of life gradually burned low and dim over the mountains and valley of Nepal. A kind of 'sleep of night' set in. Those in authority watched carefully to see that no 'lights' were lit which might upset the establishment or bring change

Hinduism rules over the country, personified in the national deity, Pashupati, uniquely illustrated in this postage stamp of Nepal.

to the status quo. Resources were few; wealth was confined to the people in power; and those in power drew to themselves whatever they could from the meager resources of the land. Five to six million people were largely shut off from contact with the rest of the world. Over them ruled a military government in which the greatest expense was for the maintenance of the army. And over the whole ruled Hinduism. Religious and civil laws were intertwined. Nepal was an orthodox Hindu state, the last stronghold of unadulterated Hinduism in the sub-continent. The peasant population continued in its primitive, hand-to-mouth existence. People in business could hardly get ahead; there was not much moving. The neighboring countries of Asia were caught up in the rapid and radical revolution in technology, education and socio-economic change that was sweeping through the earth. About the only benefits

[1]There are often two or more interpretations of events in history. Some say that Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana, and hence the Ranas, usurped power by force. Other factors may have been involved but Jung Bahadur Rana received his position and power legally by written and sealed decisions of the legitimate king, especially in the edict of 6 August 1856.

that came to the people of Nepal during this period were some steel suspension bridges, some town water pipes and various facilities for the aristocracy. A kind of stagnation settled across the kingdom.

Within the broad, general scene there did come a kind of development for the aristocracy. The first of the nine Prime Ministers, Jung Bahadur Rana, was unusually vigorous in mind and deed. He 'ruled' for about 30 years while the king 'reigned' with his title in the seclusion of his palace. The Prime Minister, with his family members, developed a tight and strong system of administration, ruling largely through the army. Officers of the army were often officers of the government as well. Jung Bahadur broke strong traditions and visited overseas in Great Britain, France and Egypt (1850). What his party saw in those lands of material development and strength opened their minds to a flood of ideas. It converted Jung Bahadur to be pro-British and his people grew in that attitude in the generations that followed.

During this Rana century the Nepal Government offered and sent its own troops to help the British in at least three wars in which they were involved. In addition, from as early as the Treaty of Sugauli of 1816, arrangements were made for the British to recruit tens of thousands of Gorkhalis of the 'fighting tribes' to serve as mercenary volunteers in the British Indian army. These excellent soldiers served in British colonial cantonments in different parts of Asia and fought in various fronts in several wars. They earned a worldwide reputation and fame as the 'brave Gorkhas'. During this period of time several hundred thousand Gorkhas served the British in this way.[2]

The aristocracy already had some of the 'dressings' of modern life, but visits overseas, especially to Britain, opened the gates of desire for just about everything imaginable. Architects and engineers were employed to build a new kind of palace, in fact dozens of them,

[2] At the peak of the British-India days the famous 'Gurkha Brigade' (spelling used in the British army) consisted of ten regiments of two battalions each, though the battalions in World War II increased to forty-five. A battalion contained close to a thousand men. The first three regiments were formed in 1815 and the others came into being by 1902. At the time of Indian independence the British kept four regiments and moved them elsewhere, while India kept the others in its army. Those who have worked closely with them described the Gurkhas as close to being the ideal or perfect soldier. Their body is short, stocky, muscular and wiry. They are in disposition straight-forward, honest, natural, confident, merry, absolutely loyal, fearless and taking to discipline and order. They do not go into battle wildly but with grim, quiet purposefulness, businesslike. When the enemy is within striking distance they prefer to go in with the '*khukuri*'.

great and small, built in the style of those in Europe, with formal gardens, tea-house, statuary and fountains. Plumbers installed sinks, bathtubs and running water. Two hydro-electric plants were installed on the edge of the Valley which supplied lights to the palaces and important places. Artists decorated the walls with paintings. Reception halls glittered with life-size mirrors and portraits, heavy drapes and huge chandeliers. Rooms were furnished with carved and cushioned furniture, pianos, great rugs, stuffed animals and nick-knacks from many countries. There were carriages, parties, pomp and pleasure and striving to 'do as the Joneses do'.

Prime Minister Jung Bahadur, to test a horse he wanted to buy, jumped it over a sword held by his brother, to the astonishment of onlookers in Piccadilly, London, in 1950.

These foreign goods came in packing boxes by ships to the docks of India and from there by train overland to the border. Within Nepal the transportation across the plains section was by bullock-carts, elephant-back and by porters to the foot of the mountains. From there everything had to be carried by men over the mountain road into the capital valley. In 1927 a narrow-gauge railway and a motor road were completed across the plains-part of Nepal and these facilities greatly eased this kind of transport at least up to the

foot of the mountains. About this time the aristocracy began to import motor cars and these too had to be strapped to platforms and poles and carried over the mountain road by numerous men. They gradually replaced horse-drawn carriages in use by the aristocracy and officials between their palaces.

Chiefly for the functions of government, certain service facilities were built. A postal service, for use by the public also, was begun and letters were carried by runners between scattered post offices in the mountains and down to India. A thin telegraph system was strung to join some major points. The money system was improved. A few schools were opened for the benefit of the privileged classes. What came to be known as modern medicine remained little known. The main foot-road over the mountains from India was improved but it remained a firm policy that no motor road should be built into the capital; this was an application of the policy of excluding the outside world.

These improvements were largely reserved for the ruling classes. They developed their manner of life as little replicas of Europe, and they lit their own kind of glittering lights. The large body of the hill people lived on in unchanging primitive dimness. They exchanged produce and hand-products more by barter than by cash. Landlordism with tenant farmers and also a form of slavery were in practice.

A commentary on the state of the kingdom can be found among the tens of thousands of Gorkha soldiers who served many years outside Nepal and then retired back into their village homes. While outside they saw much of the progress and development in India and elsewhere, learned to read and write, learned skills of many kinds and developed disciplines and ideas; but when they returned to their homes and villages they were able to do little or nothing in basic development in their communities. Entrenched interests around them pretty well squelched such possibilities. They brought home their tin trunks of 'goodies' from the outside world to their family members, built a new house with sometimes a tin roof and that was about the end of it. The huge reservoir of the ideas, experiences and skills of these tens of thousands of respected citizens in their home villages largely sank into the stagnant society. But this is not the whole picture. The other large part is that numerous people of Nepal did make progress and did get into the current of world development. But not in Nepal. They went outside and found it in India.

During the century and a half when the curtains were down and Nepal was closed there was a slow but steady seepage of people out into British Indian territories. Some went into big cities like Gorakhpur, Patna, Benares, Calcutta, Dehra Dun and even to Delhi and Bombay. But the majority of them moved eastward into country similar to their homeland. They went into Sikkim, Darjeeling District, the Duars and Bhutan. Others went still further into the Shillong hills and other parts of Assam and even as far as NEFA and Burma.

When growing children in village farms became too many to feed, a young son would leave home and head for India. Later he might come home to bring a wife or others with him out to the place he had found. Information filtered back to the home places; more would leave. In the new lands they helped each other to get started and to make a new living. The hill people who seeped out were a tough and hardy mountain 'breed'; hard-working; open, happy and uninhibited; good at the pioneer life with an axe and kettle. They could easily build a simple shelter, clear land, till it by hand and eke out a living, until little by little they rounded out a better farm or found another means of livelihood. It was better than back in their mountains; opportunities were better. There was a saying that the Gorkhalis could make a living on the upper side or the lower side of the road, it did not matter. They were that kind; they could make a 'go' of it anywhere. As we saw in the last chapter, thousands of this kind of hill-people migrated into Darjeeling District and found their living in the tea gardens and growing city life.

They found another thing that they could not find at home. They found a chance to get 'service jobs', that is, salaried employment with fixed hours, pay, with benefits and facilities. These were mostly low-level jobs, often for illiterates, but enough to make a living; and if others pitched in and helped with this and that, and often with a second job, a whole family could keep going. Then there were usually pick-up jobs for those who were willing to work: coolie work, wood cutting pounding stone, making roads, unskilled hands in construction. They were a friendly people and generally easy to get on with and neighbors liked them. They usually kept their old hill-country dress; the women did not have the covered-up, secluded customs of plains women. You could spot the Gorkhas readily on the country road, in the bazaar or on the railway platforms.

There was leakage from the towns too. Things were at a standstill in the towns. Three sons of one shopkeeper did not have a chance to start business of their own and they were not needed at the home store. Government was not engaged in planned development works and service programs which could require and absorb numbers of new 'government servants'. There was little for which ordinary people could get educated. Even at the upper levels of society there were getting to be too many people and not enough to do.

Perhaps the greatest drain was by men, and then their families, who went into army service in British India. Among these tens of thousands, who had experienced the outside world with cash pay and good living, many did not want to return to their confined and restricted mountain life. They stayed in India, growing into large settlements in several parts of north India, and helping to swell the numbers of Nepalese in India to over 3 million by the time the country opened.

It was in these times, in the earlier days of the Rana regime (about 1870) that a certain government servant worked in the king's palace at Hanuman Dhoka and had his home in Thamel Tole, Kathmandu. Upon the death of his wife, the husband and father made the radical decision to leave Nepal and seek a new life off to the east in Darjeeling, India. After quitting his job and closing his affairs the father took his 11-year old son and started out over the Main Road into the eastern hills. This was a strange new world to them. They were town-bred Newars, at home among the tight streets and bazaars of Kathmandu. Now they left the broad valley behind and rose to the ridge of mountains surrounding it. Crossing through the pass they found themselves looking at eye level across an unbelievable jumble of mountains, stretching off without end to the distant hazy horizon. Those who have been at sea have likened this view to that of the great swells and tossing waves of the ocean. The travellers stood aghast and wondered why they had left their home and what would happen to them if they took the plunge into that sea of mountains. But plunge they did and three weeks later they came out at the other end, their city muscles hardened and their stomachs adjusted to mountain fare.

Their plunge sent them down 3,000 feet into a narrow valley, where they crossed a river and then climbed a similar mountain side to the top of the ridge, and then down again. This they repeated: down a mountain and across a river, up and over a ridge and down

and across another river, and up and over again and down. Sometimes the road wound along a ridge top for some miles or followed one of the streams for a good stretch. But however it was done the mountains had to be climbed and the streams had to be crossed. This is the solid stuff of which Nepal is made, hundreds of miles of it. There were plenty of new experiences for these travellers. The cool breezes refreshed them on the mountain tops, with a view of the unending line of snowy Himals of their left. They drank of beautifully clean and cold springs of water on the mountain sides, waded through small streams, forded thigh-deep in rushing rivers while holding arms with other travellers, or rode dug-out log canoes across deeper rivers. As night approached they sought out some village or farm house where they could get a meal and a place to sleep. Hiking along through the day they kept an eye open for any fruit or an egg that they might be able to buy but these extras were rare. The road led through 6 administrative districts and brought them into the chief town of each district. They spent a little more time in these places, to look around, to learn something, and to glean news. They found in each a miniature of the capital city: the Governor's palace, administrative offices, a cantonment of soldiers, the better buildings in Newari form of architecture, and a tight street of shops.

There was not much change in the manner of life and of making a living on the mountain sides and in the valleys, but there was some change among the people. They found themselves among Tamangs, and then among Rais, and then among Limbus. They were near the Sherpas and met a few. They saw some who were unmistakably Brahmins. The rest of the people seemed to be a peculiar kind of Hindu, more taken with the ancient forms of animism of their ancestors than with the veneer of Hinduism which was gradually being spread over them.

One day the atmosphere changed, their step quickened with anticipation, and coming up the hill they stepped onto the border at a small village called Simana. They were in British India. A shopkeeper called them to stop and rest and have a meal. While they did this they learned that the road was mostly level and less than a day into Darjeeling. When they reached the big city, time and again they just stopped and looked. Everywhere was activity. People were working at building roads, constructing buildings, laying water systems, moving things. There were eating places, shops, important people, English men and women, and so many things they had never seen before.

Enquiring and feeling his way, being intelligent and active, the father found a place to live in Bhutia Basti. In time he was instrumental in establishing a small village at the tail end of Bhutia Basti, toward Lebong, which is still known as Newar Gaon. In time he married again and later took employment as a contractor at Ging Tea Estate. With his family he moved to live on the Estate and here children were born to them. Throughout the district things were on the move. For anyone with open eyes and ready hands there was plenty to see, to do, to make. For the office worker from Hanuman Dhoka the lights of his new world were brightly shining.

The lad who had come out of the old-country was active and precocious, picking up ideas and knowledge every day. Soon people of a foreign Christian mission opened a school near where he lived and he enrolled, giving his name as Ganga Prasad Pradhan. This name was to become famous through Darjeeling District and into literary circles in Nepal and even overseas. But now he was only a young lad attending a simple village school. To call it 'a simple village school' was really to do it an injustice. It was in fact the most valuable, single, common possession of the village. If we recall that this was a hundred years ago and consider something of the thinking and conditions of those times we can begin to appreciate the value of this simple school. Father Pradhan and son Ganga Prasad had travelled through 200 miles of eastern Nepal and very likely not seen a single 'village school'. The idea of modern-type schools to educate the general public was not yet an idea in the minds of leadership in Nepal. It was an anti-establishment idea. There were here and there, in communities of sufficient Brahmin population, small Sanskrit schools where especially Brahmin boys were taught the rudiments of their priestly language and the minimum needs for conducting the village paper business. The aristocracy of the country arranged for educating their own youth, either in Nepal or outside in India. But there was no idea in those days of general public education.

India was another story. It was booming. There was a 'madness on' to get education. The Christian missions across the sub-continent were taking the lead and had opened schools by the hundreds: from low to high, with colleges, for boys and girls, men and women, general and professional. The Church of Scotland Mission which had gone into Darjeeling District in 1870 put very strong emphasis on educational work. The missionaries, together with national Christians, worked hard and far to spread education in the area.

In 30 years they had established 100 schools throughout the district together with Teacher Training Schools and a college. By the time that Ganga Prasad entered a mission primary school the idea of missions engaging in educational work had become quite generally accepted as a proper part of the aims of missionary work. But 50 or more years earlier the philosophy or theology of Christian missions did not include this idea. In those earlier days missionary work meant only evangelistic preaching, instruction of converts and church development. Missionaries and their managing boards had long, hard discussions over the question of whether or not they should engage in school work for the general public.

Those who opened the first schools had their critics and opponents. But gradually the idea took hold and soon education work became an accepted and even expected part of the total missionary endeavor. The thinking on this subject followed along several interwoven lines. Christian people and their children, so ran the thinking, should not be illiterate and ignorant. At the very least they should be able to read the Bible and the song-book and other Christian literature so as to nourish their faith and grow in Christian life. Many converts came from poor and ignorant members of society; these should be helped to be educated, to learn new things, get better jobs and make a better living. Further, God does not want people of the earth to be ignorant and mentally half-asleep; He wants people to be knowledgeable, learning, mentally active and creative; God is such a Being and He has created mankind in his own image; knowledge should be shared, and the opportunity to learn and grow mentally should be given to all people. Hence schools should be opened. Missions carried this line of thinking and pushed it hard. Gradually governments awakened to the idea that they had a responsibility for educating their citizenry until nowadays it is widely held as a basic duty of government. Christian missions also saw school as a place and means for teaching Christianity; they placed religion as a fixed subject in the curriculum and schedule and Christian and non-Christian students received teaching in the Bible. To many in the missionary movement the fact of the Christian content in schools and the use of school situations for evangelism became their rationale and justification for the use of mission money and personnel in educational work. Over the generations of history the experience of many has been that the living and inspiring Spirit of God has prompted and guided them to undertake ever changing and fresh works of concern and

sharing among their fellow men in the common struggle of humanity. This human concern has found expression in many, many forms of sharing knowledge and educating one another.

In the schools of the mission in Darjeeling District, as in the school where Ganga Prasad studied, one of the books placed in the hands of students was a small, thin book of 30 pages, bound with a thread and having a thin-papered red cover held on with glue. The name of this book was 'School Questions and Answers'. From this book Ganga Prasad and other students read their first lessons in Christian teachings. They slowly worked their way through 64 questions with the answers, among which were these:

Q: Who created the heavens and the earth?
A: God created the heavens and the earth and everything that is on it.
Q: What is God?
A: God is a spirit who is eternal and almighty, holy, righteous, all-knowing, all-merciful and all-loving.
Q: How do we learn about God?
A: We learn about God from our own reason, from his wonderful works of nature, and from the old and new testaments of God's Holy Book.

And following with many questions such as these:

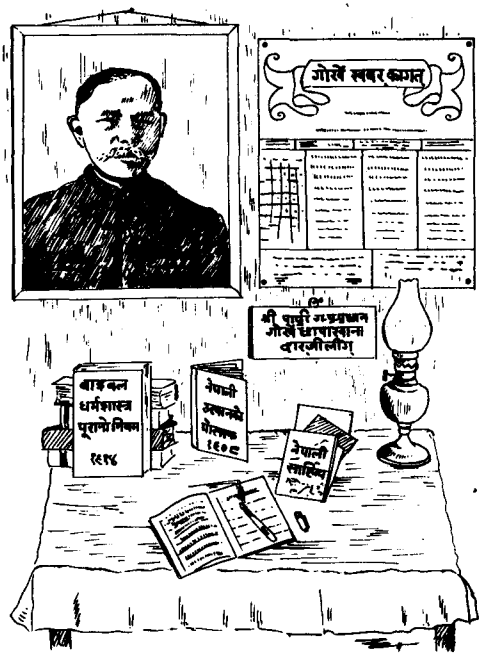
Q: How does God show his love to us?
Q: Who is God's Son?
Q: How did the Lord Jesus Christ become our Saviour?
Q: Why is it necessary that we should be saved?
Q: What is the thing called sin?
Q: What does God do to those who repent and believe?
Q: What is a sacrament?
Q: What is prayer?
Q: What are the ten commandments?
Q: What is our duty toward the church?
Q: What is our duty toward the country?
Q: What should be our chief concern in this life?
Q: What hope do God's people have for the life hereafter?

By the time Ganga Prasad was reading in upper classes the things about God were becoming alive in his mind and he thought seriously about sin and salvation. He got the little Bible book called 'The Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke' and read carefully in it. He started to pray to God and felt that God was close

to him. Later he began to talk to missionary Macfarlane and to read certain important places in the books by Luke and Mark which told him about his salvation by God. As his interest and faith in Christ grew he told his father about these new things but his father strictly forbid him to follow them or become a Christian. As Ganga was coming into young manhood his father died. This blow sent him more strongly into a consideration of the things of religion and he determined that now he could not only read and pray and learn but that he could act and become a follower of Jesus Christ his Saviour. So he asked about how to become a Christian and, following advice from friends, he went away from the strict and forbidding environment of his home to Gaya, Bihar. There, among a group of Christians, he spoke about his faith in Christ and desire to be a disciple and was baptized. Thus he became a Christian and a member of the Christian church.

Back in Darjeeling there was another man named Sukhman who was going the same way of belief and baptism. He and Ganga Prasad were really the first Nepalese to convert in that area. What they found in Jesus Christ and in the Bible meant very much to them and from the beginning they were active in telling others about the Bible teachings and inviting them to Bible study meetings and to prayer. In keeping with the nature of Hinduism in their community these believers were cast out when they left the religion of their ancestors and became Christians. Their converting was a most extreme act, and the consequences were likewise extreme. We have details with us today about Sukhman, though it happened a hundred years ago (1875). He could not again enter the house of his family, nor could he enter the homes of orthodox Nepali families. When his own people, or others in other places, gave him food they placed it outside the house for him to eat in a place which his presence would not defile. He could not enter a house to sleep but would be given a place in a secondary building. Then there were jests that people flung at him and sarcastic remarks about being a traitor to his own people and becoming a dog on the heels of the foreign Christians. Religiously and socially he had made himself as though he was dead among his own people and he was treated accordingly. Weighing these things and thinking deeply about religion he said of himself, "For the sake of knowing and belonging to Jesus Christ I am ready to lose father and mother, brother and sister, and other companions; and I am ready to give my life for my Lord and Saviour if necessary". Such is the nature of deep,

inner personal religion. People who are serious and earnest in their own religion can appreciate this spiritual conviction in others, though they may not agree with the content and object of that faith. Sukhman spent 15 years as an itinerant preacher among the towns and villages of the Darjeeling hills. He worked in Kalimpong for some years and was a padre (pastor) of a church. Then he experienced the leading of God for him to go to Bhutan to preach. His church arranged for him to do this and held a meeting in which he was consecrated for this work. But a cholera epidemic was raging in the town at the time and he, among the many, was taken by the dread disease and died before that very day was finished (1892).



Padre Ganga Prasad Pradhan wrote school books, a book of Nepali proverbs, assisted in translating the Bible, ran a printing press, published a newspaper.

Ganga Prasad went for some more schooling to Ranchi, Bihar, and in due time returned. Now he began to teach in a school and also to learn the job of printing in the small mission press. He grew in maturity, in knowledge, in skills. He became respected as a leader among the Christians and guided others to belief in Jesus Christ

and to baptism. The Scots Mission grew considerably in the years before the turn of the century. Back in the church in Scotland strong decisions were made by organizations in the church and by young Christian men and women in Universities to send missionaries and money for working in the Eastern Himalayan area. With this backing many missionaries were sent and strong work developed. The large system of schools was built. Evangelists and teachers were trained and put to work; with the preaching went teaching of believers and then their baptism and forming into congregations. Before long there were 2,000 Christians in the area, with large church buildings in the centers and small meeting places elsewhere. In Kalimpong a hospital was opened as well as other large mission institutions and these really occasioned the growth of that village into a proper town. Christian literature was used as widely as possible. On one occasion the Bible Society in Calcutta printed 10,000 copies of the Gospel of Mark in a special edition which sold for one pice. This was widely used in the area and on the Nepal border. Shortly after, a similar edition of Luke was printed. To learn to read and then to have something to read was a great thing in those days. That was the way to knowledge and success.

These Christians worshipped mainly in two ways: in their church services, and then in their small house meetings. In the church services the men sat on one side of the hall and the women on the other. The padre led the meeting. Gradually they developed a songbook which contained 280 songs, many with printed-in tunes in the tonic sol-fa method of note reading. In a similar way their small parts of the Bible grew into the whole New Testament, and then by 1915 they had the whole Old Testament. In their service the congregation together often recited the Ten Commandments, or declared their faith in the words of the Apostles Creed, and prayed the Lord's Prayer. They always took up on offering which was used for the work of the church. The Bible reading and sermon were the central and main part of the service. The special annual conference of the church at large, with delegates from many places, was always a great event. With this occasion there developed a Song Festival which attracted people who filled the largest church. At this time families and groups and delegations from different places took turns and went to the front of the church and sang a song of their own composition which they had prepared. Some of these songs in time made their way into the church's Song Book.

In a peculiar way the little and numerous house meetings were

the heart-beat of the church. Folks left their shoes at the door, sat on the floor, and gave themselves to personal meditation and prayer. There was nothing formal to follow here. Everyone could say something, ask questions, and take a turn at prayer about the things on his heart. People could get personal and intimate with each other and with God. They sang songs, read the Bible and listened to it explained, and prayed; everyone prayed, taking turns. And when they prayed they prostrated themselves, with the knees and feet under them and their heads to the floor. They prayed about all kinds of things because they believed that God was with them and loved them and helped and saved them.

We ought to take some time to consider rather carefully what was happening to these people. It will help us to understand what true converting is. These people were Nepalese and orthodox Hindus, and they were also first-generation Christians. They were people who had once worshipped deities in temples and shrines, who had made sacrifices and observed caste rules. Now they were people who gathered with 300 others and worshipped in a formal church service and later in the week sat on the floor at home in a Bible-study and prayer meeting. What had happened? Something had happened in the inner room of their heart. Their hearts, in common with the heart of humanity, yearned to be right with God and to be safe on life's road for now and for eternity. They were on a search. Along with their people, in the traditions of their elders, they strove to save themselves from the endless wheel of life, from being born again and again in forms of life which are unsatisfying, of the earth earthly, while seeking for the deliverance and peace that comes from union with the Divine Reality; constantly on guard to observe the rules of purity; doing those holy deeds which could help one's soul in the reckonings of fate; appeasing those gods which have something to do in these matters; on the road, seeking, striving ..... Then, on the pages of a cheap, little book, in illuminations of their thoughts, sometimes in visions of the night and even in the inexplicable help of an invisible hand in one of life's extremities, they experienced someone telling then: I am God; I made you; I know you; I am your God; I know your desires, your sins, your longings to know God and to live with Him. I have come to you in Jesus Christ. He died for your sins. He rose again to be your Saviour and Lord. That which you cannot do to make yourself holy and clean I will do to you; I forgive you and take you. I will live in you by my Spirit; I will help you to live a life that is

clean and honest and helpful. In this way I will save you ..... Taking these teachings, these revelations, one by one and trying them, finding them to be satisfying and effective answers to their heart's desires, they yield to God and let Him save them. They use different words to describe it and there are certainly variations in experiences and expressions. But in the core of the matter, in the inner room of the heart, a needy soul meets God who saves him when he could not save himself. Ask any of them: Nepali, Indian, Scot, Chinese, Jew, Greek, Arab. They will use their own words but say the same thing: God is merciful to me and saves me! Come to Him and let Him save you!

These Nepali Christians had a deep and genuine concern that others of their people might know of God's saving love and experience his salvation. This concern reached out toward Nepal and they prayed for that land. Out of their prayers came one of their songs especially for the Gorkhalis which translates something like this:

O Lord, hear our petition, open the door of salvation
For the Gorkhalis.
Father, Son, Holy Spirit, hear our petition,
Show us the way by a cloudy fiery pillar.
Peoples of different religions are to the east, west, and south;
Tibet is north, and Nepal our home in the middle.
There are cities: Thapathali, Bhatgaon, Patan, Kathmandu:
Our desire is to make them your devotees.
Up, brothers: we must go, ignoring hate and shame,
Leaving wealth, people, comfort, to do the holy task.

This kind of concern and prayer led these Nepalese to organize a Gorkha Mission of their own (1892). The Christians gave their offerings for this Mission, which were gathered from the groups and congregations and amounted to around Rs. 500 per year. With this money they hired a Nepali evangelist and sent him to do preaching and teaching on an important road running in and out of Nepal. This man lived in the thriving village of Sukhia Pokhri. Following the rapid growth of this village the government opened a bazaar in which surrounding farmers and businessmen brought their produce for sale on one appointed day in the week. Hundreds of people from the nearby hillsides came in on the 'bazaar day' to do business and visit and have fun. Among these crowds the evangelist stood and preached about Jesus Christ, distributed tracts and sold the little

Bible books to those who wanted them. Printed books were uncommon in those days and anyone who could read, or had someone at home who could read, tried to buy a book; the price helped too because it was low.

Not only on this market-day but on other days also the evangelist would go out into the town and onto the road and try to meet especially the Gorkhalis who were coming from across the border or returning to their homeland. With these he would try to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ and get them to take some Christian literature. Most of these people could not read but they would take something because printed matter was interesting and somebody back home would know how to read. An evangelist in this way could sell up to 500 Bible portions in a year and distribute several thousand tracts.

After a while the people in the little border village of Simana, through which Ganga Prasad and his father had passed 25 years earlier, asked the evangelist to come and teach them in night school. So he went to them regularly and taught them reading and writing and arithmetic and also from that little 'Question and Answer' book about the things taught in the Bible. In time some of these people believed and were baptized. For years this missionary was Buddhi Singh. In his work he travelled to other places along the east border to meet people on other roads. The Gorkha Mission that was sending him on this work prayed for him and that his preaching and Christian literature might help some people inside Nepal to believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This sincere concern ran deep in these people. In one meeting which was held by the Gorkha Mission to hear and discuss about its work one woman went to the table at the front and placed her offering of Rs. 6 in the plate for the support of the mission. This was a very large sum in those days. Others followed her example of generous giving and the offering that day was Rs. 20. In later years the Gorkha Mission sent its evangelist to do his work on the south border of Nepal and at the important border town of Raxaul. One effort of the Mission was to send a petition to the Government of Nepal requesting permission for Nepali Christians to go and live in the country, but no reply was ever received.

Ganga Prasad Pradhan was in the thick of all this activity, not only in the mission and church but in the community around him. The schools needed textbooks for the students. Somebody had to write and print them. Ganga Prasad got into this job. He wrote

some books and then opened his own printing press and went into the printing business. He saw the importance of the printed page as a tool to influence and guide development, and he worked at producing books for schools, for church and newspaper for the public. The Mission and the Bible Society early saw his skills in scholarship and he was given work to translate the Bible into Nepali. For 25 years he was the co-partner with a turn-over of three Scottish missionaries in translating first the whole New Testament and then the whole Old Testament into Nepali. The latter was finished and printed in 1914. For his work in Bible translation he was made an Honorary Life Governor of the British and Foreign Bible Society. His literary efforts strongly influenced the Nepali language which was growing by leaps and bounds in Darjeeling in those days, outstripping printed productions within Nepal or elsewhere. The church ordained Ganga Prasad to be a padre and he served as pastor in congregations. His fatherly influence was widespread and respected in both the Christian and non-Christian community.

After completing his work on the Bible, Grandfather Pradhan was determined to go back to his own people in Nepal to tell them about the Gospel of God and to help enlighten the community with schools and teaching. So was Harkadhoj Pradhan, his son-in-law and also teacher and Headmaster, as well as his son Andrew Pradhan and his wife. Of a like determination were Padri K.S. Peters, Mr. Ratandhoj Rai and still another man. This determination had come out of meditation and prayer and discussion in house meetings. A young member of the clan had received a vision from God in which they were instructed to go to Nepal for this purpose. After careful and prolonged consideration these seven families with their children, of three generations, about 40 souls, took the decision to emigrate back to the land of their fathers. They were all educated people with land and homes, holding positions of leadership and responsibility in their community. One after the other they resigned their posts, packed their goods, gathered their families around them, said farewell to their neighbors and friends and left Darjeeling. It was an act of faith in the Gospel of God and of obedience to God to preach the Gospel and to do good to their fellowmen.

They travelled down the hill on the new, tiny mountain train, which zigs and zags to negotiate its way on the steep mountain sides. Having reached the plains the party changed to the broad-guage railway and travelled westward for a day and night and then changed again to a smaller-guage train that ran up to the rail-

head and end of the line of the border at Raxaul. Their approach to Nepal was quite close to that route taken two hundred years before by the Capuchin Fathers. The early travellers were foreigners in strange hood and robe and girdle, plodding through elephant grass and jungles. The latter were Nepalese, a large party of families with all their belongings, rolling along in railway carriages with the wind blowing through windows. Both groups were Christians and both were travelling to the same place for the same purpose: to live as Christians, to tell about the Gospel of God, and to help others to live in the 'light' of God. G.P. Pradhan and party could have learned something from the Capuchins and not travelled in the middle of the summer! It was July! The intense summer heat was on, and now mixed with the weight of the monsoon rains! When the party left the train they were in mud, the burning sun alternating with sogging rain. The men folk were trying to move the heap of luggage; mothers looked after the needs of children. They negotiated with officials to leave India, crossed the boundary river and slowly made their way on ox-carts over three miles of road to the public rest-house in the Nepal frontier town of Birganj. After they were reasonably settled the leaders went to see about proceeding on in to the country and to Kathmandu. To their dismay they learned from the border officers that they could not proceed until they got a permission-pass from the authorities at the top of the road. They did the only thing they could and dispatched their petition for entry to the officer in the mountains.

The wait for the answer was trying in the extreme. These were hill people, born and raised in the bracing cool and breezes of mountains, living in the settled and routine arrangements of their homes and neighborhood. Now they were in an open-sided shed, hanging on to belongings, getting water and fuel for food and drink, washing clothes, doing their toilet, sweltering in heat and flies and bugs and often under sodden skies and with scrounging dogs and inquisitive people around them. Day after day dragged by. They rented a small house and put all their belongings in it and slept outside under the trees because it was too hot and crowded inside. One night thieves entered the house from the back side and stole their belongings and absconded to the India side of the border. Police could do nothing to try and recover the goods. Sickness befell some in the group. Grandfather Pradhan was riding on a bullock cart to some place and had a fall and was severly injured by the wheel. Somewhere during the 3-week wait at the border a

number of the party left and returned to Darjeeling. Then the permission came and Grandfather Pradhan and Harkadhoj and their families and some others made their way across the terai-plain, up over the mountains, past the fort, showing their pass, and to the top of Chandragiri ridge from where they looked down on the famous valley of Nepal. The road from the high ridge led quickly down into the west end of the valley and then toward Kathmandu. In front of the city flows the Bishnumati River, spanned by an ancient timber and brick bridge and also by a new steel truss bridge. Near the bridges where several brick-and-tile open-sided resting inns for travellers. Here the party laid down their luggage and took temporary lodging.

From this *pauwa* or inn, in the next few days, they ventured out to look over the city and search for a house to rent. Certainly they stood in the royal square of the old King's palace, looking up at its four wide-flaring roofs and nine storeys, at the magnificent temples and statues, at places where the Capuchins in their day had stood and wondered at the wealth of money, mind and hand that had gone into the creation of these wonderful works of man. Surely they searched out the home and people, over near Narayan Hitti Palace, where Ganga Prasad had lived as a boy until he left with his father on their great adventure to the outside world, perhaps 45 years before. The men-folk made enquiries in shops and restaurants about what-was-what and who-was-who in the city, where could a house be found for rent, what schools there were, where did so-and-so live whose name they had. Beyond the tightly-packed high brick buildings of the old city they found spaciously laid-out grounds and palaces of the Rana nobility and watched the great ones ride by in carriages.

A police detective watched this new party of arrivals and followed them around town to see what they were about. He had earlier worked in the Botanical Gardens of Darjeeling and was acquainted with the people and goings-on in that city. Now he was employed by the Nepal Government to watch new people who arrived in the city. In fact, he recognized some of this party and talked to them about their intentions in Kathmandu. This information he reported to the authorities and it reached the Prime Minister. They introduced themselves and explained that they were Nepalese and Christians and had come to their motherland to take up residence. They hoped to open primary schools and to teach about the Gospel of God. They requested His Highness to grant them permission to reside

in the country and to go about their business. Maharaja Chandra was understanding and kindly with them but explained that it was impossible and against the law for Christians to live in the kingdom and instructed them to return to India. When he heard about their loss of goods to the robbers in Birganj he gave them a sum of money to replace the loss. Then he assigned two soldiers to escort them to the border. Giving their farewell, the men returned to their families in the *pauwa* and shared the disheartening news. There was nothing to do but pack up and take the trail again down the mountains and out to India. Some of them travelled to visit Nepali communities in Dehra Dun, Benares, Gorakhpur and Calcutta. Some months later they made their way back to Darjeeling and Kalimpong to take up life and work there again. These people were among those who had sought and found something and were telling about it, but Nepal would have nothing of it.

There is a characteristic common among men which becomes apparent when they face the Gospel of God. It is man's attempt to achieve by self-effort. A person may on occasion admit his lack of achievement in religious matters but he will keep on trying in his own strength and not accept help to reach his goal. This self-pride in people is probably nowhere more evident than in matters of religion. It does more than anything else to hinder growth in true godliness. At this point the Gospel of God is a stumbling stone in the road of the religionist. For he is doing his very best to achieve has salvation while God, in His Gospel, is telling him just the opposite: that he cannot achieve and that God will do it for him. To help us reverse our deep-seated instinct about achieving our salvation, we need the illuminating work of God's Spirit in our minds to "see and perceive" our true condition and God's saving acts for us. Here is the core of conversion.

Consider the example of the man Saul while on a road at the western edge of Asia. This man was a highly educated Jew, steeped in the traditions of his ancestors, zealous in keeping their religious law and proud of his achievements in it. This was in the days just after the things that God had done in the person, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Saul had totally rejected the claims of Christ and was going about from place to place with a band of soldiers and authorization from the chief priests to arrest, imprison and kill the Christians. This led him on to the road from Jerusalem to Damascus when a light from heaven struck him to the ground and Jesus Christ spoke to him. In this physical and spiritual meeting with

Christ he was converted; that is he was turned from being an enemy to being a devoted disciple of the Lord Christ; from achieving his own salvation to accepting the saving by Christ. In this meeting Christ told him also to go and preach the good news of salvation to the Gentiles, that is to the non-believers; so he spent the many remaining years of his life as a missionary throughout the Roman Empire. In later years he wrote of his conversion in these words:

> "In his good pleasure God chose to reveal his Son (Christ) to me ... If anyone thinks to base his claims on externals, I could make a stronger case for myself: circumcised on my eighth day, Israelite by race, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born and bred; in my attitude to the law, a Pharisee; in pious zeal, a persecutor of the church; in legal rectitude, faultless. But all such assets I have written off because of Christ. I would say more: I count everything sheer loss, because all is far outweighed by the gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I did in fact lose everything. I count it so much garbage, for the sake of gaining Christ and finding myself incorporate in him, with no righteousness of my own, no legal rectitude, but the righteousness which comes from faith in Christ, given by God in response to faith."[3]

Many of his Jewish co-religionists could never accept this experience and message of his. They followed him from province to province in his missionary work and stirred up opposition wherever they could, with violence, and in the end caused his death. Several of this man's religious writings have been incorporated into the New Testament of the Bible and therein have been offered for consideration to the people of Nepal.

In a rather similar way the age-old yearning of the people of Hindustan for contact with the ultimate spiritual reality was personified in a young man in the Punjab. Through his childhood he was taught by able priests and pandits in a Hindu-Sikh home, nurtured by the devotions and prayers of his devout mother and the guidance of his religiously strict father. This young lad had an above average hunger for spiritual things and prayed to know God and to know salvation. Christ appeared to him in his room and talked with him and he saw Christ and became his humble and devoted disciple.[4] For 25 years he spent his time in meditations and

---

[3] Galatians 1 : 16. Philippians 3 : 4–9. (N.E.B.)

[4] Sundar Singh tells the story of his conversion in his own words as follows: "I was sent for my secular education to a small primary school that had been opened

Sundar Singh met Christ, became His disciple and preached in the mountain regions and in eastern Nepal.

prayer and in travelling far and wide in India and in the Himalayan regions preaching about the Gospel of Jesus Christ and salvation in Him. This was in the early 1900s. His name was Sunder Singh and he lived the life of a sadhu. Devotion to Christ and preaching to others were the main parts of his life. He preached and prayed with people that their zeal for God should be according to the knowledge that comes with Jesus Christ. He explained that in Christ we see and meet God; in Christ's death and resurrection God forgives our sins and reconciles us to Himself, and saves us from death, from hell and from the devil; in union with Jesus Christ we will rise from the dead and live forever with God in heaven.

---

by the American Presbyterian Mission in our village in Rampur. At that time I had so many prejudices about Christianity that I refused to read the Bible in the daily Bible lessons. My teacher insisted that I should attend; but I was so opposed to this that the next year I left that school and went to a Government school at Sanewal three miles away, and there I studied for some months. To some extent I felt that the teaching of the Gospel on the love of God attracted me, but I still thought it was false and opposed it. So firmly was I set in my opinions, and so great was my unrest, that one day, in the presence of my father and others, I tore up a Gospel and burned it.

"Though, according to my ideas at that time, I thought I had done a good deed in burning the Gospel, yet my unrest of heart increased, and for two days after that

(continued on next page)

This is what he preached as he learned it from Christ and from the Bible. In his travels he went to Garwal, Kumaon, Tibet, Nepal and Sikkim. In 1914 he was in Darjeeling District and entered Nepal on the main road by the village of Simana. He preached to people along the way and reached Ilam. This town which was the district seat of government had an army cantonment. The day was special with the bazaar full of people. Sundar Singh stood and preached Christ to crowds of people. They were surprised to see a man standing preaching in this way. It was a new thing for them. It was equally new to hear of God's Saviour who both died for them and was resurrected to life for them. When the officer arrived he arrested the preacher and after a discussion had him escorted back over the border. But Sundar Singh returned and continued preaching in the bazaar. This time they put him in prison, fastened his hands and feet in stocks, stripped off his clothes and left leeches to crawl and suck on his body. They threw filth on him and abused him. For two or three hours he felt his sufferings very much but then the presence of the Lord filled him and turned the prison into a paradise. He sang songs, praising God, with people listening, and he preached again to them. Then they released him and in weakness he made his way back to India. After recuperating he made his way into Sikkim and other places.

In the press and throng of souls hungering after God, Sundar Singh was one who found his quest for God fulfilled in Jesus Christ. When he witnessed about this, along with the Pradhans and Rais and others, to co-religionists in Nepal, he found the door firmly

---

I was very miserable. On the third day, when I felt I could bear it no longer, I got up at three in the morning, and after bathing, I prayed that if there was a God at all He would reveal Himself to me, and show me the way of salvation, and end this unrest of my soul. I firmly made up my mind that, if this prayer was not answered, I would before daylight go down to the railway, and place my head on the line before the incoming train.

"I remained till about half past four praying and waiting and expecting to see Krishna or Buddha, or some other *Avatar* of the Hindu religion; they appeared not, but a light was shining in the room. I opened the door to where it came from, but all was dark outside. I returned inside, and the light increased in intensity and took the form of a globe of light above the ground, and in this light there appeared, not the form I expected, but the living Christ whom I had counted as dead. To all eternity I shall never forget His glorious and loving face, nor the few words which he spoke: 'Why do you persecute me? See, I have died on the cross for you and for the whole world.' These words were burned into my heart as by lightning, and I fell on the ground before Him. My heart was filled with inexpressible joy and peace, and my whole life was entirely changed. Then the old Sundar Singh died and a new Sundar Singh, to serve the Living Christ, was born." See A.P. Appasamy, *Sundar Singh*, page 20–21.

shut and the wall up. Orthodoxy ruled; solidified; bound to the letter of the law; unable to see new light from God. Religion has often become this way in many lands and among many people. The Jews, before and during the time of Christ, had become this way and slew the prophets sent to them by God; they even crucified the Christ whom God sent to them. Centuries later the Christian Church in Europe became this way in what we call 'the dark ages' and in some places burned those who received new light and life from God. It is part of our fallen nature to be small and fearful and clinging to our traditional ways, and greatly hesitating to recognize and receive new light from God.

In these same years that Sukhman, Ganga Pradhan and Sundar Singh were 'seeing God', a woman of Nepal was going through the same striving for deliverance from this illusory existence and yearning for God and salvation. It so happened that a girl, whose name was Chandra Leela, was born into the family of the royal priest in Kathmandu. She grew up in the wealth, comforts and happiness of this home and was married at the age of seven. When she was eleven years old her Brahmin husband died and the advantages and position she enjoyed came to an end. Her head was shaved, her jewelry discarded and she dressed in white. For the rest of her life she must remain a widow. The inexorable consequences of past deeds, somewhere on the wheel of life, had surfaced and she had been the cause of her husband's death. She must now seek somehow to do those things which would overweigh her sin and yet move her hopefully in the path to salvation. The next year her mother died. Father and daughter were drawn together in their loss. For years the father had taught the precocious daughter to read the Sanskrit scriptures. Her gifted and sensitive spirit responded. There, within the confining brick walls of ancient Kathmandu, the everlasting spiritual hunger of mankind took hold in this young woman and set the direction of her long life in questing pilgrimage. She would spend her life in seeking God; she would seek release from the guilt of her widowhood; she would seek spiritual attainment, following the instruction that she found in her books.

When she was fourteen her father took her with him on a pilgrimage to the temple of Jagannath at Puri in eastern India. There her father died, after giving her instructions and the keys to his wealth. The young orphan and widow made her way back to Kathmandu. Her father's wealth was sufficient to care for her for life. She continued her intensive study in Sanskrit and the holy

scriptures. This study confirmed in her a resolve to continue her religious quest by going on a pilgrimage to the distant holy places in the four corners of India and to Benares. For seven years she walked and worshipped, through changing scenes and climates, over the hundreds of miles between the distant corners of the sub-continent. Then followed seven more years of serving as a priestess and teacher to the women of the royal family of Midnapore, on Calcutta side.

But her spiritual hunger sent her out again, this time into severe renunciation of all things. She became a sanyasi in ashes, with matted hair, begging. Then she entered upon the vows of self-affliction wherein she sat during the hot season in the sun with fires burning around her, and in the cold season she sat in ponds of cold water day and night. In the end she left it all. She cut off her matted hair, gave her long-cherished image and sacred books to others and said, "Take these. I will use them no more. I have suffered all that can be required of me and found nothing."

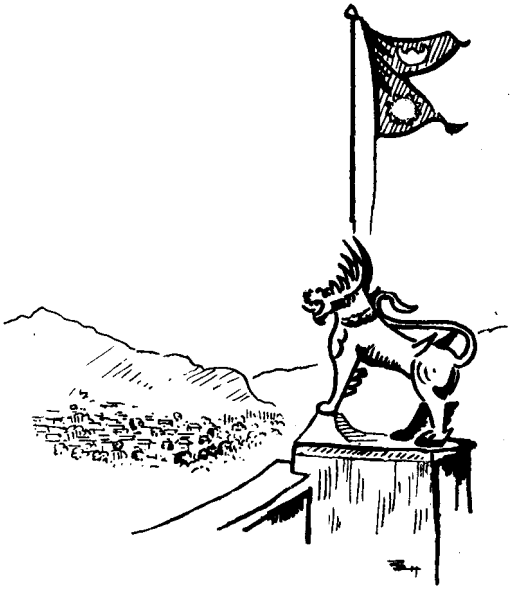
Chandra Leela of Kathmandu went on pilgrimage to seek release from the guilt of her widowhood and realization of God.

Some time later she was in the home of a girl who was reading the Bible. Chandra Leela also began to read in it. From the pages crept a revealing new knowledge about God which fanned to flame the old smoldering hunger. She read on and gradually her mind was illumined to see God's personal love for her and His forgiveness and saving through the Lord Jesus Christ. As she opened her soul and received this revealing of God and His work, there came a peace toward God and joy in His salvation for her. In time she returned to her home in Kathmandu and told about these things to her people. Her older brother told her that he had come to believe in the truth of God's salvation in Jesus Christ. When he became sick and was dying he discussed with her about how he could be baptized. There was no one to do this so Chandra Leela said, "When I was a Hindu I was a priestess. God will not be angry with me if I am a priestess for Him and I will baptize you." So she did, and he died in peace and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. She also buried him in a Christian way. Soon after this she left her country to travel again. She dedicated herself to telling others about Christ. She went on long travels over the former pilgrim routes and told the pilgrims about the Gospel of God. To the end of her days she did this in city, town and country. She explained from the Bible the salvation which people cannot attain themselves and which God has prepared and given to them.

In the early days after Christ's resurrection and ascension, the disciples called this message 'the Deposit', and 'the good news'; what we call 'the Gospel of God'. First it was given to them by God to experience themselves, and then it was entrusted to them by God to hold carefully and give away to others so they too could experience it. So the 'deposit of the Gospel' has come down from hand to hand, from tongue to tongue, by page and book through history. God has chosen to use human and material means to convey his gift to men. Blessed is the person who is able to step beyond himself and past the means that conveys it, to see and hear and taste of the Deposit itself, —for he shall be filled with God. This is sure, for the Lord has promised, "Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened."[5]

---

[5] Matthew 7 : 7. (N.E.B.)



CHAPTER 4

PEOPLE WHO PREACH, TEACH AND HEAL

The Nepalese, from their Himalayan heights, had a grandstand seat from which to watch the making of the greatest empire in world history. We have already followed the coming of the British into the sub-continent and seen their tide wash up against the homeland of the Gorkhalis and turn away to flood on over other numerous states and lands. To save themselves from the colonial tide the Nepalese built their wall and locked themselves into a century and more of isolation. From behind their separating wall they became spectators, not participants, of the grand British century in India and of world development which accompanied it. Nepal's contacts over the generations had been mostly downwards with their neighbors on the plains of Hindustan. Now with the new political structure of British India occupying that region the Nepalese redefined and worked out a new relationship of careful isolation from this great surrounding neighbor and indeed from the whole outside world.

During this century (1850 to 1947) the British consolidated their rule and developed a thorough-going administration over their huge new Indian Empire. Their sovereign became Emperor of India. Law and order and peace, such as India had never known, spread into every nook and cranny of the land. The rulers brought in and spread far and wide across the huge provinces and native states the manifold fruits of the scientific revolution in scores of forms of development and in a new manner of life. Among the dense populations of 400 districts there spread roads and vehicles, waterways and canals, postal and telegraph networks. Great, modern cities grew up served with electricity, sanitary and water systems, paved streets, telephones and later airplanes. Mighty service departments, employing millions and millions of people, spread and multiplied, giving to the masses unheard of services in education, health, agriculture, communications, forestry, banking and business. They tell us that this 'British Raj', the British Empire of India, was the greatest empire the world has ever known; the greatest union under one rule of a kaleidoscope of peoples, languages, religions, cultures, climates, conditions and land that has ever been attempted and caused to function successfully for 100 years. And that's probably right! It was an amazing accomplishment.

A great wonder of it was the extent to which its content reached to all the little men and women in the vast sea of humanity and brought to them some measure of change and benefit. A little-man farmer, with the help of the village scribe, could get his letter written, buy his stamp and drop his letter in the red box and it would reach his son reading in a school in the big city. The postal system spread its offices and red boxes away down the dusty road to his village to serve him. Who ever heard of such a thing?

Among the many wonders of that British century in India perhaps the greatest wonder for the greatest number was the railways. There was a time when they were the greatest system in the world, though they were down to third place when the British left India. The trains had four classes. First Class was 'posh', with private cabins, attendants, for the rulers and their kind. Second class was somewhat similar but less 'posh', for people on the next social level down. Inter-Class was a peculiar creation, for people a step above the masses, with hard pads on the benches and bars in the windows. On its walls, as in other classes, were bold words defining how many soldiers could be accommodated in the carriage, with fixtures for holding their guns; ready preparations for troop movements. Third Class had all its fixtures and furniture built with strength

and toughness to bear the wear and tear of the common people. There were no bars in the windows and through them passed the rich intercourse of the vendors of the station platforms and the occupants of the carriages. Here you could experience the great wonder of the railways! The common man, together with his family members, bringing along bundles, sticks, baskets, food and sometimes animals would crowd in by door or window and ride away on this grand and wonderful vehicle to visit relatives in distant places. These common people, really by the millions, went over to the station and got on and rode away. The price of a ticket in Third Class was so low it must be called fantastic. The common saying is very true: You haven't seen India until you have ridden on its trains.

Broad gauge rail lines joined together the big cities; medium gauge went off to lesser places, while narrow gauge tracks bearing proportionately smaller engines and carriages sent their branches to dead-ends and to border points. As the network spread its arteries over the northern Gangetic plain, it sent small tracks up to a dozen railheads on the 500 mile southern border of Nepal. These places became like doorways on Nepal's frontier. The Nepalese travellers who did go in and out of their country during this century of isolation naturally converged on these border points. Twin towns grew up at these places. On the India side, around the end of the railroad and its station there developed a small town serving the travellers with hotels and traders with shops and warehouses for produce and goods. On the Nepal side of the border a similar town grew to do the same thing. Each town also had its offices of police, customs and immigration affairs.

Into the streets of these towns came the Nepali hill-people, wearing coarse and grubby clothing, carrying on their backs their baskets and bundles with food, utensils and the necessities which they had used in coming over the trails down out of the mountains. On the railway platform they watched with awe as the iron machines came out of the countryside with flying dust, shrill whistles and a great clatter, to ease to a stop right in front of them. There was for them the new experience of buying a neat, little ticket which allowed them to board the train. Pressing in with others they dropped their luggage in the aisles and squatted on their feet up on the benches, waiting for 'this thing of wonder' to carry them and move easily over the fields. No walking! No carrying! How could it be?

Of course the Gorkha soldiers serving in the British Indian

Travel inside Nepal was almost entirely by foot, with people carrying loads on their backs.

army, as well as some shop-keepers, government officials and aristocracy, the people of Nepal who travelled outside their country more often, got used to using these highly convenient carriages. And the more they used them the greater chore it was to leave them at the border on their return journey and continue their way by foot. In fact the Nepalese came to use the outside Indian railways regularly when they had to travel to more distant parts of their own country. Instead of walking for many days and even weeks over poor and difficult foot-roads, they dropped down to India, took the train and looped around to another border point and from there walked on inside Nepal to their destination. By 1927 the Rana Regime relaxed enough to build a narrow gauge railway for 27 miles over the plains of Nepal, plus a few miles of motor road through the Siwalik hills and Inner Terai to the foot of the mountains. This was along the most important route of travel from the border town of Raxaul toward Kathmandu. But the Government held out against building a motorable road on up and over the mountains to the capital. So the people walked over the mountains

by foot, a very few on horse back, and all luggage was carried on the backs and shoulders of porters.

To the student of the times the observation became increasingly apparent over the years that the more India (as well as Asia) developed in this great century the more the reactionary and isolationist policies of the Rana Regime stood out in darkening contrast. What had begun as a protectionist policy to save the country against foreign conquest had evolved into a policy to save the Rana Family and keep it in power, and to maintain the 'status quo' in all areas of national life was considered essential to this end. So Nepal was left farther and farther behind as India and other countries pressed on in world-encompassing development movements. "They produced scarcely a ripple in the stagnant waters of Nepal".[1]

The Nepalese, throughout this century, from their mountain heights watched not only the human drama of the British Raj on the plains below, but watched another movement as well. This was the coming and spread of Christian missionaries, with all their works and ways, across the many miles of the sub-continent and right up to and knocking on their own borders.

The very first ones had come much earlier. They found a footing in some coastal towns, often precarious, then more permanent. Others moved inland. But they were very few in the early days.

During the century of the British in India, which we are watching, they came in large number, first to the big cities, then to district towns and finally to large villages. They exercised comity among themselves saying, "You go that way and I'll go this way." With indefatigable work they built compounds containing their churches, schools, hospitals and residences. Sometimes they had only a small room or two joined to a dispensary in a far-out village and sometimes they had a complex of large institutions in a busy part of

[1] R. Shaha, *An Introduction To Nepal*, p. 165. This author points out also that there were some 'improvements' after World War I. The practices of *sati* and slavery were abolished. A 14-mile ropeway from Dhursing to Kathmandu was built (1924). The Pharping hydro-electric plant came in 1911. Tri-Chandra College was established in 1919. In 1936 an Industrial Board opened the way to set up a jute mill, match factory, two cotton mills, rice mills and a plywood and bobbin factory. The first bank came in 1937. Water supply and medical facilities were extended. The T.B. San at Toka came in 1934. Three newspapers were published. A Board was established to conduct S.L.C. Exams and 2 or 3 private schools were allowed to open. Educational development was slow and the number of high schools and colleges could be counted on one's fingers. Public works were almost non-existent. During the Rana rule the country suffered the worst period of stagnation and exploitation in its history. Pages 156–165.

a large city. During the century their numbers swelled to thousands. They came from many countries of Europe and North America, both Catholics and Protestants. Prominent among them was that peculiar phenomenon of the modern missionary movement whereby they organized themselves into numerous, separate boards, missions or societies. At the height of their strength there were more than 400 such missions in India.

Common among them as might be expected, were missions from Great Britain. Leading them were *padres* of the Church of England who were sent out especially to serve the British nationals connected with government and business. Very early some of the *padres* also began to missionate among the Indians and led the way for the coming of British missionary societies to work in India. Their concern and zeal for the spiritual condition of the people of India was so strong that in the 1860s they introduced into their Book of Common Prayer the famous Collect For Missions which ever since has been recited daily in the services of the Anglican churches in India. It reads:

> "O God, Who hast made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and didst send Thy Blessed SON JESUS CHRIST to preach peace to them that are afar off and to them that are nigh, grant that all the peoples of this land may feel after Thee and find Thee; and hasten, O heavenly FATHER, the fulfilment of Thy promise to pour out Thy Spirit upon all flesh; through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Amen."[2]

For sure there were some among the missionaries who wanted to keep moving on and on, deeper and deeper into the continent. It wasn't long into the century before there were outposts of missionaries along the 2000 miles of the northern frontier of the Empire. On the never-quiet North-West Frontier they pressed their way among the fierce Pathan tribesmen until the British had to pull them back. Some Christian army officers quit the Service and joined the missions, believing that the Gospel of God is the best thing to give to the Pathans. They climbed up toward tiny kingdoms with romantic names like Swat and Chitral. Others made their way into the rocks and cold and snow of Kashmir where it touches on Tibet. They went deep into the mountains of Garhwal and Kumaon, regions that for a few years had been a part of the Gorkha

[2] Andrews, C.F., *North India*. Page 33.

Kingdom. A few felt their way around closed Nepal to find places where they could usefully contact the people within. Three or four were allowed into Sikkim, and some settled on the edges of Bhutan. The tribes people of Assam and of the North-East Frontier saw them coming and making their way even to the borders of Burma. Explorers and travellers in these interior parts encountered these missionaries and left quaint observations about them in their journals and travelogs.

Missionaries are a peculiar breed of people. Everyone knows this. There are few classes of people in society about whom there has developed such a stereotype image as the missionary. They have been picked on and picked to pieces; they have been exalted on pedestals and crowned with haloes. A poor way to judge them, or to judge anyone for that matter, is to magnify some eccentricity or to pull out of proportion some secondary element. A more fair way to consider them is to try to sort out and assess the main things which they believe and which have given content to their lives and work.

Take Dr. Katherine Harbord for example. When I met her she had already been working on the border of Nepal for 20 years. She wore ankle-length skirts, had her hair in a bun, was thin and worn out and reminded me of a wrung out washcloth. Slouched far down in an easy chair she propped her head up in her hands and talked with halfshut eyes. At night she slept with newspapers between her sheet and blanket to keep in the warmth. By day she carefully rationed the sticks of wood she would allow herself to burn for warmth in her room. The money she saved from skimping on her personal expenses she used to pay the fees of students she was sending through boarding schools. After her noon lunch she relaxed for a recess by pulling out a book of advanced mathematics and immersing herself in its problems. When you got her talking about Nepal and missionary work toward that land you could feel the fires burning in her and see the flashes in her eyes.

In the days of her strength she left her place in an established mission hospital of north India and made her way to a railhead on the border, at an exit-entrance point named Nautanwa. Here she rented a small house in the area of town where the Nepalese lived, opened a dispensary and began witness to the Gospel of God. For a few people who would listen, in a house or yard, she would pull out of her shoulder bag a set of pictures illustrating the major events in the life of Jesus Christ and proceed to teach about them. Down the street she would not hesitate to stop a fight and lecture

the people about how God wanted them to behave in society. She brought from her homeland a small and simple press which she could operate herself. After writing a message in Nepali, she set the type and ran off a few hundred tracts on bright colored paper.

These she distributed to the Nepalese whom she met in the streets and shops and at the railway station. She used tracts of different messages to fit various seasons and events. Each day she followed a strict schedule: so much time for prayer and devotions; so much for food preparation and eating (as little as possible); then fixed hours in the dispensary; then work on the press followed by trips into the bazaar to visit, talk, distribute tracts, sell Gospel booklets, and tell about Jesus from the pictures in her bag if there was occasion.

At least three times Dr. Harbord received messages from Tansen, a town in the mountains of Nepal, with requests that she come to that town to tend a maternity case in the household of the officials. When she responded the escort took her by elephant across the plains of Nepal and by horseback or carrying-chair up the mountains. In the Tansen household she was an appreciated and friendly guest. She carried her medicine bag wherever she went as well as her bag of pictures of Christ and used both. She taught the womenfolk to knit helping to get wool, needles and patterns from Calcutta and Britain. The hobby spread to Kathmandu and was much appreciated by the aristocratic women.

On another occasion, after gathering the facts about Nepal, she wrote an article which was printed in a leading missionary journal of those days. In this article she called on Christians to pray for the Kingdom and challenged them to come and work on the border. I know about this because I read the article and later came and joined her work. By then she was sickly and wasted in body. She gave her hand-operated press to me and showed me the tracts and the pictures she had used. Then she gave me a pile of manuscripts stacked a foot high which she had prepared over the years and hoped they could be published some day—all in Nepali. They proved to be unusable; the Nepali was not good enough; she didn't know it well enough for this kind of work. She believed deeply that God had good and strong purposes for Nepal; she spoke of this and prayed for it. She quoted a verse from the Bible which says in effect that the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable, and she felt this way about God's purposes for Nepal.[3]

[3]Katherine Harbord (died in 1952) came from a well-to-do home in England. Her father was one of England's leading metallurgists. She worked as a missionary

When we meet a person like Katherine Harbord there is no virtue in getting taken up with her clothing or hair style, the kind of house she lived in or what she ate. But there could well come some benefit from considering with her such personal questions as, "How should I relate to and love God, and how should I relate to and love my fellowmen?" She found her answers to these questions and lived them out in north India and on the Nepal border. And her living was a little bit of that divine glue that holds the world together for as long as it has lasted, because it was God at work in her.

These missionaries had read the Bible and they found its teachings exemplified in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. It says of him that "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity."[4] They took Jesus' parting instructions to his disciples as instruction to themselves, his present-day disciples, when Jesus said, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you."[5] So, following Jesus' example and instruction they went into every place they could and preached and taught and healed. These three functions became the standard departments of their missions, with allowable variations in details and expressions. They built and developed what became familiar facilities and structures: the set of buildings; the employed catechists, evangelists, Bible women; the books and literature; baptizing converts, forming congregations with worship and church activities; the organized church body; schools and colleges with teachers, materials and equipment; dispensaries and hospitals with their doctors, nurses and para-medical workers. They understood Christ's instructions to include concern and care for orphans, the blind and handicapped, the starving and dying, and in fact a wide variety of services in economic and social development. They applied themselves with an intense absorption to their work because of a deep desire to obey Christ and to do as he did in God's mission in the world. These missionaries believed that this was the way to put right

---

in north India under the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission and also for a short time with the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade. During most of her years she worked in hospitals of her mission, but received permission to go alone to the border town of Nautanwa where she lived and worked for about 8 years (1920s and 30s). Dr. Harbord, perhaps more than anyone else, by her articles, letters and zeal, caused the growth of interest and participation by missionaries in work along the border of Nepal.

[4]Matthew 9:35 (RSV)

[5]John 20:21 (RSV)

the ills of the world, and that if enough people would get right with God and follow His way the world could be put right!

There were others beside Katherine Harbord who made their way up to the Nepal border. They found the border marked with white pillars, or in some places by a stream or a river. The border was closed; they were forbidden to enter. The British Indian Government strictly forbade them to cross the border, in no uncertain terms. And the Nepali authorities were quick to spot any foreigners and see that they were turned back. But they went up close and felt their way along the 'wall' until they found the gaps through which people were passing and at these places they began to do their work and to preach the Gospel.

One day in 1895 some 'hill-billies' of the far north-west corner of Nepal strode down the mountain side and crossed the Kali River on a precarious bridge of poles and strolled into the little town of Darchula. This was in India, for this river, from its source up in the Taklakot area and until it flowed out of the hills a hundred miles later at Tanakpur, formed the western boundary of Nepal. News had reached them that a foreign European woman doctor and some Indian companions had come to live in Darchula and run a dispensary, so they had come to investigate. Sure enough, on a small level patch above the town the people were already at work building living quarters. And among the group of newcomers and their tents they spotted the white woman. They learned that she was already treating sick people, praying to God for them, and talking about some god named Christ whom they at first thought must be a mispronunciation of Krishna. They were pleased to learn that their sick people from the Nepal side of the river could come to the doctor for medicine.

This lady doctor was Martha Sheldon. She came from America and worked in places in north India before she went to the distant outpost at Darchula. To reach it her team left the train at a railhead on the plains and in the company of porters, ponies and luggage hiked northward into the mountains for 12 days. Darchula was a way-station on a rather well-used road which led into that triangle corner called Bhot where India, Nepal and Tibet meet. Having led through Bhot the road topped a high pass and entered Tibet. The doctor went up this trans-Himalayan road just about as far as people can reasonably live the year-around and there she built her very modest mission station.

Martha Sheldon lived in the generation before Katherine Har-

bord. The two were so much alike that they could be called 'chips from the same block'. There were other missionary ladies of this caliber. Their kind could be found across the central Asian front of missionary endeavor in the most distant posts, on the longest travels, in the simplest living conditions, and with strongest faith and dedication to Christ and his mission. It is their kind that has led to the saying in missionary circles that 'the woman's the man to do the job'. For 17 years Dr. Sheldon worked in Darchula and environs, with Indian colleagues, and for some years also with Miss Browne from Britain. She died and was buried in Darchula and her grave marker can still be seen today.[6] Four years later an earthquake severely damaged the mission buildings. Indian pastors served the congregation in the area and continued with preaching work for several years.

Then came Rev. and Mrs. Ezra Steiner to the same Darchula in 1927 and built a new bungalow and started work again with strength. Their interest was also in Tibet, though Steiner preached vigorously also to Nepalese and Bhotiyas. They opened the dispensary again and among others they treated leprosy patients. People came quite frequently from the Nepal side of the river to get medical treatment and on several occasions, by special arrangement of the local Nepali official, the Steiners went over the river into Nepal to attend some patients.

At a place about two day's walk down-river from Darchula there is a sizable stream which comes slanting out of the India mountains and joins the Kali River. Such a place where sacred rivers join is always auspicious to Hindus. The triangle of land formed by the confluence of these rivers is called Joljibi. The place is unsuitable for cultivation because it is strewn with large and small boulders, rocks and sand. Once a year a large *mela* or fair is held

---

[6]Dr. Martha Sheldon (1860–1912) of Excelsior, Minn., USA, served under the Methodist Episcopal Church in Southern Asia. The special interest of this group in Darchula was to try and give the Gospel message to Tibetans. In attempting this they lived on this road to Tibet and on several occasions went up to the border and made one or two trips into Tibet. In medical work Dr. Sheldon served an average of 2000 patients a year. Among the ailments which she treated were goiter, leprosy and cateracts.

The Methodist Episcopal Church (USA) worked strongly and widely in the United Province during this century. On one occasion, around 1900, the church in Lucknow sent Indian evangelists to preach among the Tharus in the plains of Nepal. The first two evangelists died the first year from the very severe form of malaria in that region. So they sent two others the next year and these also died. The third pair whom the church sent also died of the same killing disease.

in this place when hundreds of people stream in from up and down the rivers and from the neighboring mountain slopes of both Nepal and India. Temporary shops and shelters spring up; people join in merry-making with singing, dancing and music; there is eating and drinking. The activities of the day move right into the night under the bright moon. Mingled with it all are stops at the little temples, gifts to the priests and ceremonial bathing in the holy rivers. There are pilgrims in the crowd, on a holy quest, some coming only as far as this place, more of them on their way for many more days northward to the holy lakes of Mansarowar and Rakastal and the sacred Mt. Kailash in Tibet. Beside the temple some *sadhus* are sitting around a fire and will spend the whole night chanting their scriptures and repeating the names of their deities hundreds and thousands of times.

This is the kind of event that missionaries like to attend because of the large and varied number of people that can be met at one time. Missionary Steiner and his colleagues often went to this Joljibi Mela. Their evangelistic method was usually to mingle with the crowd and then stand on a rock where people could readily see them, sing some songs to attract a crowd and preach about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. With their preaching they offered tracts and small Bible portions. They went from place to place in the *mela* grounds and repeated their 'program'. In between preaching they might converse with someone who had a question or try to interest someone in the message or in a book. After the *mela* crowd dispersed on the second day the Christians tied up their tent and belongings and returned to Darchula.

The Steiners had two children who grew up in those parts, and later in life were married and returned with their families to join their parents in missionary work at that same station. They were there until the Indian Government for security reasons drew an 'inner line' and required that foreigners could not live on the outer side of the line. Darchula was within this frontier strip so the missionaries had to leave.[7]

[7] Rev. and Mrs. Ezra Steiner were Mennonites from Ohio, USA. They worked in India for ten years under the General-Conference Mennonite Church. But Steiner felt strongly that God led him to evangelize the Tibetans and in 1927 arranged to take residence in the Darchula station. He made three trips into Tibet. Their married children, Dr. and Mrs. B. Steiner and Rev. and Mrs. Charles Warren, also served under that mission after it had changed its name to The Evangelical Alliance Mission. This mission had many years of interest and work toward Nepal and in recent years has supported missionaries in Dandeldhura, a town in western Nepal among the mountains near that Kali River.

During this closed century, the people in the far western region of Nepal lived a hidden life. More than other people of the country they were neglected, alone, quiet and almost unknown. They were not among the 'warlike clans' and were not recruited for the British Gorkha regiments. Their population was thin and their mountains were quite thickly forested. It was a major task for government servants to hike over the internal roads to administrative posts in this distant part of the kingdom. It took weeks. It was easier to circle around through India and come in from the far side. So the region was much neglected and left largely to take care of itself. The life style of these mountaineers was very primitive. Their clothing was coarse, hand-woven of wool; their food was what they found in the jungles and scratched out of the meager fields. Tools were what they made themselves. Foreign manufactured articles were almost unknown.

Some of these people learned about the 'greener pastures' in India and hiked out in small bunches. Their boundary was the Kali River. They usually crossed at either Jhulaghat in the mountains or at Tanakpur where the river came down onto the plains. Jhulaghat was a small bazaar town deep down at the bottom of a tight valley where the steep mountains stood on each others feet, the Kali River rushed between them and a steel suspension bridge was anchored to the rock on either side. These Dotial-Nepalese made their way down into that depth, crossed on the border bridge passed the customs and police officials and then climbed 14 miles up and out of that canyon to the large town of Pithoragarh. At this center roads from Tibet and Nepal met those of India and people converged for a variety of purposes.

As early as 1870 missionaries came into this town and gradually opened schools, a hospital and preaching work. On a hill above the town a leprosy hospital was opened at Chandag Heights which drew patients from all those mountains and from Nepal. Churches grew in some of the towns of this district but the Gospel had little effect on the Nepalese because they were seasonal transients passing through.[8]

---

[8] Mr. Budden of the London Mission, resident in Almora, travelled in the early 1870s the 53 miles to Pithoragarh and found it a strategic location for missionary work. His mission was unable to man it so the Methodist Episcopal Church Mission of USA sent workers who began there in 1875. Soon they had a Girls' school, a Boys' school, hospital, church, a Widows' Home together with preaching throughout the district and along the roads to Nepal and Tibet. The leper colony at Chandag Heights was supported by the Mission To Lepers of UK. For many

(continued on next page)

The southern exit for these Nepalese was on the plains where the Kali River spread out and in the cold, dry season the travellers could ford thigh-deep across the river and enter the railhead town of Tanakpur. From time to time missionaries have lived in Tanakpur and even for short spells in Jhulaghat, in order to witness to the Nepalese about the Gospel of God. But none stayed on a permanent basis.[9] The Nepalese who passed through kept going on the roads toward the larger centers in the Indian Himalayas and found coolie work in places like Almora, Naini Tal, Mussoorie and Dehra Dun. Some lived in the woods and made charcoal to sell in the hill-stations. Missionary work among Nepalese on this west side border was meager because the Nepalese who travelled in and out were few, they kept on the move, and in their settled places they lived aloof.

When we turn the corner in the far west and move along the 500-mile-long southern frontier we find an entirely different situation. This is all plains country, part and parcel of the vast Gangetic plain of north India, watered by tributary rivers coming out of the mountains. This land is densely populated with people living in villages without number, in sprinkled towns and cities, 800 or 1000 to the square mile. These plains of North India spread right past the border markers and into Nepal for 20 miles until they reach the jungles and then the foot of the mountains. The distinctive feature of this southern border is the dozen branch railway lines which run out from the Indian system at intervals to the border. The towns at these railheads were of course places of traffic and trade for Nepal. From the missionary standpoint these were places to go to for contacting Nepalese. And this they did.

Raxaul was the most important railhead and gateway because it served the main road to Kathmandu, the capital of the country. Especially in the cool winter season hundreds and even thousands of Nepalese passed through the twin cities of Raxaul and Birganj.

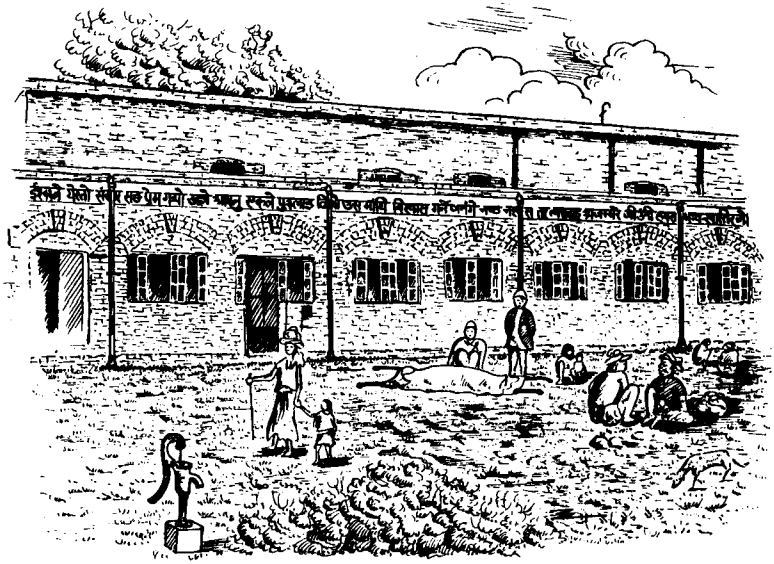
---

years Dr. Katherine Young was superintendent of this work and later, when Nepal opened, she received permission and opened a dispensary for leprosy patients at Dandeldhura, 2 days inside Nepal. When she retired, this place was occupied by The Evangelical Alliance Mission.

[9]Missionaries of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade lived in these Kumaon Hills during the 1930s and 40s. Their center was at Abbott Mount and in Lohaghat and their people were in Munsiari in the far north, on the Jhulaghat road, and in Tanakpur. They have had missionaries in evangelistic work among Nepali people in other parts of India also. In a place outside of Tanakpur, the Good Shepherd Agricultural Mission worked on a farm and offered training to young people. They included Nepal and its people in their prayers and work.

There were Gorkha soldiers coming and going to their regiments in India; students attending schools and colleges; pilgrims and traders; hill people emigrating to look for work in tea estates in Assam or in the big cities; high-ranking officials on state business; aristocracy seeking their interests in the outside world.

In 1900 British missionaries came into the Champaran District of Bihar, met scattered British indigo planters and started their work in Motihari, some miles from the border. These missionaries, while working among the people of India around them, also carried an interest toward Nepal. Part of the name of their mission was 'Regions Beyond' and to them this meant Nepal. In the cold season they itinerated throughout the district for preaching and distributing Christian literature and they always included a camp in Raxaul. In 1919 a Nepali couple was posted in Raxaul especially to preach to the Nepalese who were there. Missionary H.C. Duncan came across from Darjeeling some winter seasons to join in this preaching. The mission opened a dispensary in Raxaul in 1926. On clear winter days they could look from this south border across the intervening plains and see the line of snowy peaks of the Himals on the back side of Nepal.



In 1930 Dr. Cecil Duncan led in building a mission hospital on the border at Raxaul, on the walls of which a Bible text announced the Gospel of God.

In 1930 Dr. Cecil Duncan, son of Scottish missionaries in Darjeeling, came to Raxaul and led in building a mission hospital within a stone's throw of the border. The staff beckoned to the travellers and offered to 'preach and teach and heal' as their Master Jesus had done. To remind themselves constantly of how they should work and to proclaim their message clearly they wrote a verse in 12-inch high letters across the length of the outside hospital wall which announced the Gospel of God in the familiar words from the Bible, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."[10] The message was written in Nepali and in bold relief. People came. They came from the surrounding villages of India and out from Nepal, seeking medical help. Then came World War II with its massive destruction and disruption. Missionary men were drafted in to military service. The hospital at Raxaul was closed, the staff gone and a watchman was put in charge. The bedpans, bottles and equipment in their places on shelves gathered dust and cobwebs, in semi-darkness behind shuttered windows. It was a long wait, for something like eight years.

A new start was made in 1948 by new missionaries from Ireland, Drs. Trevor and Patricia Strong. They gathered a staff of European, Indian and Nepali Christians and opened the hospital with vigor. A building program enlarged the hospital to 120 beds. The staff grew accordingly, together with a nurses training school, and before long the hospital was treating 40,000 out-patients and 4000 in-patients yearly. This hospital has sustained a Christian service and witness which has received public appreciation from both sides of the border.[11]

In this hospital for half a century, there were always some people from Nepal mixed in with the large crowds of patients. With their medical care they also received information about the Gospel of God. Among them was a gentleman of the ruling family of Ranas. He benefited from both the medical care and from the Gospel.

---

[10] John 3:16 (KJV)

[11] Missionary work in Raxaul and at the 'Duncan Hospital' has been conducted by the Regions Beyond Missionary Union, an interdenominational and international mission. Since 1900 its missionaries have worked in this area of Bihar province. Dr. Cecil Duncan came and worked with the RBMU but in order to build a hospital at Raxaul he formed the Raxaul Medical Mission. He was unable to return after World War II so the RBMU took over the hospital and opened it again under the name 'Duncan Hospital'.

This Col. Nararaj Shamshere J.B.R. tells of his experience in these words.

> "I was born in a high Hindu family in the heart of Kathmandu, and brought up as an orthodox Hindu until the middle of my life. I had to leave my home and settle in the plains of Nepal. While there my eldest grandson fell ill of typhoid. I took him to the nearby mission hospital in Raxaul on the India-Nepal border. It was there for the first time that someone spoke to me many wonderful things about the Lord Jesus Christ. When I accepted a Bible I was accepting the Lord as my personal Saviour. I was instructed to read the Bible regularly and I have never given up the habit. These readings I did in a shut door room. My grandson recovered his health after much prayer and we returned from the hospital. Some years later, I returned to my birth-place in Kathmandu, and had a reunion with my friends and relatives, but the Light that lighteth every man guided me to accept baptism, for which I went to India, and returned. In Kathmandu my home was opened for Bible Study and Sunday worship service. The Church of Christ grew. I was engaged by the Bible Society in revision of the Nepali Bible. Our Lord Jesus is a unique Saviour. There is no salvation apart from Christ Jesus. May God guide us."[12]

Along the border eastward there is a railhead at Gorasahan. To this place in 1917 there came an Australian couple by the name of Rev. and Mrs. J.H. Coombe. They were sent by a prayer band which had been praying for missionary work towards Nepal for several years. This band was able to send other missionaries into this district also and they itinerated extensively along the border, camping at several places, from Jaynagar to Bhikna Thori and even to Gorakhpur, preaching and distributing literature to Indians and Nepalese. During the World War and the anti-foreign feelings of the independence movement these missionaries left this district.[13]

Still farther to the east a rail line goes up to the border town of Jogbani. This gateway served interior parts of eastern Nepal with such towns as Biratnagar and Dhankuta. Sure enough, a lady missionary, Miss Mildred Ballard, went into this town, opened a dispensary, and undertook Bible teaching and literature distribution. She was a woman like Katherine Harbord, full of personal faith in the Gospel of God and zealous to share it with the people of Nepal. Mildred Ballard forged ahead on her own, took care of

[12] United Mission to Nepal, *Nepal On The Potter's Wheel*. Pages 34–35.

[13] These missionaries, numbering about a dozen throughout 1917 to 1948 were of the Australian Nepalese Mission. They amalgamated with the RBMU in 1948, from which time RBMU started a branch and council in Australia.

herself, ran a busy dispensary and told people about the Gospel at every opportunity. Her personal manner of life was characterized by strong dedication to her work and frugality in the things of this world.[14]

Along the border westward there are also several railheads, two of which are important places which we ought to visit. The first is Nautanwa, the place where Katherine Harbord opened a dispensary and ran her printing press. The road that runs into Nepal from this place served a large area of central Nepal and even Tibet. After reaching the mountains the road sent off branch roads serving districts and places with important historical names like Palpa, Nuwakot, Kaski, Lamjung, Pyuthan and Baglung. The main trunk road, of course a foot-road, found its way into the valley of the great Kali-Gandaki River and climbed with it steadily deeper and higher in the mountains until it reached the region of the Takali people. These people were able traders and worked on this road with caravans of goods moving between Tibet and India. In the high Takali area, this river, together with the road, pass through the Great Himalayan Breach and rise into the dry highlands of the central Asian plateau.[15] This road has seen a variety of peoples and goods from ancient times to the present.

On the plains end this road and traffic were anchored at Nautanwa. During the quarter century before the opening of Nepal, raw materials were exported from Nepal and considerable amounts of Indian manufactured goods went up into the hills. Nepal produced none of these new things so they were sent across from India; things like tins of kerosene, factory made cloth, cigarettes and

---

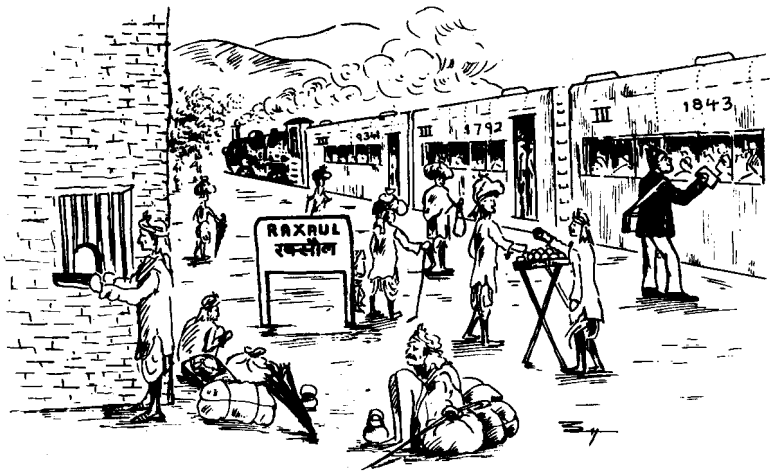
[14] Mildred Ballard was a missionary with the RBMU. In later years she entered Nepal and did extensive trekking in the eastern mountains as well as dispensary work in Dhankuta. The Howard Barclays of RBMU also worked in Jogbani for a time.

[15] A description of this gorge and road is given by Michel Peissel in *Mustang*, pages 50–51, with these words: The gorge of the Kali Gandaki is "the greatest canyon on earth", its depth far exceeding that of any other, be it the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River or the mighty gorges of the Zambezi. This is because the Kali River runs through what has recently been termed the "great Himalayan breach", a passage that cuts right through the middle of the highest part of the Himalayas, between Annapurna (26, 504 ft.) and 26, 810-foot Mount Dhaulagiri. These two peaks crowd on either side of the river, towering 18,000 feet above it, barely six miles from the river on either side. Thus at Tukutcha, the sloping walls of this incredible canyon rise over three miles above the riverbed. This is one of the steepest drops in the world! . . . For thousands of years the great canyon of the Kali Gandaki has been one of the major passageways linking the world of the high Tibetan plateau with the lower tropical lands of India. Along this route had passed since time immemorial the exchanges of men and goods between the two cultural and physical divisions of Asia.

matches, umbrellas, writing paper with pens and ink, soap, pots and pans, flashlights with parts, many small and cheap things like needles and thread, safety pins, buttons, scissors, locks, pocket knives and nails. These articles found their way into hundreds of tiny shops in nooks and crannies of the mountains. Many of the *Lahures*, or Gorkha soldiers, came from places above Nautanwa so when they returned home from their British Indian army service they brought tin trunks of 'goodies' from the outside world for the folks at home. Nautanwa saw a busy flow of interesting people.

Because of the amount of Nepali traffic at this frontier town, different missions have worked here. Among them were missionaries sent in 1929 by the National Missionary Society under its UP Provincial Committee. The missionaries were Rev. Dr. J. Boaz and Mrs. Boaz. She was also a qualified medical woman. This was the first 'foreign missionary field' for this indigenous society from the churches in India. Later on, the Society, owing to various difficulties, had to withdraw from this center for many years. But it was able to send missionaries again after 1951 into Nepal to the town of Butwal on this same road.

In the late 1930s Dr. Lily O'Hanlon and Miss Hilda Steele, missionaries from Britain and Ireland, came to Nautanwa and gradually took over from Katherine Harbord. Their youth and



On railhead station platforms, at different towns along the border, evangelists distributed Christian literature to people who were leaving or entering the country.

vigor put growth into the station and they soon formed a band of both foreign and Nepali Christians to work together. Band members worked in the busy dispensary and went daily to the railway station to distribute literature, sell Gospels and talk with Nepali travellers. They did the same in the bazaar and at inns and hotels. In the cool season the band worked in Nautanwa and in the hot season they went to Shillong and worked among resident Nepalese in the city and in the adjacent districts.[16]

The second major gateway on the west border is reached by the railway coming from Gonda through Bahraich and Nanpara to Rupaidhia on the border, with its twin city of Nepalganj on the Nepal side. Into this district came a Dane named Christian Beckdahl in 1909 and a Norwegian woman named Agnes Thelle in 1910. These missionaries became acquainted and were married in 1915, making their home in Nanpara. From this base the Beckdahls itinerated on preaching tours far and wide in the area and for long stretches along the Nepal border. This was their main work for 40 years. Perhaps no one worked with such continuing and widespread preaching as this couple did. They lived in village huts or in tents, moving their gear on bullock carts, stopping a day or a few days in village after village. Each evening, after pitching camp, the curious villagers gathered round and the Beckdahls would sing songs, preach and offer literature. On and on they went, for weeks and months, year after year. Along the border they met Nepalese and witnessed to them and prayed for them. On some occasions they were able to get permission and crossed into Nepal for short times.

Other missionaries of the same mission had their bungalow just a few feet from the border in Rupaidhia (Nepalganj Road). Near the road they built a kind of caravansary, an enclosed yard with a shelter where Nepali travellers coming down from the hills could find temporary lodging, with firewood for cooking their evening meal before heading for the station and outgoing train at midnight.[17]

---

[16]This Nepal Evangelistic Band founded in 1940 worked for a dozen years on the border. When the country opened they received permission to go up into the mountains on that trade route which they had come to know, and opened a hospital at Pokhara which came to be known as the Shining Hospital. The mission changed its name to the International Nepal Fellowship, grew considerably over the years in numbers and worked and is today one of the major missions in the country. See Chapter 5.

[17]These people were missionaries of the Assemblies of God Mission (USA) and conducted work in evangelism, schools, orphanages, a Widow's Home, and

There were two colleagues in this mission at Rupaidhia whom we ought to meet. They were Barnabas Rai and his wife. Originally this Nepali couple lived in the basti or village area outside of Darjeeling in the eastern side of Nepal, and were among the poor and illiterate class. When this man heard the preaching of the Gospel he responded with belief and acceptance. He and his wife payed attention, prayed to Christ and in due time were baptized. In his new-found life Barnabas wanted to read. He couldn't go to school because he was no longer a boy so he simply set about reading the Bible until he learned to read it, at first very very slowly, sounding out each letter and word with much care. It was both a pleasure and a strain to hear him reading in this way when he took his turn in a small house meeting; but he made it in the long run. Both of them came to every meeting and always took part in prayer.

Then one day a letter came from Rupaidhia asking if there was a Nepali Christian who would want to go there and preach the Gospel to Nepalese? The Rais took up this request seriously as from God and went there and joined the mission. For many many years Barnabas preached to the Nepalese at places along the border. He had no training or skill in methods and was very simple in what he said or did. But God chose to use him and 'anointed' him for this work so that when he preached people nodded their heads; the truth of his message struck a response in their hearts and people believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

At Rupaidhia he preached to the waiting people at the 'caravansary' or in the yards near the station. People arrived out of Nepal in the late evening, sat around and cooked their meal on open camp fires and whiled away the time until time for the train to leave at midnight. Barnabas and wife took their lantern and visited among these travellers.

"Would you like us to sing you a song and tell you some religion?" they would ask.

"Sure, go ahead, we have nothing to do," was usually the reply.

So they sang a Christian song. The wife didn't sing so this meant Barnabas sang the song. He had no sense of tune so it was only the words that meant anything. He unrolled a large picture of

---

a Leper Colony in such towns as Rupaidhia, Nanpara, Baraich, Lakhimpur, Mawabganj, Hardoi, Uska Bazar, Siswa Bazar, Chupra, Bethia and Kalimpong. Whatever their work or place they always kept in touch with the minority of Nepalese who were part of the constant seepage of hill peoples coming down to find work in the vastness of India.

Christ and while his wife held it up with the lantern shining on it he preached the Gospel of God to these people. In this way he moved from one group to another and another. They liked him. He was like them. They took the literature he offered. When the train arrived near midnight and the people moved on to board it, Barnabas Rai and his wife went home for the night.

But Nepalese not only lived within their country or travelled back and forth across the border, they lived in residence by the thousands in scattered places across north India, a minority community of people which numbered probably more than 3 million when counted all together. Within the missionary movement which we have followed in its spread across India and around the borders of Nepal there were people who also approached these resident Nepalese, especially in the areas where they were more heavily concentrated as in Darjeeling District, near Bhutan, in Shillong and Assam and in centers like Gorakhpur. Both Catholics and Protestants were in this work.

These missionaries, whether located along the border or living farther afield in India tended to work together in some respects. They tried to learn Nepali and work among Nepalese in their home tongue. The Bible Society produced and supplied them with Bibles and Gospel booklets in Nepali. Some worked in Bible Schools which taught in Nepali for Nepalese. Others managed correspondence courses for Nepalese to study Christian teachings, and in which thousands enrolled. They created publishing societies, presses, book stores which produced and used a wide variety of literature.

In the 50 years after 1900 the work of foreign missions among Nepalese gradually grew in numbers and extent. There may have been as many as 25 missions in this kind of work, some undertaking fulltime 'Nepali work' and some doing what they could in a secondary or minority way.[18] The foreign missionaries joined with the Nepali Christians and tried to live as fellow-members in the community of Christ in the society where they were.

In 1935 a number of these people met together and formed the Nepal Border Fellowship. This simple organization was a means for them to share news, information, advice to each other, cooperation in certain kinds of work and to encourage continuance in prayer and witness. People here and there throughout the world were joined with them in prayer. The Fellowship held an annual

[18] A list of some of these missions is given at the end of this chapter.

conference which contributed stimulation, unity and common effort. At one time there were more than 75 members in the Fellowship. They joined the Nepali Christians of Darjeeling District to pray their song: "O Lord, hear our petition: open the door of salvation for the Gorkhalis."

We have already said that missionaries are a peculiar breed of people. All kinds of stories are told about them. We have told some in this chapter. There are two more things that need to be said to understand the people whom we have met in this chapter, to know what it was that made them live the way they did.

These people, from Martha Sheldon in one corner and through a hundred others to Elaine Crane in the opposite corner, almost without exception, believed in God's personal guidance in their lives. They would all testify that in some way or other God called them and guided them to the place and the work they were in. It was usually a very personal, inner experience of the spirit, of which they were reluctant to speak, but which was entirely decisive and controlling in their lives. It was for them similar to the experience of the first disciples when the Lord said to them, "Follow me and I will make you become fishers of men."[19]

This teaching about God's guidance of individuals has its background. There is the fact of God the Creator of heaven and earth; of God the personal Father of his children; of God's redeeming deeds for men; of men living their lives in vocation for God; of God's management of the coming of His Kingdom among men in the earth and the involvement of people in that purpose. People may adulterate and becloud God's guidance because of ignorance, smallness, pride and even sin. But the over-riding fact is there, that God has and does guide and use individuals. Most often people are unconscious of it and perceive it better from hindsight; but sometimes it comes with conscious relevance.

The other element to note in these missionaries was that they prayed to God for the people and country of Nepal. This they did on the grounds of the examples and instructions concerning prayer in the Bible. For example, the early disciples came to Jesus on one occasion and asked him to teach them to pray. Among his instructions were these words: "Pray then like this: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."[20] These missionaries took this

[19] Mark 1 : 17. (R.S.V.)
[20] Matthew 6 : 9–10. (R.S.V.)

prayer and studied its meaning. They found reasons in the nature of God, in his words and deeds and purposes in the world, in his instructions to them, to pray as they did. They prayed often, individually and together, encouraging each other. They waited, months and years, assured that God was working out his purposes to bring his kingdom into the hearts of men on earth.

There is a small blue book on my shelf which contains extracts from the diary of Agnes Beckdahl. It is sprinkled throughout, during the years of 1910 to 1930, with items about praying for Nepal. She kept at it for another 20 years after that. Similar items can be found throughout the papers of these missionaries, of fellow Christians and associates in this movement.

Certainly there are mysteries and questions with us about God's guidance and about prayer. That is to be expected. If we knew all we would be God. But there are truths about them in men's experience none-the-less. Consider the Nepali gentleman who came to experience prayer and God and testified to it. For the strong years of his young manhood he sought reality in the twin religions of his community and was not satisfied. He joined the beginning movement for political and social reform in Kathmandu and landed in jail. There a friend gave him a book to read which contained instructions in prayer from different religions. Among the passages he found one spoken by Jesus Christ which said: "When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you."[21] This struck him. He had never heard this kind of thing before! Who was this god? He pondered the words and decided to follow the instructions. He reckoned that he qualified there in his shut room in detention. So he prepared his petitions and addressed himself to this Father in words to this effect: God called Father, I have read your instructions and I bring my petitions to you, which are these: release me from jail, restore me with the authorities, and give me the necessities to live. That was it. Then he waited. Within a short time he was given his liberty; a friend met him in the street and offered him lodging and food; he was interviewed by the authorities and reconciled. He said later about his prayer in jail that it was like throwing a rope out the window into the black night and somebody out there caught ahold of it and pulled—and he knew that God was! He later went on to become heavily involved in the movement that led to

[21] Matthew 6 :6. (R.S.V.)

the termination of the Rana Regime and the making of a new Nepal.

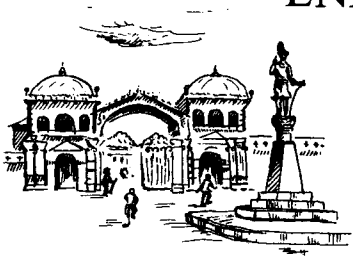
We see in part, in bits and pieces, some of which we call the missionary movement of the church, or the hand of God in the lives of people or in events among men. But over and above and far wider than we know there is the unseen presence of God in the earth working out his purposes, causing his kingdom to come and his will to be done on earth as it is done in heaven. And to this we say: AMEN.

Christian Missions which worked among Nepalese in India before 1950, so far as is known to the author:

Assemblies of God Mission, USA
Australian Nepalese Mission (later joined RBMU)
Catholic Missions
Central Asian Mission, UK
Ceylon and India General Mission, UK and international.
Christa Shanti Sangh, India
Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon (Anglican)
Eastern Himalayan Mission of Church of Scotland
Good Shepherd Agricultural Mission
Gorakhpur Nurseries Fellowship, UK
Gorkha Mission, Darjeeling District
Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, USA
Leprosy Mission, UK
Methodist Episcopal Church (USA), later the Methodist Church and later the United Methodist Church.
National Missionary Society, India
Nepal Evangelistic Band, UK and international, later The International Nepal Fellowship
Norwegian Tibet Mission
Raxaul Medical Mission, later joined RBMU
Regions Beyond Missionary Union, UK and international
Scandinavian Alliance Mission, later The Evangelical Alliance Mission
Swedish Baptist Mission
Welsh Presbyterian Mission
World Mission Prayer League, USA
Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, international
Zenana Bible and Medical Mission, later BMMF, UK and international.

CHAPTER 5

END OF THE RANAS, REVOLUTION, NEW NEPAL



It was the practice of the Rana government during the 1930s and 40s, the period which we are following, to fire a cannon in Kathmandu at 10 o'clock at night. This was a hundred-year-old custom. It was a kind of timepiece and served as a notice to the good citizens of the town that it was time to be home and in bed. But it was also a curfew. When it sounded the police on duty checked unauthorized persons who might be out in the night. Rivalry, jealousy, revenge and ambition were constantly fermenting among the upper and ruling classes. For one thing, there were too many Ranas and not enough to do. For another thing the restrictions on almost any kind of human enterprise were getting far too tight; chafing was turning into sores. The curfew was one of the devices, among several, used to discourage plots and subversive activities against the government. Furthermore, in these times one never knew what might be going on among more common people as well. Some were getting education and ideas.

There was unease in the times. The unrest was in Nepal; it was stronger outside. In British-India the beginning of the unease was showing itself in the late 1800s among the British-educated class of people in administration and professional services. They began to see themselves and their culture and their country from new viewpoints. The Indian elite used western ideals of equality, justice and freedom to reassess the British rule and to develop a philosophy of nationalism and independence. Mahatma Gandhi joined this thinking and helped to give it shape. In the 1920s and 30s, between the two world wars, the independence movement crystalized into a nation-wide, organized political party acting in demands, protests and riots, with consequent mass arrests and repressive measures by the government. Similar movements of thought and action were stirring in other countries of Asia.[1] The ideas seethed in the minds of some Nepali scholars and youth who were in India or at home. With great caution, sometimes under the disguise of religious talk, some Nepalese began to discuss the new concepts about people and government.[2] The talk was no longer only about the old aim of replacing one ruling clique with another. There were entirely new, dynamic, structure-changing ideas afoot—ideas about what government ought to be, where it derived its power, what it should do, as well as what people were and a new kind of manner of life which could be theirs. The words for these concepts were democracy, human rights, freedom.

There came a night in September 1940, after the curfew sounded, when men stealthily went into the streets of Kathmandu and Patan

---

[1]The brown giant of Asia's people was awakening and pulling at its bonds. The Japanese showed that Asians could defeat Europeans in their victory over the Russians in 1905. World War I materially weakened the European colonial powers; it cracked their moral case for foreign rule, broke their axiom of permanent empires and stopped the advance of the colonial trend. See Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama*, Vol. I, chapter 4.

[2]Fuel for the fires of revolt in Asian countries came from several sources. One was the Communist government of the Soviet Union, which, after World War I, vigorously denounced imperialism and supported the nationalists' demands in Asia for political independence. It preached social justice based on equality of all, regardless of sex, race, color or class. The assumption of white supremacy implicit in colonial rule was attacked. The Russians demonstrated the rapid economic development of a backward nation by state planning. Communist doctrines took stronger hold where the colonial rule remained tighter with few reforms and concessions ... The Allied war aims in the first World War included the principle of national self-determination (though it wasn't applied to colonial countries) ... Liberal thinkers argued that democratic principles were incompatible with authoritarian rule. See Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama*, Vol. I, chapter 4.

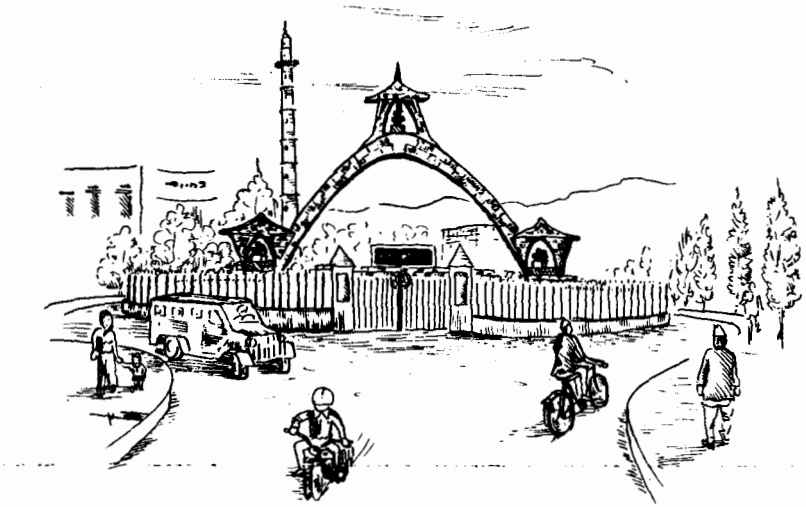
and left papers here and there where pedestrians in the morning could find them. These notices had been produced on a duplicating machine obtained in India and smuggled in to Nepal. Members of a secret society called the Nepal Praja Parishad had been meeting since 1936 and discussing how the autocratic government of the Ranas could be terminated. This society was small, with perhaps only two dozen members. They had even made secret contact with His Majesty King Tribuvan who gave his moral support to their cause. In these times the Royal Family was confined to their palace quarters under guard posted by the Rana Prime Minister. The first action of the secret society's plans was the distribution of these notices which called on people to take up arms and overthrow the autocratic Rana rule.

The next morning people found the notices and were astonished at such bold words in their society where thoughts of this kind were hardly whispered. Police found some of the papers and reported to the authorities. Soon the hunt was on for the insurrectionists and within a month members of the Society plus several hundred other political suspects were jailed. Of course the news of the paper, its message and the arrests spread like the wind over the country. All eyes and ears were on Singha Darbar, the palace of the Prime Minister Juddha Shamshere. At the trial a hard line was taken to suppress the movement. Four were sentenced to death, others to life imprisonment or shorter terms and many to fines.[3]

This drastic action squelched the movement for a time and all was quiet. But the fire which had been kindled was not quenched, only temporarily dampened. The rule of the Rana Regime was drawing near its end. This time the cause was not a tide of foreign imperialism flowing against its borders; nor family palace plots; it was a wind of ideas, mounting to storm proportions around it in Asia with gusts of the storm blowing right in the streets of Kathmandu and in the towns of the plains. The enemies were not only disaffected aristocracy. This time the opposition was ideas in the people who were ruled, a growing rebellion in the population who had found new hope and strength.

The Nepali rebels found they could work more easily and safely from bases in India. The British, because of the treaty with Nepal, tried to suppress them, but had their hands full with the huge

[3]The four who were executed became martyrs to the cause and national heroes. Their busts and names are part of the memorial to the revolution now standing in the center of Kathmandu. Their pictures are on a memorial stamp.



The martyrs' memorial in the center of Kathmandu honors those who served and gave their lives in the revolution.

subversive movement of mounting strength and activity all across the Indian Empire. In 1942 the nationalists of India launched their actions of non-cooperation, a kind of nation-wide, sitdown strike. Scores of Nepalese in India joined in these activities and some were jailed. There they met some of the Indian leaders and learned from them and received encouragement and coaching for carrying on political agitation in Nepal. World War II came on top of all of this. The Rana Government followed its century-old policy and supported the British with 300,000 Gorkhas who fought in the British armies in the western and eastern theaters of the war.

It was World War II that shook the mountain of colonialism and started the avalanche crashing down to pieces.[4] We view Nepal in this larger scene. It was, as Myrdal says, an 'Asian Drama'.

[4]The granting of independence to colonial peoples was not an aim of the European allies in the war. It was a by-product. The war wrought conditions in the European countries and allowed movements in the colonies which, combined, were able to bring about independence. The Japanese defeated the naval and military strength of the British, Dutch and French in Southeast Asia and broke their image of superiority and power. During the years of Japanese occupation nationals in some of these countries rose in position and power. Nationalism grew. Europeans were not wanted when they returned to repossess their pre-Japanese possessions. The war severely weakened the means of the colonial powers to rule. The will and strength of the British to hold vast India was drained and when she gave it up the avalanche began. See Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama*, Vol. I, Chapter 4.

Little Nepal could no longer stand isolated and alone against the currents of the world around it. It was caught and shaken along with the other nations of Asia. Four hundred years of the course of Asian history came to an end and a seething scramble for position in a new order took the stage. Within the twelve years following the war 600 million people of southern Asia were liberated from colonial rule.[5] The independence of India really started the avalanche and it rapidly spread to other colonial countries.

After the war the Ranas hung on for another five years. The political opposition grew more vocal and demonstrative. New political parties were formed. In January 1947 thousands of workers went on strike in the industrial area of Biratnagar with strong anti-government sentiments in their demands. They were suppressed with police firing, some deaths and arrests. The Nepal National Congress, based in India, launched a sit-down, non-cooperation movement which went into effect for some months in several places (spring 1947). It was a protest against the repressive policies of the government. Students demonstrated in Kathmandu and some towns of the plains, shouting slogans against the government and were forcefully suppressed. In mid-1947 the surrounding and supportive bulwark of the British government quit India and went home, leaving the Rana Government, an old friend, to stand alone. The new Indian government was not supportive of the Ranas and advised them to reform their ways. It allowed and encouraged the Nepali rebels to carry on their propaganda and activities from the sanctuary of India.

Prime Minister Padma Shamshere (1945–48) was liberal and tried to set the country on a new course. His government opened new diplomatic relations with India, the United Kingdom, USA and France. United States Operations Mission began cooperative projects. Money was assigned for road building. Some schools were opened and mass education encouraged. Padma Shamshere drew up some reforms and in January 1948 announced The Government Reform Act 1948. It proposed limited civil rights with forms of elections and participation in government. But conservative Ranas resisted such reforms and pressured Padma to retire to

[5]The Philippines were the first to receive full independence; then India in 1947; Burma and Ceylon in 1948; Indonesia in 1949; the French Indo-Chinese Union in 1954; Malaya in 1957; Singapore in 1959. Some received their independence by peaceful means but some by war. This political avalanche in South Asian countries swept on to similar liberations in West Asia and Africa. See Myrdal as above.

India and resign. Mohan Shamshere became the last Rana Prime Minister (1948–51). He seemed not to have understood the current of the times and went back into repression of political demands and banning of parties. Again leaders in India advised him to reform his ways and allow political liberties. He waited too long. Late in 1950 when he tried to implement some of the 1948 Act it was too late. The Nepal Congress party had armed its insurgents and fixed its plans to oust the Rana government by force. The culminating events of the overthrow were at the door.

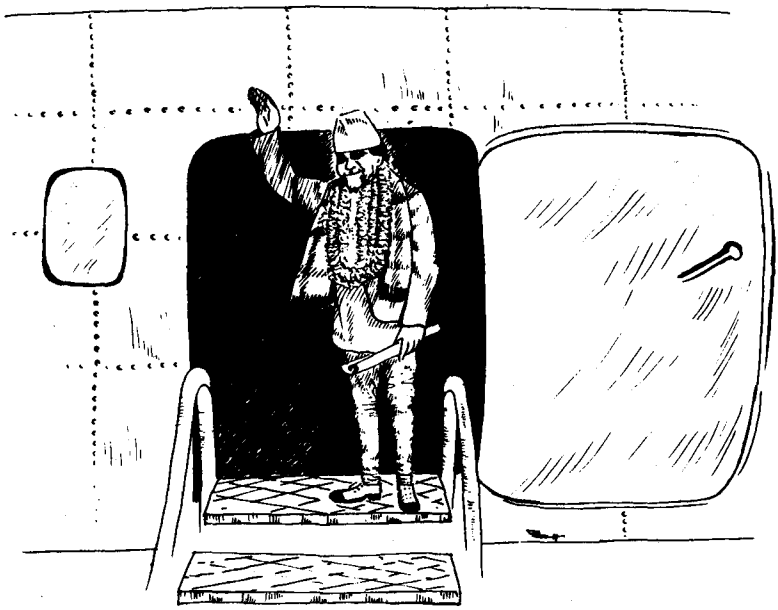
Two determinative events occurred in rapid succession. First, on November 6, 1950, King Tribuvan with most of the royal family, on pretense of going on a picnic, motored out of their palace grounds and ended up in the India Embassy under protective asylum.[6] The King refused to see or deal with representatives from the Prime Minister. So the next day the Prime Minister Mohan Shamshere J.B. Rana pressured leaders into their signed agreement and dethroned Tribuvan. In his stead they enthroned his 3-year-old grandson, Gyanendra. Pictures of the new child-king were printed in newspapers and magazines around the world. Then he gave permission for Indian planes to come and take the King and family away to India. This 'escape' set the King free to play an important role in the road ahead for his country. He was received in India as the head of the Nepal state, above the head of government in Kathmandu, and was involved in the negotiations that would lead to a new government in his country.

Meanwhile, in the very same days, the second determining event broke loose. Insurgents, led by the Nepal Congress in India, were gathering at border places. According to a prearranged plan, on November 9th, simultaneously at nine points along the border, armed insurgents invaded Nepal and skirmished with guards to capture police posts, governor's offices and government facilities. They were successful at places in the eastern and western hills and on the plains. At Birganj, just inside from Raxaul and on the main road to Kathmandu, heavy fighting took place, the town first going to the hands of the insurgents and then back go government

[6] King Tribuvan had earlier sought to leave Nepal and even to abdicate the throne. He seemed reluctant to get directly involved in politics. It appears that while living in the strict confines of his palace he received information about the movements against the Rana government and gave some degree of consent, and possibly of participation, to them. Now, in the mounting tension, and fearing that harm might come to him and his family, he made this move.

hands. Wounded people were brought to the Duncan Hospital in Raxaul. On that same starting day of the rebellion, an airplane, supposedly from India, flew over Kathmandu and dropped notices calling the public to join in overthrowing the Rana government. In the days following processions and strikes swept through the city.

For some weeks Prime Minister Mohan tried to hold out but the pressure was too great. Four enemies were joined against him: India, King Tribhuvan, the Nepal Congress and discontented Ranas. India had refused to recognize the new child-king and treated Tribhuvan as the head of state. Britain and USA followed suit. India called the concerned parties together in Delhi and led them to agree to what was called the 'Delhi Pact'. The parties agreed that King Tribuvan would return to Nepal and take up full Kingly powers while the Ranas stepped down and that moves would be initiated to establish democratic rights and procedures in a new government. This would mean the writing of a constitu-



King Tribuvan returned to Nepal to a huge welcome, a scene which has been memorialized in pictures, stamps and statues. The day is fixed as Democracy Day and honored as a national holiday.

tion, universal manhood suffrage, an executive council and an assembly.

On this basis Delhi appealed to the Nepalese, based in India, to stop violence. Mohan lifted his ban on parties, freed political prisoners and let activists return from India. King Tribuvan returned to Nepal in mid-February to a huge welcome and two days later announced to his people the main points of his promised democratic government.[7]

King Tribuvan brought to an end the government of the Rana family which had been given such complete powers by his predecessor kings. He set up another temporary government to run the affairs of state until the constitution could be written and its procedures implemented. Mohan assisted in this Cabinet which was made up of half Rana and half Nepal Congress members. Here Mohan continued until near the end of the year and then evacuated from his huge 800-room palace of Singha Darbar and retired to south India. The palace was confiscated and turned into new and rapidly expanding offices of His Majesty's Government.[8]

Any rapid political change which takes place in violence and resistance, rather than by planned guidance, is bound to carry in its aftermath an amount of shuffling and chaos. This was now true in Nepal. In the next few years the times were tempestuous. When the tight restrictions and patterns of life of the old regime were removed there was no immediate set of new fences within which to operate. The country was an arena of political free-for-all. Ideas and meanings about how government and society should function sprang up like weeds and political parties like mushrooms

---

[7] The King returned by plane on February 16, stepped aground in civilian clothes, and was decked in garlands. This scene is memorialized in numerous pictures, stamps and statues. The day is fixed as Democracy Day and honored by a holiday, programs and parades throughout the nation. The date is Falgun 7th of the Nepal calendar and falls close to February 16th on the Gregorian calendar.

[8] These were times of strong contending political forces. The British had left India and had left Nepal to stand alone as best it could in the new times. The Nepal government sought to maintain its sovereignty and to develop relations with the new powers around it. Communist China occupied Tibet and brought its rule to the borders of Nepal and India (1950). On the other side India did not favor the Rana Regime, sought to unduly influence Nepal, to be its 'big brother' and bring it under India's guidance; some thought it might be best for everyone concerned if Nepal was brought into India. There was a mixed bag of ideas among the revolutionaries of Nepal, though on the whole they had a strong aim to eradicate the Ranas and confiscate their property; some aimed for democracy with a British-form of monarchy. The Ranas wanted to stay in Nepal and find their place in the new society. There were also the monarchists.

after the rain. One meaning of the times was that the embroidered black cap worn commonly in the Rana days was stigmatized and discarded. The high and low classes were equalized and everybody was addressed with the honorific form of speech.

The King was on the throne with power and he had to set up a body of people, called 'His Majesty's Government', to govern the country and manage the public works. He was committed to do this through democratic processes. It would take probably years to set up the promised constitution and the mechanics for general elections in this backward country. In the mean time it was his duty to form Councils or Cabinets to run the government for him. He had to choose men for this job from those who had come through the revolution, men with differing ideas, ambitions, personal interests and parties behind them. In a milieu of inexperience, contention, and lack of structure there was a succession of several Cabinets and Councils in a few years, none of them really doing the job that was needed. Along the way King Tribuvan died (1954) and King Mahendra continued with experiments in government until he finally put a stop to the 'games' and ruled directly. After a year he gave to the nation a fully-developed, constitutionally-defined structure of absolute monarchical government together with a 'partyless panchayat democracy' in which democratic ideas and forms could be learned and practiced (1962). This is the political infrastructure of Nepal society which has continued and prevails today.

Nepal had been caught in the current of the times, shaken violently, and had many of its structures broken to pieces. The revolution was more than political; it was social, economic, cultural and spiritual. A new form and motion of society was appearing in the Himalayas which is best described by its own people in these words:

> "... In conformity with the times and in tune with the prevailing climate in our country ... a new socio-economic system has been set afoot ... It is a bold renunciation of the old and the outmoded and it is an affirmation of the aspiration for a NEW NEPAL ..."

In walking this new road of nation building they threw the windows and doors open, joined the world family of nations, laid development plans, undertook implementing programs and sought the help of friends in this building work. His Majesty's Government has been pursuing this general course since 1951 to the present.

We have been following with close interest and care the events on the stage of Nepal since 1714, and in particular with relation to the cause of the Gospel of God in the Christian church and mission. Their representatives watched with considerable attention the course of the revolution and the 'new climate' within the country and wondered what it might have in store for them.

The first to learn were the Catholics in Patna. Of course Catholic interests toward Nepal date back to the years when the Capuchin Fathers lived in the Valley in the 1700s as we saw in Chapter 1. The refugee Christians who left Nepal during the hardships of the Gorkha conquest settled in a place called Chuhari, about six miles from Bethia, in Bihar province. Over the years these Nepalese have been very staunch and loyal Christians, a segment of the strong church in Bethia. They have always served as a reminder and a 'connecter' for the Catholic Church with Nepal.

In 1881 Catholic Fathers went to Darjeeling District, east of Nepal, and sought out places where they could contact Tibetans such as in Pedong and Kalimpong. But they soon developed schools and colleges in the major towns of the district, both Nepali language and English medium, which grew strong and served the local population as well as students from other parts. Through preaching and teaching a large church has grown up in that area, now under a Nepali Bishop's oversight.

While the Church from its offices in Rome had first sent Capuchins into north India, Nepal and Tibet, it later sent Jesuits into these parts. Jesuits, as an order, have been active in many countries of the world for over 400 years. They have engaged in several kinds of social service work but have been especially known for work in education. They conduct thousands of primary schools, high schools, colleges, universities and advanced institutes throughout the world, with a million and a half students in attendance. In India alone the Jesuit Fathers together with lay collaborators operate 480 schools of different kinds. These have a strong reputation for giving quality academic and moral education. They are built out of an old and large reservoir of experience and wisdom.

One of these schools opened in Patna in 1940. This was St. Xavier's School, started by Fr. M.D. Moran, S.J., later to become a prominent figure in Kathmandu. This school, being located in the large capital city of Bihar, served the upper classes of society by offering to their boys ten years of the best possible education as arranged in a curriculum designed to prepare students to take what is called

the "Senior Cambridge" examination from London. When a school taught this content by well-trained and dedicated teachers, mixed with consistent moral guidance, character development and physical fitness training, it tended to train boys into the kind of men who could go on to made a leading contribution to the life of the nation. St. Xavier's in Patna was this kind of school. It did its work in English with the boys following the national custom of wearing uniforms. The day's work was run with discipline; work was work and play was play. The school brought to the students enrichments of extra-curricular activities and learning experiences. It related deeply to the parents, to the institutions of society, to the development of the country and to the government.

Nepalese who wanted modern education for their children and could afford it sent them to schools and colleges in India. Some of these students were in Catholic schools in places we have mentioned as well as in other places. There was an average of 20 Nepali students all the time at St. Xavier's in Patna. Of course they attended many educational institutions, private and state, of the large system in India. In the Rana days it could be said that what modern education there was in the Nepalese people was Indian education, received one way or another.

In the 1940s the Tri-Chandra College in Kathmandu was affiliated with the Patna University and its students had to write the examinations of the latter. There in Patna Father Moran not only worked in his own school but served in the University. At times he was a member of the Senate of the University, of the Faculty of Arts, and the Board of Examinations. Because of his personal interest in people he did much to help and guide Nepali students in his own school and to help others through the procedures, studies and exams of the University. He helped Nepali professors at the college in Kathmandu to get sylabi, curriculum materials, textbooks and exam results. He acted as an unofficial liaison, as an uncle and brother, to many Nepalese for getting their education.

For years he discussed with parents from Nepal the idea that they should have a good school in Kathmandu for their students and be done with this constant running to India. In October 1947 he visited Kathmandu, being on duty for the University. He was the Center Superintendent in charge of invigilating college students who were writing their final B.A. and B.Sc. examinations, and had to carefully envelope the exam papers and post them Registered-Insured to Patna. On this occasion he had talk with Prime

Minister Mohan Shamshere about education in Nepal and a school. Parents in Kathmandu had petitioned the Prime Minister for such a school. Out of this came a request from the Director of Education to Fr. Moran to start a school in Kathmandu similar to the one in Patna. He went home to prepare for this.

In the middle of the noise tensions and scramble of the revolution (January 1951) Fr. Moran chartered a plane and flew in to troubled Kathmandu and went about the business of arranging for the school.[9] The authorities wanted him to consider locating in places such as Pharping or Sundarijal. He held out for the quiet country and wooded surroundings of Godavari. And he got it. In March he went again to arrange for furniture and facilities and in May he came to stay at Godavari. On July 1st St. Xavier's School opened with 60 students. This was one of the early practical steps taken in the new regime to start building the New Nepal.

Four years later the growing school divided and a second part opened in the Jawalakhel area of Patan town. The next year St. Mary's School for girls opened nearby (January 1955). For 25 years these have been top schools in Nepal, setting high standards of excellence and helping to make young people of quality in the nation. The staff members of these institutions have entered heartily into the community life of the Valley and have contributed at the University. They have been active in research, writing, social work, cultural events, as well as in their own religious services. Father Moran has been a helping friend to everyone: to foreigners or nationals, to tourists or residents. He has been allowed to operate his ham-radio station, the only one of its kind in the country, and he has on occasion used it to help people with emergency news and business. He shows up at street corners, board meetings, teas, dedications, receptions, homes and offices, and everywhere he leaves his "Best wishes, prayers and blessings in our Lord."[10]

In these days of revolutionary change there also came to Nepal two unobtrusive and unknown men from south India. They belonged to the very ancient church that has known roots in the New Testa-

[9]Near the end of the Rana days a dirt airfield had been constructed near Kathmandu. There were no scheduled flights at the time Fr. Moran flew in. Anyone wanting to go in by plane had to do so by specially arranged single flights with the Indian Airlines or other flying organizations.

[10]Father Moran and some others of the Order have acquired Nepali citizenship and cast their lot with the country. They have registered their organization as "The Society of Jesus in Nepal" and this society owns the necessary property for their work.

ment era. It is called the Mar Thoma Church. We have already met Sundar Singh, the Christian *sadhu* of the Punjab who travelled and witnessed in the Himalayas and preached in churches in India. During one of his visits in south India he laid a burden on the Christians of concern for missionary preaching in Tibet and Nepal. A certain devout woman longed to respond but was not in a position to go herself. Her response took the form of an earnest prayer to God to give her a son whom she vowed she would dedicate to missionary work in Nepal. She did receive a son and she made her covenant with God and in due time informed her son about it. The Lord worked in his heart and he took the calling personally and applied himself to be obedient. In due course he was studying in the Union Theological Seminary at Yeotmal. While there he interested three other Mar Thoma students in going on this venture.

Two men made a preliminary trip up north in 1950. As they came near Nepal they stopped and visited with Christians in Gorakhpur and Raxaul and learned about 'the lay of the land'. They went in to Nepal at two points, at Raxaul and at Nautanwa, and travelled across the plains to the foot of the mountains. Along the way they talked with the people as best they could in weak Hindi or to an occasional person who knew English. What they saw and experienced solidified their resolve to come on a permanent basis. Returning home they reported to church, friends and to the seminary. They continued their studies and made another preliminary trip in 1952.

When they were ready, the four Mar Thoma Christians formed themselves into a voluntary band, to live and work together in an *ashram* fashion, to share a common purse and trust God to take care of them, and to obey the calling of God to set forth and serve the Gospel in Nepal. They took the name 'Christa Shanti Sangh', the peace of Christ brotherhood, for their little band, and travelled north again. This time (1953) they went right up the mountains into Kathmandu and rented living quarters. Col. Nararaj Shamshere invited them to his house and Christian services were begun there. Soon the Sangh members moved to rooms upstairs in a house near Juddha Sadak in the center of the city. Their quarters became the meeting place of Christians, and place for Bible studies. They also had a small library and a supply of Christian books for sale. The men attended classes at the new University and made friends among the students. One of them taught shorthand and typing at an institute down the street and later was given the job of starting a college in Pokhara. This group grew, with the addition of Nepali converts,

and formed into a congregation which bought land and built a small church, as well as managed a book store in the *bazaar*.

In those very first years after the change, still another Christian group entered Nepal. This was the Nepal Evangelistic Band which had been on the Indian border at Nautanwa, as we read in Chapter 4. They watched the change of government with great interest and tested the new policies by offering to open a hospital at Pokhara. They made their approach through the British Ambassador in Kathmandu. The place where they wanted to go was a center in central-western Nepal, destined to receive an early airfield, motor roads, large government development works and many administrative offices. The Mission had contacts with people from that place and it was a good choice of location for their purposes. The new government of Nepal was looking for quick, ready aid in its plans for social services to its people and it knew that Christian missions did this kind of thing. Here was one that was offering such service and so it gave permission to the Band to proceed to Pokhara and open a hospital. With the permission came the conditions that the Mission was to do no proselytizing nor engage in political activities and the government could terminate their work at any time in which case they would have to leave the country with one month's notice.

In the clear, lovely, open-skyed days of November, with green on the mountains and harvests in the fields, eleven people of the Band trekked with thrilling hearts into those mountains that they had viewed from afar for many years. There has always been in the saga of missions a high elation when missionaries have gone into the lands that lie beyond. For Dr. Lily O'Hanlon, Hilda Steele and colleagues there was this feeling of exultant happiness and excited joy overriding the labors of many days on the trail and as they found their place and applied themselves with hard work to create a hospital to serve the people of Nepal.[11]

To get quick housing in a place where there were no modern building materials, tools or hardware, the missionaries took the innovative idea of using ready-made buildings and ordered prefabricated aluminum 'quanset-huts' from Calcutta. These were flown in by charter plane and readily erected. They were certainly an innovation and attraction. These became the hospital while staff lived in thatch-bamboo houses on loaned land nearby. Because

[11]Six members of the mission and five Nepali Christians made this trek and arrived on November 22, 1952. By March 1953 they had located and begun to build the hospital on the north end of the old parade ground at the upper end of town.

the buildings did shine in the sun the surrounding populace soon called it by their name, 'the shining hospital' and the Mission, thinking well of this label, made it the official name.

Now there came years of hard, creative work, piling up more and more, as the hill people who had never had modern medicine came with their troubles. The staff worked with very limited supplies and equipment and in extremely trimmed-down conditions. New types of diseases appeared and there were new attitudes of people toward health and medicine with which to contend. Patients needed doses of medicine heavily mixed with health education. Staff was short and overworked and it took years to train Nepali staff. But they stuck at it, strong in faith and dedication. Auto roads came through from India and from Kathmandu so equipment and supplies arrived more readily. Town electricity showed up and even paved streets and telephones and the Mission got vehicles. The hospital added buildings, nurses' training, equipment and of course patients. The Mission expanded, sending nurses into three dispensaries in outlaying villages, and opened a leprosy hospital and colony named 'Green Pastures' in the south part of town. By the end of 25 years they were heavily involved in cooperative plans with the Health Ministry for sharing in building the new district hospital and in managing an extensive leprosy control program requiring many years of work across western Nepal.

In the first decade after the change other missions also entered Nepal after negotiating terms and agreements with His Majesty's Government.[12] The government knew who these people were and took precautions to hedge them in with limitations of movement, work and manner of life. They could be sent out at any time the government wished. The door was partly opened to them and they were invited to enter as friends to stay for a season to help make the new Nepal. Some missions did not seek to enter because of the restrictions. These people of the church missions were but a few of the many foreigners who came to work or to enjoy the country. Before long there were a thousand foreign residents in

[12]The United Mission to Nepal came in 1954 with permission to open medical work in Kathmandu and Tansen. The Gorakhpur Nurseries opened a dispensary on the central plains at Semri in 1955. The Mission To Lepers (UK) received permission in 1956 to open a hospital on the edge of the Valley at Anandaban. The National Missionary Society of India opened an ashram with a bookstore in Butwal in 1957. The Seventh Day Adventists went to Banepa on the east edge of the Valley and opened a hospital in 1957. Dr. Kate Young opened a dispensary for lepers at Dhandeldhura in the far west in 1960; this was later expanded into a hospital and taken over by The Evangelical Alliance Mission in 1968.

The Coat-of-Arms of His Majesty's Government of Nepal contains many national emblems set against the background of the country itself.

the country They were of many kinds from rich Westerners to international hippies. Tourists came by hundreds and then thousands and by now (1978) more than 100,000 visit the country each year.

These foreigners, whether missionaries or others, were only one of the many new factors with which the Nepalese had to take their chances. There were many other very alive issues. The revolution was certainly political, that is, it was a transfer of governing power from some hands to other hands. But it was much more than that. The larger part of the revolution was the process of setting everyone in the nation free on a new course to find a better way of life. It was a mighty revolutionary decision to turn from the old ways and seek new and better ways. The floodgates were opened. The great debate was on. What of the old do we keep and what do we drop or change? What do we seek and take? What is a good, new Nepal? How can we make it? This material, social and spiritual revolution has been struggling to succeed ever since King Tribuvan raised his hand and gave the signal on the decisive day in February 1951.

CHAPTER 6

BIRD TRIPS, THE DIKSHIT LETTER, A NEW MISSION

Missionaries are great on making plans. I once knew a missionary lady who could sit down and write a full-blown constitution for a mission and have it ready in case it would be needed; and she did this. She was zealous to get the job done and this included thinking out plans for proceeding. Missionaries discuss plans, pass them into minutes in meetings, write them into reports, revise them, scrap them, and start over again. It is part of the nature of missionaries that they are pressing to go places, to do things, to get things done. If they didn't have this in them they wouldn't be missionaries. It is in the nature of the 'creature'.

We have learned about the many missions and missionaries which had been working near the Nepal border for many years. They had worked and prayed and hoped that some day they might enter Nepal. Without a doubt there must have been thoughts, maybe dreams and ideas, and with some people even plans about how they would enter and what they would do in Nepal. But for

most of these missions, when an opening came for them, it came about in a way that was as far from imagined ideas or plans as could be. They had no part in how the opening was made. It was done for them. It was a classic example of a sovereign act of God; an opening which God made, in His way, and gave to them. They blinked and gulped and gradually the 'light dawned'. They saw that this was the way which God had made for them and they took it up with a powerful faith and dedication. This faith has been the footing under them for the following twenty-five years. This story we must now begin to tell. It is the story of the United Mission to Nepal.

In the mountains that keep going westward out of Nepal, in territory that once belonged to Nepal for those few years around 1800 but which has since been a part of India, there is located in the hill station of Mussoorie a school for missionaries' children. This Woodstock School, for three or four generations, has served hundreds of missionary children as well as children from other walks of life.[1]

It was owned and managed by several missions, mainly American, and these missions had responsibility to staff and finance it. During the 1930s and 40s one of the teachers contributed by the American Methodist Board was a science teacher, and later high school department head in this school, who had a very strong personal interest in studying and collecting birds. This school had a three month long vacation in the winter when the weather was too cold for the school to carry on in the mountain height. So during winter vacations, for many years running, as well as sometimes in the summer, this teacher would prepare and go on extensive bird expeditions in various parts of India. His ornithological travels took him to such places as along the Ganges River, into Gujarat, Manipur, along the Western Ghats, in Assam as well as the Punjab, up the Kulu Valley and around the Dehra Dun district. He shared his enthusiasm and findings with the school family and enriched the science department with it. In the 1940s there were some students of the Nepal aristocracy in the school and this contact perhaps encouraged the thought that maybe he could extend his bird studies into the on-going Himals of Nepal. Birds do not stop at

[1] In India there were several schools for missionary children. Woodstock School served mainly students in the north-west, and a few from neighboring countries. It had an American curriculum and in its hey-day served over 400 students in boarding. Some missionaries in Nepal send their children to this school today.

borders. What are the birds like over there? Bob Fleming determined to try for a bird expedition into Nepal.

Those were still the days of the closed and isolated Rana Regime in Nepal. In applying to visit the country Bob would be taking a long shot in the dark. He made his approach through the American Embassy in Delhi and, lo and behold, a six-months permit was granted to him for a bird trip into central Nepal, the word coming through the Royal Nepalese Embassy in India. Early in his preparations Bob wrote to the Chicago Natural History Museum and asked for their support and sponsorship. They gave this and Bob

Dr. Bob Fleming's bird expeditions in the mountains of Nepal occasioned the forming of the United Mission.

set out with their name on his letter-head and their financial help for this unique opportunity to study birds in the little-known country.

Bob organized his team to include Dr. Carl Taylor who could take care of the party medically if need arose and who would also conduct a travelling dispensary among the people as the team moved and camped from place to place. They left India at the border town

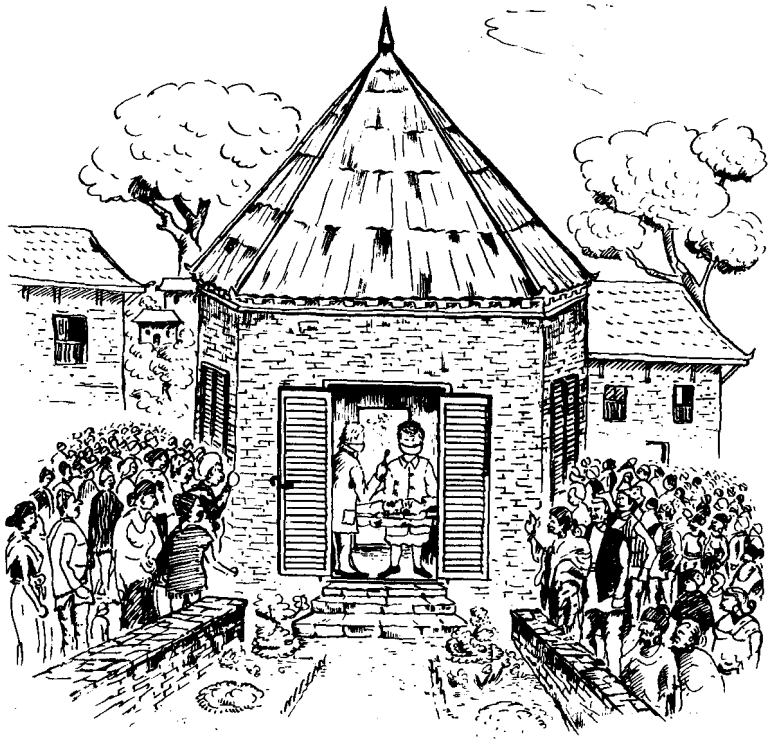
of Nautanwa, crossed through Bhairawa and Butwal on the plains and climbed the first ridges to Tansen town, the government seat of Palpa District. We recall that this is the same place that Dr. Katherine Harbord visited 15 to 20 years earlier to care for maternity cases. Governor Rudra Shamshere J.B.R. received the Fleming party warmly and assigned to them a police escort for their tour. Their plan was to travel in stages through central Nepal, from the plains to the snows, mainly along the trade route which follows the valley of the great Kali Gandaki river. In places where they camped in their tents for some days Bob Fleming would move around the area collecting bird specimens and recording data, while the doctor opened his boxes and treated patients. For three months they moved slowly along the footroad through these mountains, a region hardly ever seen by Europeans, thrilling each day to new sights and experiences with people and nature around them. The foreigners and the natives were an equal curiosity to each other so each day had its supply of stimulating human relations. It was a small yet great expedition, for during it were planted seeds of knowledge, ideas and faith which in time bloomed into the United Mission.[2]

After reaching home Bob described their experiences and explained, "It opened our eyes for the first time to the medical needs of Nepal." His wife, Bethel, medical doctor of Woodstock School and on the staff of Landour Community Hospital, had been on other bird trips with Bob, taking their two children along as well. Bob of course was now 'bit with the bug' to go on more bird trips to Nepal and Bethel and children determined to go with him. It was not possible to make a trip the next winter because of the political unrest and revolution in Nepal (1950–51). But they planned a trip for the following winter into the same area. This trip brought

[2] Bob Fleming writes about this first expedition with these further details: The party consisted of Dr. Robert L. Fleming (doctorate in education; Methodist missionary on the staff of Woodstock School); Dr. Carl Taylor, doctor of the American Presbyterian Mission hospital in Fatehgarh, UP, whose place in the hospital was taken by Dr. Bethel Fleming to make it possible for Dr. Taylor to go on the expedition; Mr. T.R. Bergsaker, missionary of the Norwegian Free Evangelical Mission, also on the staff of Woodstock School; Mr. Harold Bergsma, high school student of Woodstock, who returned from furlough in USA and brought equipment for the party. "We set off October 31, 1949 for a three months trek and visited Butwal, Tansen, Baglung, Tukuche and Pokhara enroute. During this time we collected 720 bird skins representing 256 species. We discovered a new species of green pigeon which we named *Teron pompadora conoveri*, after our sponsor, Dr. Conover of the Chicago Natural History Museum."

into the picture Dr. and Mrs. Carl Friedericks who from then on also became active participants in this story.

This second trip (1951–52) became a family affair, medical tour and a bird expedition. The Flemings took their children along, Sally Beth, age 8, and Bob Jr., age 14. The Friedericks were a young missionary family who had started out in south China but had evacuated when the Communists took over the country. Their American Presbyterian Board had then assigned them to replace Dr. John Taylor at the Fatehgarh mission hospital in the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh), India. There they began to learn about Nepal. Carl and Betty Ann Friedericks took along their three children, the youngest being only two months old. On this trip they went into the same part of Nepal that the party of the first expedition had visited. From information learned previously the families planned to live in Tansen where Dr. Bethel



When Carl Friedericks took out and displayed a bladder stone there was a spontaneous cheer from the crowd of onlookers.

and Dr. Carl would conduct a clinic. So, along with food and supplies for such a trip they also brought stocks of medicines and equipment for the clinic. Dr. Bob Sr. and Bob Jr. would give their attention mainly to the study and collection of birds in the area.

In the town they quickly made friends and got the use of a large house both for living quarters and clinic. For six weeks they saw patients and treated them, in all about 1500. The crowds grew and the governor sent police to help organize the people. Young men of the town also volunteered and their help was very useful in interpreting and guiding the patients and crowds. In the town was a small government hospital and the doctors arranged for Carl to perform some operations in a special room. For the first operation there were about 200 people watching through the windows and door and when Carl took out and displayed a bladder stone there was a spontaneous cheer from the onlookers. The townspeople feted the foreigners to tea in celebration of this successful major surgery in Tansen. The days passed swiftly, full of clinic work, looking around the town area, and making friends. During the last few days some Methodists came up from India to join them and see what this Nepal was like. They were Dr. Moffatt of the Methodist Mission in Lucknow and his daughter Margaret, a nurse, together with Mr. Douglas Pickett, son of the Bishop in Delhi. When their days were up at Tansen these visitors escorted the mothers and children back down to India while Bob, Carl and Bob Jr. went together further north for birds. On the night before leaving some town leaders came and seriously asked the missionaries to return and establish a hospital in Tansen. They discussed the implications of such a request: it would mean Christian missionaries establishing a mission hospital; permission would have to be obtained from the government; their own mission boards would have to approve of such new work. Even then the town leaders insisted that they wanted the missionaries to return and open a hospital. Hundreds of them had experienced modern medicine, with surgical and healing help from the hands of these missionaries and they wanted more of it. Some of them knew about mission hospitals in India and they were satisfied to have the same. The doctors responded with serious concern and assured the Tansenites that they would certainly consider the matter.

Bob and Carl made their trip further up the trail as far as Pokhara. At the new dirt airport they met Paul Rose, Director of the United States Operational Mission and started a friendship which would have many contacts and enrichments in the days ahead. On their

return Bob and Carl stopped briefly in Tansen again. The Governor urged on them the opening of a permanent hospital and offered to do his part to influence government officials to grant permission. A clan of Brahmins by the name of Sharma, who had become friendly and helpful to the missionaries and in whose house they had lived for the six weeks clinic, also urged them strongly to return and establish the hospital. These were men who had grown up in Kathmandu and Tansen and had been away to India for higher education. They pressed for this improved facility for their town and country.

Again in India, the party met in Lucknow at the home of the Moffatts for a kind of after-meeting. They thrilled from their new experiences in the 'last home of mystery', in the 'closed land of Nepal'. But there was a soberness settling on them. For up in those hills there had been laid like a yoke upon them a firm request that they go into Nepal and establish medical missionary work. The more they thought about it the more it dawned on them that it was not only the townspeople who had placed this on them, but it was God who was placing it on them. Questions grew and filled their minds: What should we do? Should we consider going? What do we do about our present places of work? What will our mission boards think about it? Would they approve and support such a venture? What are the wider implications and meanings of this for Nepal and the Gospel of God? Is God in these bird trips and using them to work out something for His mission in this land? There in Lucknow the small group prayed over these questions and concluded that it seemed God was working out something definite in Nepal for them. The Flemings and the Friederickses, who were involved said their personal "We will go" to the Lord and began to take first steps accordingly. They decided that Bob Fleming should write a letter to His Majesty's Government of Nepal and offer themselves to open a mission hospital in Tansen, as requested so strongly by the people there. Bob composed and sent this letter in late February 1952.

Having sent the letter the missionaries reported the whole story to their Methodist and Presbyterian mission leaders in India, explaining what seemed to them to be the evident leading of God, and urging them to consider what might be done about it from the mission side. The missionary families had made their answer and now left the matter in the hands of others, and in the hands of God, and went back to their places of work.

Now, it is one thing for an individual to get up and leave the house

and start down the road; it is another thing to get father, mother and all the children together to do the same thing; and it is something else again to get an organization like a church body and its mission boards to move through the process of decision making and fresh action. The larger the group the more people there are to consult; the particular proposals must be viewed in relation to the larger whole; new programs must be thought through, planned, financed and staffed. A new load must be carried. To say these things is not to criticize; it is to be realistic and responsible, to explain how a group of people when working together has to handle their corporate efforts. The issues would be considered; but it was still hypothetical until a reply came from the Nepal government. But consider it they did.

In these same times, following the revolution and in view of the new atmosphere in Nepal, missions nearby were wondering and inquiring what it might mean for them. Some missionaries made visits into the country to 'case the place'. Some missions prepared proposals of service programs and offered themselves to the Government to work in the country. The Nepal Border Fellowship, which was composed of individuals rather than missions, shared their learnings about the situation and considered viewpoints of what actions might be taken. The secretary of the National Christian Council in India was aware of the new situation and made enquiries in different directions to glean facts and to offer the assistance of the Council.[3] Things were certainly stirring in many places. There was an atmosphere of expectation. People waited for something to happen and here and there they prodded to help it along.

That spring the Friedericks family went on furlough to America (April 1952). They reported to their mission Board about the Tansen request for a mission hospital and their readiness to go to this new work. There was reluctance to consider new work. The Board had heavy commitments in many parts of the world and was severely pressed to find staff and money to meet the needs of current work, and this included new projects already started in other places. Friederickses were needed elsewhere. The Board

[3]In these days the conservative-liberal theological controversy was in full swing. The ecumenical movement was on the rise, with its wide issues of debate. Fundamentalist viewpoints prevailed in the Nepal Border Fellowship causing a strict doctrinal statement to be adopted, membership being made dependent on it and an offish attitude taken toward the NCC and its related councils, missions and churches. An approach by the NCC to the NBF for information and fellowship was turned aside.

was heavily involved in the ecumenical thinking and movements of those days and was not ready to consider just a Presbyterian station in Nepal, or even one of cooperation only with the Methodists. The Friederickses kept pressing them all through their furlough, enlarging the Board's understanding of the country of Nepal and what was happening there and of the wider implications of this possible move. Slowly the cause took hold and contingent attitudes were formed. The Friederickses were allowed to speak in churches and raise money for a Tansen hospital. The Board agreed that if a broadly based mission was formed they would join and appoint the Friederickses to it.[4]

The Methodists were enthusiastic about the possibility of entering Nepal and their leader in Delhi, Bishop J. Waskom Pickett, took the lead in discussions and meetings to form a mission. But everyone had to wait for a reply from the Nepal Government. They waited for more than a year. The Flemings waited through the school year and during the next winter vacation planned another bird trip into Nepal. This time Bob and his party went for four weeks into the far western districts of Kanchanpur, Kailali and Doti (November–December 1952).[5] Receiving permission for this third bird trip encouraged Bob to believe that the Government was not against them though there had been no response as yet to his earlier letter about a Tansen hospital.

Following this bird trip the Flemings went into Kathmandu upon an invitation to be the guests of Paul and Mary Rose (January 1953). These folks were enthusiastic workers in the United States Operational Mission, the American aid program in Nepal. The two Bobs went about the Valley studying and collecting birds and visiting some of the sights of the ancient culture which was still intact in this modern age. Dr. Bethel visited what medical facilities there were and met persons connected with the Health

[4]Dr. Charles Leber, Secretary of the Presbyterian Board in New York, was a strong voice in insisting that this proposed work in Nepal should be strongly ecumenical. The Presbyterians were particularly insistent throughout the formative months that the mission coming to the birth should be as widely as possible international, interdenominational and inter-mission. They were already involved in a similar mission in Indonesia and believed in the idea.

[5]There was no doctor on this trip. The party was made up of Bob Fleming, son Bob Jr., a classmate Richard Parker, and their cook from Landour. They made their base in the town of Dhangari in the *tarai*, as guests of the Governor, whose son was a student at Woodstock. For Christmas, Bethel Fleming and Sally Beth made the arduous trip and joined the men at Dhangari. This western area of Nepal had never before been studied by an ornithologist.

Ministry. These were important days for their earlier medical offer. Their personal contacts and enquiries reactivated the case, now a year old. Out of encouragement given to them and a growing 'feel' for the situation they wrote a second letter to His Majesty's Government of Nepal re-offering, in behalf of their Missions, to open a hospital in Tansen and adding the offer to establish maternity and child welfare centers in villages of the Kathmandu Valley. (Letter of February 13, 1953.)[6] Friends in USOM and among the Nepalese whom the Flemings had met on bird trips and in Kathmandu urged upon the Government acceptance of this offer of medical service to the country. When their time was up, the Flemings returned again to their duties at Woodstock School and to more waiting for an answer.

Flemings were at Woodstock School when the reply came to them. It was a letter from Shri K.A. Dikshit, Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, Kathmandu, dated May 18, 1953. The letter gave permission to the Flemings and the Friederickses, and to their Missions, to open a hospital in Tansen and clinics in the Kathmandu Valley. For such work it laid down certain conditions as follows:

1. All expenses for the establishment of a Hospital at Tansen and the Maternity Welfare Centres in Kathmandu are to be borne by the mission.
2. The staff for the Centres and for the Hospital should be drawn from Nepalese citizens as far as possible and they should be properly trained.
3. The Hospital at Tansen and the Welfare Centres in Kathmandu should be handed over to the Government of Nepal after five years.
4. Distribution of medicine and treatment of all patients should be free.

The question of allowing Christian missions to come into Nepal had already been faced by the Government in the case of the Roman Catholics and their schools and the NEB mission opening a hospital in Pokhara. But each new case, as with this one, brought

[6]In this letter Dr. Bob Fleming reported that "the Missions which we represent have intimated their willingness to implement the offer we made last year of organizing, equipping and staffing a hospital in Tansen. We would expect to open a training school for nurses there as soon as a hospital of sufficient size to merit such a program could be organized ... The maternity and child welfare work offers a real opportun-
(continued on next page)

up again the considerations of old suspicions of foreigners and prejudice toward Christians, of some fears by medical practicioners, of how to control foreigners coming into the country, of what effect it would have on society. But new attitudes of openness and the desire to get quick, modern medical service for their people prevailed and the positive decision was made.

Flemings at once passed on the invitation to the Methodist and Presbyterian mission offices in Delhi. Thought had already been put to the matter and now with the permission-letter in their hands the two missions started taking concrete steps toward forming a mission to enter Nepal. They realized that while the invitation was personal to the Flemings and Friederickses the medical work proposed would require many staff members teamed together with large resources to do the work well; and who knew what more might grow out of it? Furthermore, and this was crucial, they saw this not merely as something that God was leading the two families into, nor as an effort to be limited to the hands and resources of two missions, but they saw it as an opening and opportunity which God was giving to his world church, a work into which the resources of a wide body of Christians could be contributed so as to make the strongest possible contribution to Nepal. This was the kind of thinking that was at work in the rising ecumenical movement of those years. It was new; it was difficult; it involved the pains of breaking away from old thinking and ways. Already it was drawing churches into moves toward union, and missions into new forms of cooperation and united efforts. These two missions, full of the belief that this was the way God wanted his people to live and work in the earth, 'died' to their personal possessiveness of this request-permission and gave it up to the world church for the widest possible cooperative basis of work. That letter of Mr. Dikshit, with its terms and conditions, received in response some of the finest missionary statesmanship that has been exercised in the modern missionary movement. God was working out his purposes; the 'seed' went into the ground and died and there came from it a tide of life that has been flowing these twenty-five years and which this book is attempting to record. No one, among the hundreds of people who have

---

ity for service in the Kathmandu Valley. If five villages were to be selected, (the staff) could hold weekly clinics in each of these places. We could furnish personnel and equipment for this project. Any such program, approved by the Government, if successful, could be extended as resources permitted."

been caught up in that tide, would have had it flow otherwise. They thrill with the life of God in it.[7]

In India Bishop J.W. Pickett for the Methodists and Dr. John B. Weir for the Presbyterians led in sharing out the invitation. They sent copies of the Fleming and Dikshit letters to associations of church missions and societies to seek their advice about what course of action to take. Thus they laid the matter before the Uttar Pradesh Christian Council, before the International Missionary Council in the USA and before the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain and Ireland. Similar information was shared with missions and persons working among Nepalese in India and associated with the Nepal Border Fellowship.

Within three months of receiving the Dikshit letter an *ad hoc* Committee met in Allahabad (August 25–26, 1953) to consider how to form a suitable mission. By now a wide circle of world missionary opinion had been coming to hand on this subject. It was felt that the mistakes that had come to light in the missionary movement in India and other countries, resulting from competition, possessiveness and independent action by denominational and separate organizations, should not be repeated in Nepal. Opinion pressed for exploring the possibility of establishing a Christian mission in Nepal on the widest possible cooperative basis, a combined interdenominational and international approach. People saw the Dikshit letter as a portent of much larger possibilities, as offering a situation of great moment. The *ad hoc* Committee put all the thinking together and proposed the forming of a united, Christian, medical mission to Nepal, made up of as wide as possible a group of members, to undertake the proposed medical projects with all possible strength. The logical group in India which could lead in implementing the proposal was the National Christian Council, so the committee forwarded their proposal first to the meeting of the Executive Committee of the NCC (September 2–3, 1953 in Nagpur) and then to the Triennial meeting of the National Christian Council of India meeting at Guntur, November 5–10, and at both places the proposal was endorsed.

With this backing the *ad hoc* Committee called a meeting in the

[7] The New Testament in many places teaches this 'law of the harvest'. In one such passage Jesus speaks of it in these words: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. In truth, in very truth I tell you, a grain of wheat remains a solitary grain unless it falls into the ground and dies; but if it dies, it bears a rich harvest." John 12:23–24 (NEB).

spring of 1954 to bring together those people who at that stage were able to help plan this united mission. A dozen people gathered in Nagpur, central India, under the hospitality and sponsorship of the NCC (March 4–5, 1954). These representatives of several churches and missions worked for two days and established an interdenominational mission which they named the United Christian Mission to Nepal.[8] The members of this meeting laid down eleven principles for guiding the mission and to which member bodies were required to subscribe when joining.[9] Missionaries were appointed to Nepal and officers of the Mission were elected to serve on a *pro tem* basis until a formal organizing meeting could be held. Needs of workers and funds were defined. Instructions were given for drafting a constitution. The new officers were told to send information about this Mission to as many concerned churches and missions as possible and to invite their joining and helping in this new venture in Nepal. The news spread in the United Kingdom, North America, Australia, Europe and in India.

Some missions had already been considering the possibility but now for six months, from spring to fall of 1954, there was intense study of this invitation by many groups. Anyone who has dealt in the inner workings of church and mission principles and practices can appreciate the wide variety of viewpoints and feelings which were let loose by this occasion. Consider some of these:

Why should we not try to go in on our own, alone, and keep to the calling God has given to us?

Why join together?

What are the advantages of joining?

If we give our missionaries and money over to this united mission, what 'say' will we have in directing them and their work?

---

[8]The Mission's first Constitution in Article 1, Foundation, states: Believing that God in response to the fellowship and prayers of His people has indicated it to be His will, the United Christian Mission to Nepal was established on an interdenominational basis under the auspices of the National Christian Council of India and Pakistan at a meeting held in Nagpur on March 5th 1954 ... This is considered the birth date of the Mission.

[9]These eleven principles were the earliest attempt to write down a definition of the Mission. They included aims, organization with officers, location of headquarters, administration of the sacraments, use of money, etc. By six months later they had evolved and had been worked into the much fuller proposed constitution for the Mission. The mission organization constructed at this March meeting did not have member bodies. It was, so far, only a Mission structure into which church and mission bodies could join. They joined in the September 1954 meeting.

Who will control and direct the new Mission? Will we have any worthwhile hand in it?

Who will own the property of the Mission? Will we, when we put money into it?

In fact, who will own the Mission with its resources, institutions, people and work?

How can we work according to those four conditions of the Dikshit letter, and other kinds of restrictions?

How can denominational board missions and free societies work together with all their differences in so many ways?

Should Europeans go in at all? Or should work in Nepal be undertaken only by Christians from India?

How would our constituencies at home think of this kind of thing? Would they continue to support us in such an arrangement?

Will the historic border societies be squeezed out and the mission be made of only denominational church boards?

Will a big foreign splash be made in conservative and wary Nepal?

Will the mission be run by young new missionaries who can do untold damage because of inexperience?

How can people from so many widely different denominations worship and work together, with their differences of tradition and practice: Methodists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Baptists, Mennonites, Pentecostals, Lutherans, Free Church, etc.? Who ever heard of this?

What kind of statement of faith or creed could this mission have to which all the members could subscribe?

You can be sure there were many meetings, formal and informal, in many places, which discussed these issues. Letters went back and forth across the earth, heavy and thick with these matters. Gradually groups made decisions. It was easier for some than for others. Some decided not to join. Some decided to wait and watch. Some decided to go into it.

With several groups the discussions generally boiled down to one final question: we have had a part for many years in prayer and work toward Nepal, and now is this the opening and way that God is giving us to enter the country? And as they searched and struggled there grew in them the inner conviction that "Yes, this is the way that God is making and giving to us." This conviction

became the glue that really put the Mission together and which has held it together ever since. Other Missions, just like the Methodists and Presbyterians in the first instance, 'died' to possessiveness and selfhood and gave themselves over to be born in another form.

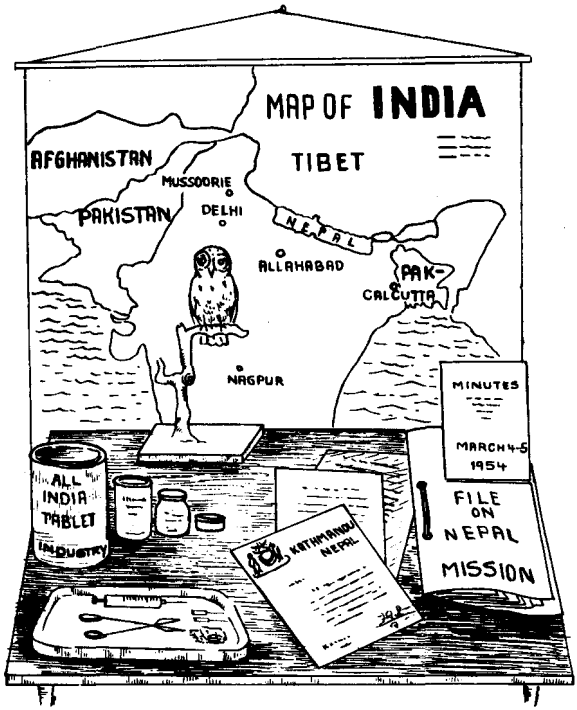
Those missions which were ready by September, 1954, sent their delegates who met in Delhi and there formally joined the mission which had been started six months before. The earlier policy had been agreed upon that when there were five missions which subscribed to the guidelines and responsibilities of membership this meeting of September 22–23 was competent to accept member bodies, adopt a Constitution and elect permanent officers. Since there were more than five the business moved forward. Eight churches and missions were approved as charter member bodies of the Mission.[10] There were another eight bodies who had representatives at the meeting as observers or visitors and who joined in the business discussions.

The meeting went on to establish a Board of Managers, with Bishop J.W. Pickett as the first President. Mr. Ross Thomas at the Inter-Mission Business Office in Bombay was appointed Treasurer. For Executive Secretary they chose a missionary of many years experience in north India and with a lifetime of interest in Nepal, Rev. Ernest Oliver, of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union. The draft Constitution was studied and discussed at length and approved for interim use. It included a Statement of Faith which was the most touchy and strategic item of business in the meeting. This item could have stymied the whole endeavor. But it came out as a strong, solid statement to which all members subscribed. Several policies and attitudes were discussed and directions fixed. The meeting wanted the NCC to continue to have a strong place in the Mission, that there be a strong emphasis on Indian workers

[10] As listed in the Minutes of that meeting, the charter member bodies were:
1. Regions Beyond Missionary Union
2. Church of Scotland Mission
3. American Presbyterian Church
4. Methodist Church In Southern Asia
5. Zenana Bible and Medical Mission
6. World Mission Prayer League
7. Swedish Baptist Mission
8. United Christian Missionary Society

The Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon (Anglican) was listed in the Minutes as a member but this error was corrected in a later meeting. This Church was an active participant in the formative meetings but did not formally join the Mission.

entering the Mission, that the National Missionary Society and the Bible Society should be definitely involved. Since there was work already going on in Nepal certain items of business were handled to assit the missionaries there.



Bird trips, medicines, letters and meetings went into the mix that created the United Mission to Nepal.

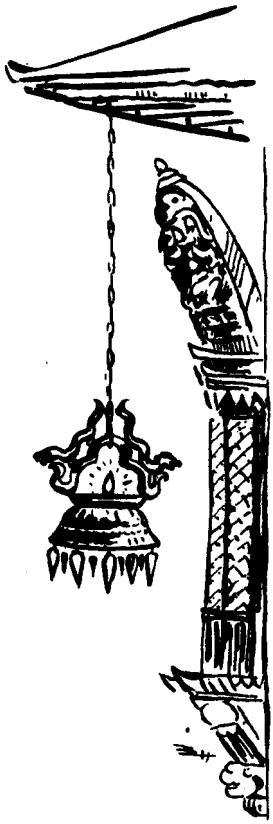
Immediately following the main meeting the Executive Committee met and considered the offer for Nepal of seven missionaries of experience in India. These were gladly accepted. Instructions were given for reporting and keeping in touch with churches, missions and organizations in India and throughout the world to invite more to join, to pray and to help so that this open door might be entered with all possible strength. So this meeting came to an end.

Several large features of the Mission would get more 'doctoring up' and rounding out at future meetings. But the hard core ideas had been constructed into a Mission and set in motion. Out of the

womb of church and mission in India, by the work of God's Spirit, there was born a new kind of united mission. The child was born in much amazement, with joy, in faith and was immediately carried away on a strong tide of endeavor into Nepal. Much of the large reservoir of missionary vision and preparation which had been building up around the country for many years was now set loose to flow. For those either observing or assisting or actively participating, it seemed like the vital taking of a highly propitious tide, the kind so well advised by Brutus in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar:*

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
> Omitted, all the voyage of their life
> Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
> On such a full sea are we now afloat,
> And we must take the current when it serves,
> Or lose our ventures."

This lengthy description of the forming of the mission as an organization we can now leave, for its missionaries are already at work in Nepal and we must hasten to join them in the new action.



CHAPTER 7

RIDING THE TIDE INTO NEPAL

The taking of the flowing tide by the Mission into Nepal was a thrilling venture. It had all the characteristics of a new enterprise in an unknown place. Awe and vigor mingled in the participants with learning and hard work. All those who took part felt the tingling thrill even in the exhaustion of slogging toil and the often severe bending to a new manner of life. There also was a rush in the riding of the tide, with some measure of scramble and even fumbling. The first missionaries went in and started work even before the Mission was properly formed, by several months. When the Mission organization did catch up with them it had difficulty serving them because, strange to say, it was mostly in India. The Executive Secretary was still serving his post in India and could make only occasional visits to Nepal to oversee this new work. The Treasurer with the money was in Bombay. Board members likewise were doing their work in India. As we have noted, the Mission was born out of the missions and churches in India and

all the early workers came out of ties and places of work there. In the beginning it was awkward to work in this way. It would take several years for the Mission to grow into its own independent and mature self-identity within Nepal. The Mission jumped off with a rush and the times were hectic. Anxiety and deep concern were in people's minds while among many of the bouncing waves, but there was no real indication of the ship capsizing or losing the tide.

Bob and Bethel Fleming were the first to go in. Following on their bird trips, contacts with officials in Kathmandu and correspondence about the medical projects in Nepal they felt strongly that they should act 'while the iron was hot'. Also, their furlough time was only a few months away. They were anxious to make a start. The Methodist Church of Southern Asia, the body under which they served in India, transferred them by new appointment from Woodstock School to Kathmandu in their annual business meeting (October 1953). Their home Board in New York which supported and sent them to India approved of their going in to Nepal and pledged a grant of working money for the new effort. So the Flemings served out their time at Woodstock and then packed for their big move. Bob Fleming wanted to use the winter for yet another bird trip so he formed a team and went this time into eastern Nepal.[1] Dr. Bethel Fleming, with daughter Sally Beth and their luggage made the arduous trip by trains, vehicles and foot into Kathmandu.[2] The Fleming men joined the women by Christmas and were guests again of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Rose of the US Operational Mission in Kathmandu. Carl Friedericks was along, though he was not yet appointed to the Mission, to see and help and learn.

Their job was clear. They had come to establish five women's and children's clinics in the capital valley. Bethel was superintendent of medical affairs and Bob was area superintendent in charge of administrative and practical affairs. They needed a first place to

[1] The members of the team were Bob Fleming, Sr., with Bob, Jr., and Dr. Carl Friedericks who had just arrived back in India from furlough. They were about two months on this trip, collecting birds and seeing patients, in the Terai and into the mountains to Okhaldunga. The Governor of the latter place asked them to start a mission hospital in his town but they could make no commitment.

[2] Dr. Bethel Fleming was a graduate of Women's Medical College of Philadelphia, and had taken post-graduate work in obstetrics and pediatrics. She went as a missionary to India under the American Presbyterian Board but after some years married Robert Fleming and joined his Methodist Mission. She had twenty years experience in Medical work in India, the last fifteen as Medical Officer at Woodstock School and also as Superintendent of Landour Community Hospital in Mussoorie, UP.

begin and they chose Bhatgaon, a large town about nine miles east of Kathmandu. The ancient foot-roads interconnecting the towns and villages of the valley were usually wide and sturdy and, while rough, were often *jeepable*. Dr. Bethel had the loan of a Jeep from the USOM friends and two weeks after arriving in the country on the opening day (January 7, 1954). Of course she needed assistants and Bethel's first colleagues were three nurses whom she negotiated on a loan basis from the Community Hospital in Landour. They came for some weeks in the cold season.[3]

Their second clinic was to be in Kathmandu. Government people took an interest in helping and offered the use of half of a cholera hospital building which was empty during the cold season. There were already steel beds in this building. The missionaries saw plenty of disadvantages in this situation but their prevailing concern was to start work quickly and do the best they could with what they had. So they accepted this offer and set about preparing the place for patients—scraping, scrubbing and painting the beds; re-mattressing them; disinfecting, whitewashing, cleaning the rooms; adding some furniture and the bare minimum of equipment. Officials were pleased and foreign diplomats and technicians watched with much interest. The country had just celebrated the third birthday of the new Nepal. There was an awareness of development and here was an improvement taking place. So it was appropriate to arrange an official opening ceremony for this new clinic. On the appointed day (February 20, 1954) a large company of finely-dressed government officials together with diplomats and friends from aid missions and development projects assembled at the clinic and joined in the festival.[4] They rejoiced in the new effort

---

[3]They were Miss Isla Knight, American, who later was assigned permanently to the United Mission, arriving in Kathmandu on December 31, 1953; then Miss Pauline Gibbs, Canadian, later Mrs. Peter Hanks of the TEAM hospital in Dandeldhura in west Nepal; and Miss Vera Charles, an Indian nurse. These were volunteers, helping Bethel Fleming get started, even before the United Mission was properly organized.

[4]This Government cholera hospital was used during epidemics. The Mission had a written agreement about the use of part of the building and also about its management in case of its occupation by cholera patients. For the Mission it was a place to make a quick and temporary beginning and served as the base for its Valley Clinics for about two years and until the Mission moved into Shanta Bhawan Hospital. The cholera hospital was located in the south part of Kathmandu called Teku, near the Bagmati River. It was later turned into the Infectious Diseases Hospital, then demolished and on the same site a new hospital is now being erected. It is

(continued on next page)

and encouraged the Mission. Prime Minister M.P. Koirala performed the act of opening. Bishop and Mrs. Pickett had come up from Delhi and joined in the happy occasion. Bishop Pickett, who was doing so much to help form the United Mission, was able to have talks with government officials and confirmed the reports of the Flemings that there was cordial interest, encouragement and cooperation from the government in the work which the Mission was beginning. Officials expressed the hope that the Mission could open work in education also.

Opening this second clinic as a small fifteen-bed hospital brought on an unexpected situation. It needed a permanent doctor, resident nursing staff, at least a laboratory technician, more equipment and more money; and this proved to be just the beginning. The team pressed right on and in a very short time had opened other clinics at Gokarna and at Kirtipur. These were places out in the valley and were reached by the borrowed Jeep over the country roads. Carl Friedericks, in the meantime, had left Kathmandu, flown to Pokhara and hiked to Tansen again to see the 'lay of the land' there in anticipation of permanently going in later to open the hospital.

These two months' worth of beginnings were reported to the important mission meeting of March 4–5, 1954 held in Nagpur, India. The first framework for the administrative structure of the Mission was created at this meeting. A fine descriptive Introduction to the whole venture, written by the new President, Bishop Pickett, was printed with the Minutes and sent to many interested friends and groups. It included these words, "We are sending you the accompanying Minutes with an introductory statement and a very cordial invitation for you and your Mission to give prayerful study to the significance of these developments and to consider whether your Mission or Church can join forces with this United Mission." New budgets and personnel lists were formed. New officers did their best to move other missions to join and contribute personnel and funds and thus stabilize the work. But this would have to wait for six months until the meeting in September. In the meantime quick help was needed by loaned and volunteer workers so that what was begun could continue and advantages gained with the public and government by this early beginning would not be lost.

---

one unit of a large complex of buildings being constructed in this Teku area for the services and administration of the Ministry of Health.

Four months after beginning the work the Flemings went on furlough.[5] Until they returned the Mission was unable to get a permanent lady doctor to superintend the small hospital and the several day clinics. A constant searching was going on for relief doctors as well as nurses and paramedical staff to serve the clinics. A succession of four doctors were loaned by missions in India, who served for a few months each, sometimes with gaps of weeks and months between them.[6] Similarly nurses came and helped for short periods. Gradually permanent mission-appointed nurses and other staff, both foreign and national, were able to come and stay on.[7] By the end of the first year resident staff were serving the hospital-clinic in Kathmandu and also the dispensary at Bhatgaon. From these two places they went out by vehicle to day clinics in four or five other places.[8] In these days also, Eunice Stevens, the laboratory technician, began systematic teaching of two Nepali young men of India who wanted to join the Mission, teaching them laboratory technology. Here was the beginning of what would grow into one of the strong features of the Mission and defined in the Mission Constitution in these words: It will be a fundamental principle of the United Mission to train the people of Nepal in professional skills and in leadership.

In India the American Presbyterian Mission was watching the situation very closely. They really meant it when they said that

---

[5] Their furlough proved to be extra long. Their son developed pulmonary tuberculosis requiring chest surgery and a long convalescence. Their time was well spent in developing interest and support for the Mission and in recruiting the services of Drs. Edgar and Elizabeth Miller who accompanied them on their return. They were away from Nepal for close to two years.

[6] The first was Dr. Mary Maclachlan, of the Church of Scotland Mission hospital in Kalimpong, who was ready to retire home but extended her time to serve in Kathmandu from May to September, 1954. Then came Dr. Rosemary Page, loaned from the Gorakhpur Nurseries Fellowship, until January 3, 1955. A month later Dr. Helen Huston of the United Church of Canada Mission served for the spring months. She came later as a permanent member of the United Mission (1960). In September Dr. Nallathamby of the Methodist Hospital at Vrindavan, Mathura, came and served for half a year or so.

[7] Nurses and other supportive staff who came in to the Kathmandu project during the first two years and stayed on as permanent members of the Mission were: Christine Eggers (RBMU), Betty Struthers (RBMU), Nora Vickers (RBMU), Mildred Ballard (RBMU), Rebecca Grimsrud (WMPL), Eunice Stephens, laboratory technician (Methodist), Frances Swenson, business manager (WMPL). Elizabeth Franklin came during this time as a teacher for school work (RBMU).

[8] Under the 'Maternity and Child Welfare Centers' project in Kathmandu Valley in these early days clinics were held at Bhatgaon, Cholera Hospital, Gokarna, Kirtipur, Banipa, Timi, Sanga and Bungmati.

they would not join until at least five missions were going in to the united effort, so as to insure a wide ecumenical nature to the mission. Their missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Carl Friedericks and family, were waiting in India for the United Mission to shape up enough for this to take place. By the March, 1954 meeting the minimum membership of more than five missions was assured so the Presbyterians took their decision and seconded the Friederickses to the infant mission. They were at once assigned to Tansingh (as they spelt it in those days) and Carl was appointed Area Superintendent with instructions to open a hospital. By May the Friederickses were in Kathmandu. They came around this way in order to negotiate the lease of a Tansen building from its owners who lived in Kathmandu. The considerations given to fixing the terms of lease for a large house in a provincial town in western Nepal for the first resident foreigners, in those times, involved considerable perplexing strain and sweat. It was an exercise that the Mission would continue to experience over and over again through the years in numerous places around the country.[9] The rental of this first 'hospital' building in Tansen was, through the years, especially complicated because it had to satisfy eight brothers with their varied claims and interests. With a lease in hand the Friederickses flew in an old DC-3 of the Royal Nepal Airlines skimming the mountains westward toward Tansen. It was characteristic of those early days of informality and few foreigners that Friederickses were able to go up into the cockpit and the pilot asked if they would like to see Tansen. "Sure", said Carl, so the pilot turned a bit to the right and buzzed down over the town. They were thrilled to see their destination so close at their feet. The plane flew past the town, over two ridges and settled down on a grassy field some 20 miles out on the plains near the town of Bhairawa. The Friederickses would have to back-track across the plains and up into the mountains to reach Tansen. There was a motor road across the

[9]Through the years, especially in the early days, the Mission bought six or seven plots of land, not large, all of which have since been nationalized. One or two pieces have been leased, on which the Mission built. Two or three plots have been bought by the Mission and ownership signed in the name of The Government, on which the mission has built. The general practice of the Mission has been to rent buildings as needed. This policy is due mainly to the fact that the General Agreement limits the time that the Mission can be in the country to just a few years and also to the fact that foreigners are not allowed to own land in Nepal. Gradually the nonownership of property became an adopted policy of the Mission on its own merits. At present the Mission rents approximately 80 properties around the country. It rents close to 50 residences in the Kathmandu Valley alone.

plains, slightly raised above the expanse of rice fields and surfaced with river-bed boulders the size of footballs. Over this road drove trucks and buses in low gear, old, tough, third-rate vehicles, battered and beat and tied to the extreme. Our family found their places in one of these vehicles and slowly labored along through the summer heat to the trading town of Butwal/Kasauli immediately at the foot of the mountains.

Climbing on the foot-road from Butwal brings one to a mountain pass and a view of Tansen on the distant ridge. This is a part of an ancient trade route linking Hindustan with Tibet.

It is a feature of the Himalayas that they are very abrupt, usually rising out of the flat plain without benefit of gradual slope or foothills. This is certainly true at Butwal. You can walk right up to the mountain and place your foot on its side and start climbing. There happens to be a mountain river coming through the ridge at this point so the foot road enters the mountains beside the river and gets behind the first ridge before it climbs over one ridge and on to the second where Tansen is located at 4,000 feet altitude, decently elevated in a comfortable climate all year round. We have met this foot road before, of course, when following the first Fleming bird trip, and the earlier Katherine Harbord maternity trips and

then with generations of Himalayan peoples moving in and out of the mountains. Now the Friedericksses, refreshed by tea and food in the *bazaar* and accompanied by porters, took the foot road through the river gorge and climbed up to Tansen.[10]

The householder was startled to see the missionaries coming to occupy his house, but when it was explained that he was to continue in one wing while the doctor and family and hospital would take the rest, he was pleased and became at once a helpful friend. So Carl, Betty Anne and three children moved in (June 15, 1954). Living was hard. The facilities considered necessary for carrying on the minimum functions of living for Western people are different than those of Nepalese in a town like Tansen. A table-height stove is needed and then fuel for it. Where do you get these? Then you need food, according to your ideas of nutrition and personal habits. Where do you get it, prepare it, and store it? Wash clothes? Tend the baby? Sit down? Write a letter and then post it? Throw out the garbage? Find a piece of wood to put up a shelf? Keep out the rats? Stop the leaking roof? Get a light when darkness falls?

Some people call these 'basic facilities' for living. Every people in every age work out their own solutions. Westerners moving into underdeveloped countries have to change their ways and make adjustments. Fifty years ago the gap in basic facilities between the cultures was less than it is today. The very rapid advance in technological, professional and specialized living in advanced countries has moved its manner of life very far away from the manner of life in Nepal in 1954. Blessed is the Westerner who, in his personal manner of life and in his professional work, can bridge the gap and fit his life into the different culture.

The Friedericks family did this nicely. Betty Anne built and tended the home base, and that kept the family happy. She hired household help and trained them to care for and use the facilities. Their main luggage, including drugs and medical supplies, was somehow stuck in India and Carl made several trips over the

[10] This certainly was one of the most heavily used foot roads in the mountains, used by travellers and porters of all kinds, coming from near and far in the mountains. The writer once counted 2,000 people passing both ways over one point in the road in an average day. He observed a maximum porter load to be five tins of kerosene, 160 lbs. Using his measuring wheel he reckoned the distance from Butwal to Tansen to be 17.6 miles. United Mission people have passed over it hundreds of times. One record for the descent by a Mission person was four hours and forty minutes. Now a fine 38 kilometer auto road (22.8 miles) carries the traffic; the ancient foot road offers only weeds, decay and nostalgia to the old-timers.

months to get it moving and up to Tansen. Carl took the decision that he would not begin medical work until he had help and could reasonably handle the patients. He was not able to get colleagues from India. He began at once to prepare such assistants by selecting and training young townsmen in simple laboratory work, treatment of patients and use of medicines. When he felt his little group was ready, after some weeks, he opened an out-patient dispensary. Explaining, learning, working together, they began to treat patients. Gradually Carl began to undertake surgery and opened a ward room for in-patients. The young men learned step by step with him. Some of them stayed on for years in this institution. In this way the United Mission Hospital in Tansen began.

The Friederickses were alone for the first eight months and were the only Christians in the community. They gradually got acquainted with the townspeople and found some were Communists who made occasions to resist these 'American Imperialists'. There were certain religious elements as well as compounders (druggists) who did not welcome them. However there were many friends and some of them who became very staunch and longtime friends.

It is not a good thing in thinking about the missionary enterprise to separate the missionary from the mission because they are part and parcel of each other. But it can happen that missionaries in an isolated place with slow communications, with little fellowship and having to carry all their affairs themselves, may wonder sometimes what the 'mission' is doing outside there someplace about such practical matters as more workers, money, equipment, mail, etc. Well, in the Friederickses' case the Mission was strongly committed to establishing the hospital and colleagues were doing their best to help in this. After eight months Rev. and Mrs. Ragnar Elfgaard joined the team (February 1955). Karla Elfgaard was an able nurse and made possible the running of a small but regular in-patient service. Ragnar helped with the non-medical affairs of the growing little station. When the construction work began for the new hospital he became heavily involved. Then months later Ingeborg Skjervheim, a nurse from Norway, walked into the station (December 1955) and the next day brought her first maternity case from the *bazaar* into the hospital for delivery. By spring Dr. Marjory Foyle of Britain joined the staff and now, though small, the team was strong.

Within two years the foreign staff had grown to about a dozen. In the years following, that number doubled and then trebled in

the Tansen area. When we speak of the 'Tansen Hospital' we must be careful to distinguish it from the 'Tansen Area'. To be sure the first idea on the bird trips was for a town hospital. We have seen its beginning in a rented *bazaar* house in a small way. There followed planning, leasing of land and then years of construction resulting in a set of buildings serving a 100-bed mountain hospital. Even while the hospital was growing the viewpoint was developing that because of the scattered population in the mountains the Mission should plan, besides running the hospital, also to 'get out into the villages' with health services. There came one stage of this view when it was proposed to establish dispensaries far afield in the mountains with resident nurses, to be visited on a fixed schedule by a flying doctor. Airfields were surveyed and sites chosen, with a home airfield at Tansen near the base hospital. Aviation service was planned and money assigned. In the end the Government firmly forbade private flying in the country.

The 'vision' at Tansen was for a group of varied services throughout the area: yes, a good hospital in the town with out-patient and in-patient services, but also a town maternity and child welfare clinic, a primary school and literacy teaching, training of paramedical workers, then a technical training school, then area-wide public health programs, as well as multiple facets of community improvement including agriculture development. These ideas didn't come in any firm chronological order. They were more or less always there, perhaps dimly in the back of the mind, coming out sometimes in a short conversation, then resting for months, to reappear in discussion and then onto paper and into Mission meetings. They all took form, in varying degrees, in the years that followed. From the beginning the works of the Mission came to be seen as a group of projects within a geographical area and were organized under the leadership of an Area Superintendent.

Within the Tansen Area the several projects have grown and stretched until today they involve many people in many places. Now the annual reports speak about the hospital with its departments. Then they speak about the community health program with its multiple activities in 35 places. There is the Assistant Nurse-Midwife School (ANM) with 82 resident students in its own fine new buildings. The Community Medicine Auxiliary Training School (CMA) is new and training 80 young men at a time for jobs in district health posts. To serve all of these, the Mission in the area has its well-developed internal administrative structure. The

current Mission prayer calendar gives the names of close to 50 Mission personnel in this area. They are associated with several hundred people who are involved full time in these programs which in turn touch thousands in the surrounding districts.

It is hard to tell what potential lies hidden in a seed; or in an idea. Some people in an old mountain town of the Himalayas asked some passing foreigners, "Can you help us with a hospital?" The idea was conceived. The seed broke open. It was nourished from here and there. What thoughts turned in the minds of men in Singha Durbar, the seat of Government in Kathmandu, thoughts no doubt heavy with the struggle between old and new ideas? But those thoughts prevailed which went onto paper and injected into the tiny plant the words of the Dikshit letter. Then came similar thoughts and then the will and the deed, first in one and then two and three people on the Mission side. It spread. With the passing of time, right there in the mountains of Tansen more thoughts and deeds arose in more people, as they did in people around the earth, each bringing some nourishing resource to the plant until it grew and grew into a large tree with many branches bearing many kinds of fruit. None of us can truly live alone. We are members of a community, part of a body. With the ideas and the deeds of many people come growth and blessing. Whence come these kinds of thoughts and deeds in people? We believe they come from God. God is an unseen Being, often hidden in the soil, in the roots and in the sap of people, doing an unseen work in them, to restore and rebuild His kingdom in people and in His earth. Blessed are the people who somehow trace His presence around them and live their lives in hand with Him. This is the Gospel of God at work from which can come the restoration we all need.

Some of the people riding that early tide, strangely enough, at times felt that it wasn't going fast enough. But in fact it was going very fast. Inside of the first year both of the original agreed-upon projects had been established in their appointed places "in a primitive sort of way" as Ernest Oliver reported it. He was saying, "Now our task is to build up our starts and footings." But, while they worked at this job in hand, the observations of the Executive Secretary on his tours in Nepal, along with the views of the workers, were being reported in the Mission meetings. Ernest Oliver was saying, "The medical needs and opportunities are so vast they cannot be measured. There are untold possibilities and opportunities." There were two executive meetings of the Mission per year

for making decisions and taking actions. This didn't seem to be enough in these hectic beginning times. There was too much happening, too many items needing attention, important things moving every month. There were the day to day jobs of consolidation in the two projects. But these were hardly even started before the Mission was planning and negotiating for entirely new and added projects.

In Tansen they wanted land to build the hospital, together with someone to plan and build it. They needed a workable system for obtaining supplies of every description. This meant a system for ordering in a foreign country (India), moving it safely by train, truck and porters, passing through the roadblocks of an international border and up into the mountains. Because of their interior conditions they needed in advance six months or one year's stocks of medicines and hospital supplies. They needed their own supply of money and ways of spending it in Nepal and India, working in two currencies. For sure they needed more people and money; there was just so much to do.

In Kathmandu they were looking for a more suitable place for a hospital than sharing in a building for cholera patients which makes "an unsalubrious companion for maternity work" as it was reported in the Minutes. Already the agreement to establish five maternity and child welfare clinics had stretched when one of them had grown into this temporary 15-bed maternity hospital. But a much greater stretch came, after months of negotiations, and by the end of the second year in Nepal, when this 'clinic' moved into a rented Rana palace (the part owner being an exile in India).[11] Here began the Shanta Bhawan Hospital, a name which came to be of considerable reputation across the country.

All this was going on in Kathmandu while the Flemings were on extended furlough in America. But communications were kept up and when the Flemings learned of the possibilities of renting the Rana palace they strongly supported the move and were instrumental in raising the rent money for it from a Methodist Church

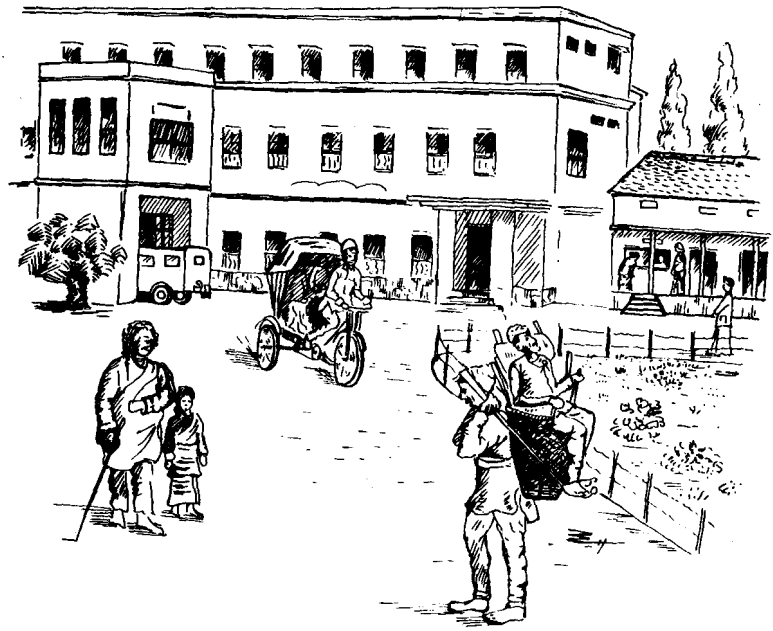
[11] The Government knew of this stretch from a day-clinic to a 15-bed maternity hospital to a large general hospital and approved of the plans, without anything being written, by granting permission for the building to be rented for this purpose and permits for new staff to come to it. Succeeding General Agreements covering the presence of the Mission in the country became more and more sophisticated requiring undertakings for every step. But the activities of the Mission in the early years were more informal, both parties learning to know each other and working in some respects by mutual understanding and trust.

in Barrington, Illinois. They also were influential in recruiting Drs. Edgar and Elizabeth Miller for the new hospital. The Millers had wanted to go abroad during the days of the Student Volunteer Movements but school debts had prevented them then. Now the Lord awakened in their hearts a call to go to Nepal and they wholeheartedly responded, launching themselves and all they had, in the prime of life, into the tide and riding it right into the gates of Shanta Bhawan. Here they poured out the best ten years of their lives in happy love and giving to others in the name of Jesus Christ, and helped the Flemings and the other staff to build up this strong hospital in the life of the nation.

Some say that there may be a hundred Rana palaces in the Valley. In general they were patterned after the palaces in Europe for they were built in a period when the aristocracy was enamored of things European. The large ones would have several hundred rooms built around inner courts and in outreaching wings, together with auxiliary buildings, formal gardens and a high surrounding wall. Small palaces were little miniatures, keeping what they could of similar forms and content. In the new era, living in these palaces as a residence was discredited and most of them have come to be used by schools, banks, Government offices or hotels. Some have been torn down and replaced with more serviceable modern buildings.

The building which the Mission rented for a hospital was a medium-sized 60-room palace built in the 1920s, offering sufficient space and utilities for opening a hospital quite quickly. When the Mission folk moved in, there were still large chandeliers and European parlor furniture in the front rooms and life-size portraits of family members in the stairway. The first patients looked from their beds at oil paintings of hunting scenes which showed riders on elephants shooting at tigers, rhinoceros and wild buffalo. These soon were replaced with the furnishings of a hospital, and two years after entering Nepal the Mission "took the current when it served" and opened Shanta Bhawan Hospital to out-patients and maternity cases. With unusual vigor the institution grew rapidly to be a leading medical center in the mountain kingdom.

The times were ripe for just this institution. When Nepal emerged from its 'medieval age' it had little or no proper, modern, medical service for the public, not even in the capital city. It needed right away a hospital which practiced modern medicine by a trained staff. This, Shanta Bhawan arose to offer. There was a combination



The times were ripe for just this institution. Nepal urgently needed a hospital which practiced modern medicine by a trained staff. Shanta Bhawan Hospital arose to offer this service.

of factors that joined to press together and raise up this institution. We have mentioned the medical need in the new Nepal. Included in the country now was an expanding foreign community working in embassies, aid agencies and business, growing rapidly from a score to hundreds. These people wanted medical coverage during their terms in Nepal. The elite of the country were very quickly expanding in numbers to include newly educated and professionals while hundreds of students were coming up rapidly and swelling the ranks of a new salaried middle class. These people wanted medical care. The large body of the common people had not known modern medicine, but in the new times were awakening to the possibility of such help in their hour of need. Tourists started coming in very early and their numbers have swelled from zero to a hundred thousand in the life-span of Shanta Bhawan. With them have grown up dozens of hotels. Among the tourists have been hippies, world travellers and mountaineers. Into the pressing expectations of this awakened and new population came the

United Mission to attempt to meet in some measure the medical needs. The Mission was a fortuitous organization for this place at this time. It was not just one Mission of one church; it was a combination of many missions and many churches. The potential resources of these Christian groups were large and were now moving and offering to Nepal talents and gifts of a large variety to make this hospital as strong as possible.

The first resources to come in were the staff and equipment of the small maternity unit which moved from the 'cholera hospital'. Three months after opening, the Flemings and Millers arrived and were added to the staff along with tons of equipment and two vehicles which they brought with them. Dr. Bethel took up her post again of Medical Superintendent while Dr. Bob again became Area Superintendent. Dr. Edgar Miller contributed his skills as internist and cardiologist while Dr. Elizabeth Miller worked with the women and children in internal medicine and gynecology. The Mission recruited many more. Over the years they came from a dozen countries, skilled people in many sides of the medical profession. This goodly number of trained and experienced staff made possible the opening of fifteen to twenty departments. The Mission has been able to keep twenty to thirty of its staff appointed regularly to the hospital and its many functions. Besides these there have frequently been expatriate volunteers and medical students helping for short terms. In 25 years there have been more than 200 staff of the Mission who have served in this medical center, some for long years of service and some for short terms. An equally strong supply of materials and equipment have been contributed. In some cases they have been brought in by workers and left for the hospital; some have been donated by mission groups in India and overseas; much more has been bought and installed in the various departments.

Large resources have given large results. They have created a quality, specialist institution, really a medical center of many parts, in a land where there were virtually no medical or para-medical workers who could be employed for such work and where very few facilities existed. To the beginning departments of outpatients, obstetrics and a laboratory were added pediatrics, surgery, physiotherapy; a pharmacy which has prepared a drug formulary and became a large enough drug store so it supplies drugs to all Mission medical units; x-ray; pathology; social services; housekeeping; a laundry with electric equipment; relation to a prosthesis center;

dental clinic; children's, leprosy and TB clinics, as well as a guest unit and hostess. All these departments went through stages of improving, change and often enlargement. Over the years the buildings were heavily remodeled and rooms, wings, wells and tanks, wiring systems, plumbing, generators and vehicles were added to make the place more serviceable in the care of sick people. A second neighboring palace, Surendra Bhawan, was added, making a substantial enlargement to the institution and departments moved into it.

Included from the beginning were training courses and schools for Nepali young people. The first was in laboratory technology; then the nursing school which has always been a strong feature of the hospital;[12] then training for assistant nurses, x-ray technicians and pharmacists. Numerous Nepalese, in all the departments, have been trained on the job. Others, after working for awhile, have been sent away for advanced training to return and upgrade the work of the hospital by their improved skills.

Visitors, observing the hospital, were amazed at all the facilities and all that was being done and sometimes were aghast when they saw the large foreign staff in comparison to so many mission hospitals which had only two or three missionary personnel. The United Mission saw these resources as the best thing it could contribute to the capital valley at this stage of Nepal's development and was thankful to God that it was able to apply such fine personnel and such an amount of equipment in order to train Nepalese and to serve people at this particular period.

Being located at the center of the country Shanta Bhawan received every kind of patient. Peasants of the surrounding farms, petty shop keepers, together with mountain people from out of the hills came cautiously, wonderingly, taking the radical step of placing their bodies in the hands of these strangers and in their strange building and with strange equipment. Most of these people had never slept on a bed, or sat on a chair or used a toilet. They struggled to learn and adjust to this strange place. It was especially difficult to adjust their religious and cultural ideas about the body, food,

[12]The SBH School of Nursing graduated its ninth and final class in September, 1972. This class brought to 54 the number of graduates fully qualified as members of the Nepal Nursing Council (28% of their registry). From 1973 this School was nationalized and joined to the Government's School of Nursing of the Institute of Medicine, Tribuvan University and functions as a branch campus. The Mission staff, facilities and finances continue to function in the School but entirely under the management of the Institute and following its curriculum, schedule and examinations.

health and medicine to the situation in this hospital and its ideas and practices in such matters. This still is an unceasing and lively area of trauma and learning, on both sides of the encounter. Then came city dwellers, merchants, professionals, students, government officials, men, women and children. Mixed here and there in the crowd were the occasional members of the aristocracy and even royalty. There always have been foreigners in the hospital, grateful to find specialist doctors, fine equipment and concerned care at the time of their need in this remote kingdom.

In the wider national scene Shanta Bhawan has heartily joined along, both learning and sharing. There has been participation in medical conferences, studies, consultations and surveys. The staff has joined the medical profession in the city and in other hospitals for disaster planning, handling accident emergencies as well as epidemic control. It has made a significant contribution in the study and treatment of altitude sickness, an illness which is occurring rather often in the Himalayas with the increase of tourist trekkers.

In several respects Shanta Bhawan has been a unique institution in the country and in the Mission. In the early stages of national development it has contributed premier medical care at the heart of the country. For many years it was the major project of the Mission, its flag-carrier. Its name and reputation were so well known that Mission personnel anywhere in the country found it easiest to identify themselves and their business by explaining that they belonged to the Mission which ran Shanta Bhawan Hospital. By now the Ministry of Health Services of His Majesty's Government has developed the large Central Bir Hospital in Kathmandu as well as other hospitals in the valley and is moving step by step to establish a network of health services across the country. Schools are training workers to serve in this national system. In this larger program Shanta Bhawan has its coordinated place and is continuing to make a significant and appreciated contribution through the functions which it has developed.[13]

---

[13] For more than ten years the Mission has tried to plan and build an entirely new plant for the hospital. There have been starts and stops. The evolution of planning is now at the stage where Shanta Bhawan will continue as a private hospital and the Mission is working under an agreement with Government to plan and build the District Hospital and administer it for ten years at a location in Patan town, about a mile away from Shanta Bhawan. A recent year's average statistics for S.B.H. are the following: Beds 125. OPD total visits 84,000. Inpatients 5,400. X-rays 13,000. Total operations 1,600. Deliveries 540. Inpatient average per day 123. Bed occupancy 91%. Dental clinic 3,025.

(continued on next page)

We must return again to that first year of the Mission. In the Bhatgaon clinic a similar thing was happening to what took place in the Kathmandu clinic. This first of the Valley day-clinics was growing large in this town. In the course of the first year two nurses with Nepali assistants had gone to live in the town and were busy every day in a dispensary and in trips to outlaying clinics.

Bhatgaon was built like a honeycomb in this respect that it consisted of tightly-packed houses, wall-to-wall, flanking narrow irregular streets, houses rising to three or four or five storeys, with as many as 500 souls of a clan-family living together. Here and there were open courts surrounding a temple or in front of the group of royal palace buildings. In many large houses were low passageways like tunnels that led through the building into inner courts on the back side surrounded by more tall buildings and sometimes with a well and private temples. The whole town was copper-red, built from bricks and tiles formed and burned out of clay excavated from the fields and from under them. The town looked for all the world like it had come unchanged out of the medieval 1500s. It still looks that way. LIFE Magazine's book *The Epic of Man* gives pictures and an exposition of Bhatgaon and its Newar culture as an example of a present day manner of life which has come practically intact out of the late Neolithic age into the present times. Like a crown high above the town rises the magnificent five-tiered Nyatapola Temple and nearby are a rich array of royal buildings and more temples, pillars, statues, great bells and gateways. Many a visitor stands in awe as he looks around, carefully exclaiming, "Fabulous! Fantastic!" And it's true.

There could have been very little change in the make-up of the town since the days, two hundred years before, when the Capuchin Fathers lived there. Now missionaries like Betty Strothers and Mildred Ballard, Nora Vickers and Becky Grimsrud were living in one of these tightly-fitted houses, using steep, narrow stairs, making themselves a part of the society as best they could. They filled their days with tending the sick, delivering babies, visiting with neighbors, holding classes, keeping their daily devotions and

---

The UMN has given approximately Rs. 50,00,000. ($500,000.) to capital costs in SBH (buildings, improvements, equipment). Since 1975 the Hospital has received no subsidy for its recurring budget from the Mission. With regard to charity, the Hospital does not have free beds; instead its Social Service personnel investigate cases of need and recommend concessions or full charity. At present inpatient charity is 28% of total charges; outpatient charity is between 20–25% of total charges; of the total hospital budget 9% is given to charity.

Bhatgaon town looks for all the world like it had come unchanged out of the medieval 1500's.

worship services and, of course, caring for their personal needs. It soon became clear that this was only a temporary way to go at medical work in this place. Bhatgaon had 40,000 people and was closely surrounded by numerous villages. This place needed a hospital of a size and kind to fit the Bhatgaon area. So they scouted around and found a fine spot on a wooded hillside outside of town, part of a government forest named Surja Binayak. The Executive Secretary came and talked the matter over, viewed the site and agreed. So did the city magistrate. In the course of the Mission's second year an approach was made to Government about the project and the possibility of a grant of this site for building a suitable hospital at Bhatgaon.

After about a year of negotiating, a lease was signed to use this government land at the nominal price of Rs. 10 per year 'for as long as the Mission remains in Nepal'. Arrangements to get water also were negotiated and with much effort a pipe was laid and water ran on the site so building work began (1957). This became a small 20-bed general hospital with a specialty in tuberculosis prevention and treatment, and for this work an extra five rooms were added for inpatients. The staff in Bhatgaon had worked for seven years in very straitened conditions which were about as unsalubrious as those at the cholera hospital in Kathmandu. What a wonderful change it was for them to move out to the open, wooded site and into buildings and facilities designed to serve their medical practice

and living conditions (June 1960). Because of their good contacts in the town they kept up a day-clinic there, with a resident Nepali family and regular visits from the hospital members. The Christians also continued their worship meetings in a rented room in the town.

The Mission designated for this project a quota of 'one doctor and two nurses' plus Nepali staff. This caused staffing problems when one went on holiday so they initiated the plan to close the hospital in cold January and all staff went on holiday at the same time. Gradually the hospital was equipped with a generator, laboratory, pharmacy, x-ray, minimum surgery and staff trained to care for these services and to treat outpatients and those in wards. As the volume of work grew it was possible to add to the staff a Nepali doctor and more mission personnel. Health teaching was emphasized and in time one mission nurse was assigned full-time to work in health teaching and practice in the hospital and in the community. The doctor in charge most of the years, Denis Roche, was especially interested in Nepal's greatest health problem, tuberculosis. He studied it and from surveys found that students in Bhatgaon were 100% TB positive and those in the villages were 30%. He worked at prevention and treatment in a systematic way. Patients were referred to this hospital from Shanta Bhawan and other places for TB care. The project became a fine institution, well-fitted into the community and the people cooperated and trusted it.[14]

By the time the Mission had been working medically in the country for close to twenty years, H.M.G.'s Ministry of Health Services had greatly expanded its work and had planned hospitals for each district in the country to be realized and staffed over a schedule of years. In keeping with this program a new government general hospital was being built in Bhatgaon and in these overall plans it was considered superfluous to have a second Mission hospital in this district. As a result the Mission was asked to close its work in the hospital and turn over the property to Government by the end of 1974. Government expected to use the facilities for some specialty service, perhaps as an infectious diseases hospital. In this development the Mission experienced the outworkings of some

[14] Statistics during its last year showed the hospital treating 22,150 outpatients and admitting 1,063 impatients. At the time of closing there was a staff of 25 Nepali and 7 Mission workers. Because of the uncertainty of the future use of the 8–10 buildings, and with the consent of HMG, some hospital equipment and furniture from the residences were transferred to other UMN projects.

of the basic factors to which it relates in the Nepal situation, such as: the temporary or limited nature of its stay in Nepal, its terms of agreement for work, its policy to cooperate with the development plans of Government and its policy to give its resources by an evolving arrangement right into the society. Degrees and forms of nationalization is something the Mission has been working with through the years. We will have occasion to observe this principle again as we follow the course of the Mission. Here in Bhatgaon it came 100% on a fixed date, after $14\frac{1}{2}$ years of the Mission hospital. There was a year to adjust in attitudes and to make arrangements for closing and transfer of personnel to other projects. The dedication and attachment that develops in this kind of staff to its surroundings of place, people and work are very deep. To detach and transfer these relations to other situations took time and attention. The staff did it with grace and faith. Unfortunately Government has not been able to use the buildings thus far and they have stood empty for four years to the present time.

We have watched one of the original Valley clinics grow up into Shanta Bhawan Hospital and another grow into Bhatgaon Hospital. In 1957 a Seventh Day Adventist Mission from USA made an agreement with Government, went to Banepa and built a small hospital. So the valley clinic which the United Mission had been conducting there was discontinued. The remaining clinics became a part of the program of Shanta Bhawan Hospital, an extension of the Hospital's services to some large villages where the people couldn't readily get in to the big city. A doctor with assisting staff would drive in a strong vehicle over country roads to a village, once or twice a week, and use a rented room to meet the sick and treat them. Very bad cases would be assisted to go in to Shanta Bhawan.

To tag along with this clinic team on one of its visits to Chapagaon or Bungmati was a fascinating experience. Mission visitors tried to get along on one of these trips to the country to 'see the real thing'. What such visitors saw is a compressed conglomerate of farm life, a totally integrated self-supporting society. There is an incredible mix of all the parts of it right around such an observer. A mother sits in the sun rubbing her new-born baby with oil, cleaning the eyes and ears, just hours after birth, while a neighbor lady massages the mother's bare back with the same oil; a feeling of achievement, relief and momentary rest enclosing their little scene. Not ten feet away a placid buffalo is dropping dung that splashes on its hind legs and on the house wall; it must be the rainy season.

Women are standing knee-deep in the public water tank washing clothes and beating them on large stones; the visitor closely watches the tank and wonders if any man-made tool can serve more purposes for beast or man than that body of thick, black water. A young girl is picking lice out of the greasy hair of a woman before she shampoos it with clay and washes in the tank. Strong men and women carry bags and bundles of produce from the fields and dump them temporarily near the house doors. Grains are spread on mats to dry in the sun and someone keeps the chickens away with a long stick. Lots of straw is stacked in the corner and a woman is carrying large armfuls of it into the house; another is weaving long rice straws into a thick mat on a simple loom on the ground. Children, lots of them, with scraggly hair and dirty noses, loose clothes hanging on their upper halves, are playing 'jacks' with stones, pushing a hoop, chasing a dog and kicking a homemade ball. Granny and a grandchild are scraping up manure with their hands and putting it in their basket for depositing on the manure pile or to use in the morning for washing the floor.

This village life is an integrated conglomerate because it is nature left as a whole—the earth, plants, insects, animals and people belonging with each other in a natural harmony. Man is on easy seeing, touching and speaking terms with the rest of nature about him. He is at oneness with nature. Therefore it comes naturally that children along with adults know about the copulating of animals, how babies are born, how to kill a rabid dog, to touch excrement with the left hand and eat rice with the right, the medicinal merits of cow urine, what to do with the crops, how to prepare the daily food for the family and its animals, how to treat the handicapped, what to do when decay takes hold of the body and death leaves it empty. There is no incongruity in knowing and living intimately with the facts of life. People have an intuitive sense that the essential life principle is at work and manifesting itself throughout the whole of nature: in the seeds and then in the crop of rice, in the mother cow who gives calves and milk and manure, in males who impregnate, in females who produce and in offspring who perpetuate, in the turn of the seasons, in the sun and water and fire and soil which somehow have a part in sustaining the whole. People instinctively cooperate with the unseen powers of life in a dozen little acts throughout the duties of the day, in devout worship of its many forms in their temples and are guided in this spiritual relationship by their religious specialists. Into this carefully fitted-

together 'society of nature' the coming of injection needles, a motor road, a cement factory, census takers or even a school for girls can be a highly questionable innovation, even an enemy. With considerable adjustment such things may be received as new and useful knowledge and even help from God.

To see Western visitors standing in the middle of Chapagaon or Bungmati brings one to reflect on how exotic they are in this environment; to consider how their manner of life often insulates them in speech, sight, knowledge and deeds from much of nature and truth; how clothed with artificiality some portions of their lives are. Pulling away from this scene the visitors walked over to the clinic room and pressed through the crowd to watch the staff diagnose and treat the mixture of nature in the bodies of these people.

For several years Shanta Bhawan Hospital had as an integral part of its program the serving of district clinics by its staff and resources. It carried two, and for a while three, such day clinics. Then on return from furlough in March, 1963, Dr. Bethel Fleming was appointed Medical Superintendent of the "Kathmandu Valley District Clinics". These were separated from the hospital and administratively organized as a distinct project of the Mission. Dr. Bethel had served the hospital for eight years; now she left the hospital to others and took up again full-time the original idea she had when she entered Nepal. With vigor and imagination she gathered staff and materials and soon the project contained seven centers. These varied somewhat in content because of their different situations. A common aim was to undertake a family-centered health care program, contributing to the health and comfort of the families in the villages. To realize this program small buildings were erected or quarters rented and resident staff placed in five of the clinics. The government power system that was spreading across the Valley made light possible in these clinics. The project had its base drug supply, portable x-ray, travelling lab technician with microscope, projectors and vehicles. Its ambitious program included mainly clinics for babies and children, preventive inoculations, supplementary foods for under-nourished children, pre-natal clinics and home deliveries, diagnosis and treatment of the sick, and health teaching in schools and elsewhere using charts, movies and other tools. The staff demonstrated to mothers the care of babies and children, and the preparation and use of local foods for improved diet. In the city clinic, next to Shanta Bhawan, for a time there was a day-care center for children of employees

in the hospital and also a training course for kitchen help and cleaners.[15]

For six years Dr. Bethel led this project, until her retirement in early 1970. This project of family-centered health care in rural places was the forerunner of the Mission's work in community health. A change came in 1972 when the Government's district health program came into effect in the area. Then these Mission district clinics were reconstituted, again joined to Shanta Bhawan Hospital and formed into its Community Health Services. They functioned in cooperative work with the newly emerging local government programs.

We have used the figure of a tide to describe in part the volume and nature of the Mission's entrance into Nepal. Initially, of course, the resources were applied to the Kathmandu medical projects and to the Tansen hospital. But these projects were not a year old before the Mission Board was discussing and pressing forward to obtain agreements to start additional new projects. A large concern was to start schools. This certainly was a need at this stage of Nepal's development. Wherever the Mission began work or made contacts in the country it included a concern for schools. Thus there was talk about the possibility of schools in the Valley, in Tansen, in the mountains to the east and west, in the plains among the Tharus and in a place of the Inner Terai at Dangdeokhuri, where the Executive Secretary had visited. It was a common experience of the missionaries in those earlier years when they travelled around the country to receive requests from the local people to stay and open medical and educational and other kinds of projects. Some of these were put into writing and sent along through government channels for hopeful action. Miss Mildred Ballard and associates were in the eastern mountains for a while with a temporary dispensary at Dhankuta, and then spending months moving and observing through the east bringing reports and urgings to open rural community projects in that direction. Another defined "community service program" for some mountain place was proposed by the World Mission Prayer League, a member mission, and the Jonathan Lindell family was offered for this work. The Board approved such a project and accepted the Lindells for it (Sept.

[15] At its peak of strength in 1969 this project had 30 employees, saw 35, 368 patients, had a recurring budget supported in part by the Mission and in part by gifts from interested friends. The clinics were at Chapagaon, Bungmati, Godavari, Pharping, Surendra Bhawan (HQ), Kalimati and Mahendra Bhawan Girls' High School.

1954). A program in Adult Literacy was approved by the Mission and begun in nearby Darjeeling District of India where workers were being trained and literature produced. Later these workers with the materials came to Nepal. The Mission to Lepers, from their organization in India, sent representatives to investigate the possibility of establishing a leprosy hospital and received permission to do so (1957). This mission related to the United Mission as an associate member. Forms of cooperative work, sharing of personnel and warm fellowship have continued through the years between the two missions. Their institution became located in a fine set of buildings on the back side of a hill about ten miles south from Kathmandu.[16]

Among these new projects under study and negotiation the first to take root and bloom was the United Mission Girls' High School. It was occasioned by Miss Elizabeth Franklin and Nepali friends who offered to start a girls' school. Girls' boarding schools had quite a history of useful service in India and were much appreciated. Miss Franklin had been working near Nepal for years and had taught school in Kalimpong. Her mission, the Regions Beyond Missionary Union, had joined the United Mission in the first instance. Now she offered herself with joyful faith and dedication to establish such a school for girls at some suitable place in the Valley. There were two Nepali teachers of like faith and dedication with her who also offered for this work. The idea was approved by the Board and the people came in at the end of 1955 to start this school.

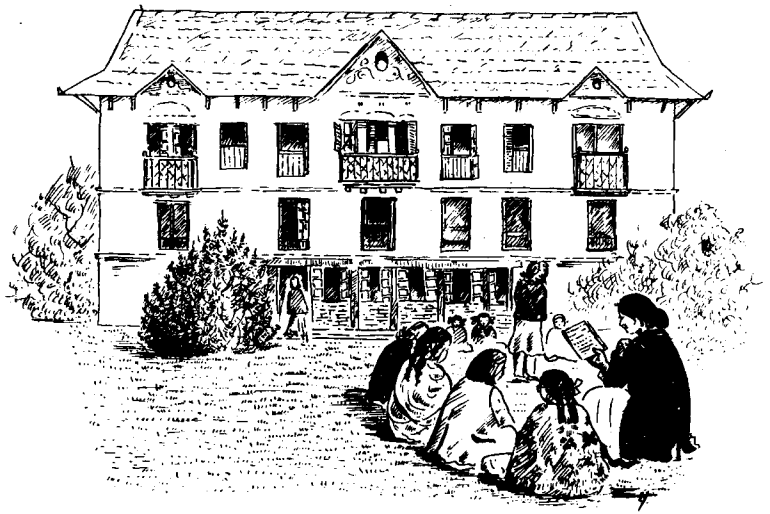
[16]The 'Anandaban Leprosy Hospital' is on a five-acre wooded hillside and consists of a 40-bed inpatient hospital and buildings with 80 beds for ambulatory patients, with staff and supporting quarters. Water for the establishment on the hillside is raised 310 feet into tanks by a hydram. It is not a residential colony. The main work of the staff consists of: treatment, reconstructive surgery, physiotherapy and rehabilitation of patients who stay up to three months in the hospital; laboratory; shoe department; occupational and recreational therapy; agricultural rehabilitation for patients; with approximately 300–400 inpatients per year; treatment of outpatients in clinics at Anandaban and in the Valley with registered patients on continuing treatment numbering about 5,000; survey and control projects undertaken in nearby Leli Valley and in the far west Karnali Zone; short training courses for health workers and nurses mainly sent from other institutions, as well as for Anandaban. This institution has moved along with government in its reforms and efforts related to leprosy in such matters as: repeal of old laws, gradual abandonment of old isolation asylums, integration of leprosy treatment and control with general health services. Through the years the UMN has related to Anandaban Leprosy Hospital through an Advisory Committee and in clinics and hospital services in UMN medical institutions. The Leprosy Mission also seconded Dr. and Mrs. C. Pedley to the UMN Hospital in Tansen for many years of leprosy work.

The team of teachers searched for a suitable place for more than a year. They had their hearts set on a building to rent in Bhatgaon but in the end this was not available. The ministry advised that a school of this kind should be opened in Kathmandu where it could better serve its purposes as well as be served. This was good advice. In the end the Mission rented a small Rana palace called 'Mahendra Bhawan' and opened the school for both boarders and day scholars (October 1957). The school began by opening two classes, Infants and Class VI, with thirty-two students, two of whom were in the hostel. Other classes were regularly added until the school reached its planned maturity at Class X, and thus prepared students to sit for the School Leaving Certificate examination (SLC) which qualified them to enter college.

An interesting feature of this school, so far as the Nepal culture and school system was concerned, was that the school hired no servants and the students did their own housekeeping duties. From the beginning they all took turns and cooked food, washed clothes and cleaned the buildings and campus. This kept them in a healthy attitude about manual work and with a readiness for housekeeping. When they went home on holidays they readily helped with the chores. Parents appreciated this and often remarked about it. Usually the category of 'boarding school', with its considerably higher fees and status, tends to develop a 'student caste' who leave menial tasks to others.

Another feature of the school was the fact that the Mission tried to keep the fees and charges as low as possible and to give a chance for poorer, educationally disadvantaged and remote area students to get an education of this kind. It did what it could to seek out such students and gave them preference to seats. Self-work by especially the hostel students kept down the costs. Then the Mission, throughout the years of its management, heavily subsidized the school, from 90% to 50% of the recurring budget. In general Nepal did not have a concept of educating girls. Following the revolution an awakening began in this area and by now coeducation is the policy throughout the nation and inducements are given to girls to attend school. Especially in the earlier years this Mission Girls' School helped to encourage the cause of education for girls and the low fees in this school certainly helped.

This school was one of the first of its kind in the country. It offered the government-prescribed curriculum in the Nepali language, keeping the school life closely related to the national culture and



The girls' school in Mahendra Bhawan was one of the first of its kind in the country. It offered the Government-prescribed curriculum in the Nepali language, keeping the school life closely related to the national culture.

as little 'foreignized' as possible. It offered this to girls, while either living in the hostel or attending as day students. It looked after the personal safety of the girls, their health and well-being, and the development of their character. Along with classwork there was a variety of extra-curricular activities. One suite was Westernized so the girls could learn to 'live' in a Western home. This was probably the first school in Nepal which seriously offered sports to girls. To begin with they had to design a suitable uniform for girls to wear while playing. They coached them in competitive games, track events and swimming. This helped to get sports for girls introduced in other schools and soon inter-school tournaments were organized.

This schooling was extremely attractive to those parents who were emerging with the nation into the new development. Large numbers pressed to have their daughters admitted. In the first definition the school planned to have comfortable classes of twenty-five students, a nicely manageable and intimate school family of maybe up to three hundred, where all knew each other and personal relations could be developed. But the public would not allow it. Within those high compound walls and beyond that gate was a safe place for their girls with wholesome living and good education

and they wanted by all means to get their girls in—by means of pressure, inducements, intrigues and even falsehoods if necessary. They bore down on those gates and through them to press their demands on the person of Miss Franklin. Some circumvented rules and deposited their girls with box and bedding right in the hostel, or came and seated their girl in the classroom on opening day, hoping that once their case was that far it could not be reversed. And so the classes swelled. It was in these highpressure times, when classes opened with the gate shut and the parents outside, that Miss Franklin made the rounds from room to room and, from her master list, read off the names of the properly admitted and registered students. The others were put out. Then with a tightly shut gate and deaf ears to further calls, the new school year got under way.

This doubling of the size of the school body brought on a serious question as to the suitability of the quarters. The small Rana palace, with some additions, could serve for a modest group of girls living in the hostel and then the day girls coming in to class, but it definitely could not serve six hundred. The Mission considered this and approved of a large 'Improvement Program' which, once started, took eleven years to complete.

This improvement began with the purchase of the Rana palace property. Purchasing land was a new operation for the Mission office people to learn. It was done in Nepali, learning many new words and terms, involving numerous interviews with concerned people, fixing prices, writing documents, paying various fees, using approved scribes, registering in proper offices, and spread over many months. These were strange and intricate moves to foreigners but a business affair that seemed enjoyable and stimulating to the Nepalese involved. The builders added a portion of land at the back and then surrounded the whole compound with a stronger and higher wall and gate. They substantially remodelled and strengthened the old Rana palace and around its three sides built new hostels, kitchens, classrooms and other facilities needed in such an institution.[17]

---

[17] In keeping with Miss Franklin's desire, for many years the Mission contributed only one missionary to the school. Then it added a nurse who also was hostel assistant. Latterly it has contributed two more teachers. For 17 years the Mission subsidized the recurring budget of the school, provided scholarship training to upgrade teachers, and gave financial assistance to students. The Mission bought the property for Rs. 240,000 ($20,000) and spent Rs. 2,280,465 ($190,000) on the 'Improvement

It has been a defined policy of the United Mission to look upon its presence and work in the country as temporary, to bring its work to suitable maturity which includes indigenization and, as time and the situation allow, to evolve projects and institutions into Nepali hands and gradually withdraw. In the case of this Girls' School this process was accelerated in 1974 when the new National Education System Plan (NESP), which was spreading its administrative structure gradually over the country in a five-year program, moved in to Kathmandu Valley. This great program, perhaps the largest and most comprehensive development effort which the Government had launched up to this time, spread its new schools and content strongly across the country and in the process gathered up all private and existing schools and conformed them to the new System. Thus the 'United Mission Girls' High School' evolved into the 'Mahendra Bhawan Girls' High School', ownership and management transferred from the Mission to the District Education Office, Mission subsidy ceased, teachers were re-hired on new terms of employment and a Nepali Headmistress installed. The Mission, by request of the new management, continued its presence in the school in a minor way. It still contributes teachers to the school, places two members on the Advisory Committee, aids certain students with financial assistance, and in other ways encourages the cause. Today the school is a superior institution, integrated and influential in the national system and respected by officials of the Ministry and the public. The Mission has had enough time in the country and in the case of this institution to travel the full circle of its defined purposes of joining the society and making a contribution to its nation-building process. In the case of the Girls' High School this process for the Mission took 20 years.

In all this early rush to start work in Nepal there were many points of pressure. Internally the Mission was pressing for workers, for money, for a form of organization that would best serve its purposes. Externally it was striving for better facilities for carrying on the work it had begun and was at the same time negotiating for permissions to open yet more and more projects. These were the larger issues, stretching over the months and sometimes years. Then there were the daily pressures which somebody had to take

---

Program'. In its present mature form the school has a staff of 24 teachers plus three UMN volunteers and seven employees. The student body numbers 600, studying in 11 classes, with 165 living in the hostels.

care of. Somebody had to keep the accounts, make financial statements, draw up constantly changing budgets. Almost daily somebody was walking or cycling to Government offices in the great Singha Darbar palace to see about permits, licenses and advice. It was very seldom that negotiations could be finished in one trip. Petrol (gasoline to the Americans) was needed to keep the Jeep going to the clinics. Petrol came into the Valley on the 18-mile ropeway over the mountains. Absences of staff had to be covered. Mail was handled at a branch post office of the Indian Government in its Embassy grounds, since the Nepal postal system did not yet belong to the international postal system. This was on the other side of town and took some time to reach. Invitations came to attend Government functions, teas, programs, along with people of embassies and aid agencies. There were Christian meetings to attend in town in the home of some South Indian Christians. Their home became the gathering point for the Church in Nepal.

One genuine difficulty, felt by all, was the fact that the leader of the Mission, Rev. Ernest Oliver, for a long time was unable to be released by his own mission for full-time work in Nepal. Ernest Oliver already was the Field Secretary of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union in its work in nearby Bihar province when he was appointed the Executive Secretary of the United Mission. He took on this new job from his station at Motihari, carrying on heavy correspondence, managing the business with the Board, and making supervisory trips into Nepal two or three times a year. This meant that the Mission office was where Ernest Oliver was in India or in his travels. It was there for five years before Ernest and Margaret Oliver were able to move and open the headquarters office of the Mission in Kathmandu on a fulltime and permanent basis (1959). They found a house in the Thapathali area of town amid the palace buildings which Jung Bahadur, the first of the Rana Prime Ministers, had built, and the office has been there ever since, of course with changes and expansion.

It was a blessing that the Mission had Ernest Oliver. He brought to the Mission just what it needed in these formative years—experience in India with mission work and management, strong ability in the use of the Hindi and Nepali languages, know-how in dealing with Government, with church, with people, and a strong personal belief in this kind of 'united' way of working. The Mission people in Nepal sent their problems and needs to Ernest and waited until he wrote or came and visited them. As might be

expected with such a new organization striking out with vigor, questions regarding policy and organization arose and Ernest led in resolving them. Could missionaries who had been appointed to the Nepal mission be pulled back to needed work in India? How can more missions be contacted to join as members and help enter the large opportunities? How should member missions share in carrying the recurring budget of the Mission? Who pays the costs of new projects? Should there be some kind of 'field conference' and if so what should it do? How does one deal with Government matters when officers are changing so often? With new projects opening up in different places, how should they be organized and how related to the whole? With the five years of the agreement speeding by, what about its renewal and what terms should the Mission seek in a new agreement? What can the Christian people of the Mission do with regard to worship and witness in this country and situation? Is the name of the Mission as suitable as it could be?

This latter question really was raised one day by the Foreign Secretary when he was discussing with Mr. Oliver about the growing presence of the Mission in the country and about the possibility of moving in to new places for educational work. The name adopted by the Board in its first meeting was 'The United Christian Mission to Nepal' but within the country the Government and the Mission people were using the name 'The United Medical Mission'. This obviously could not serve as the Mission expanded into other than medical work. The Foreign Secretary explained the growing nature of the Mission and the still orthodox religious society with feelings against the coming of Christians. He certainly favored the coming of the Mission and its work and explained how he fully understood its Christian nature and then advised that given the present factors in the situation it would be better if the Mission was simply called 'The United Mission To Nepal'. This was considered by the Board and a change to that name was made in 1956.

Thus, within the few years of that first agreement the small beginning grew rapidly into a tide of resources entering Nepal. It spread into several projects and directions which became the core shape of the Mission for many years. Relations with the Government were cordial and helpful. They really wanted the Mission at work in the country. Patience and consideration from both sides, in close cooperation within the agreement, opened the way and the tide flowed in.

CHAPTER 8

INTO THE HILLY REGIONS

In the wake of World War II and resulting massive world changes, there emerged an increased awareness of the underdeveloped peoples of the world and a desire to improve their condition. One of the strongest means which emerged for such work was the United Nations Organization (UNO) and its several agencies. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), immediately after the war, drew up plans and began to work in certain underdeveloped areas in a form of practical 'education'. It published a series of monographs on this subject and described these early pilot projects (1949–51). UNESCO began these booklets by quoting James Yen's famous statement: "Three-fourths of the world population are under-housed, under-clothed, under-fed and illiterate." Then it explained its idea for working among such people. It described coordinated efforts which dealt with the whole range of human activity but giving attention to the most pressing needs and problems of the community concerned.

The content of a certain 'project', as they called it, would vary in keeping with the factors in the particular place and would express itself therefore in a variety of 'works'. It might deal with farming, crafts, business, health, schooling, transport, energy, resources and even recreation and music. The project would deal with adults, adolescents and children as a community of people and not as isolated individuals, and it would work by means of this kind of essentially non-formal and very practical 'education', aimed at enabling the people to live better lives. This they called Fundamental Education.

As these monographs were appearing they came into the hands of Jonathan Lindell in America who had been a missionary along the Nepal border in the 1940s. He was taking graduate studies in Education in the hope of entering Nepal as a teacher. From his experience along the border he had become acquainted with Nepal and knew the general facts. There were about nine million people, 90% living in the villages and related to agriculture, 5% literate, living conditions were primitive, social institutions were simple and provincial, and the economy poor. Compared to other countries Nepal was far behind. Countries in Asia had been on the move for many years. Nepal was really only now coming out of isolation and starting on the road of development.[1] It was truly underdeveloped, just what UNESCO was talking about. Now, with the possibility of entering Nepal, this missionary was asking the question which others also were asking, "What is an appropriate kind of work that we as a Christian Mission can offer to undertake in the interior mountain communities of Nepal?" In these UNESCO booklets he found an answer which seemed to him just right. He debated with himself and asked, "Why can't we take this fundamental education idea, fit it into our mission structure and apply it according to our resources and understanding? Wouldn't it be fitting to the Nepal conditions for us to form a small team of workers with different skills who would join themselves closely with the people of a mountain community and work through a coordinated group of services at the basic living problems of the people?" Concluding that this would be a useful pattern of work, Jonathan wrote an outline of such a project and sent it to his own society

[1] Nepal is classified among the ten least developed countries in the world, has disadvantages of being land-locked, and speaks in international circles of its need for special considerations in matters of economic assistance and development.

for consideration. He called it a 'Community Service Program', to be based in this philosophy of fundamental education.

The Council on his society thought well of the proposal and forwarded it, together with the offer of the Jonathan Lindell family as possible workers in it, to the United Mission.[2] The plan and the family were both accepted. When the Lindells arrived in Kathmandu (May 1956) Jonathan was assigned by the Mission to get a permission-agreement and a location for the project and to initiate it. Because the Mission had already been discussing with Government possible work in the field of education, Jonathan approached the offices of the Education Ministry located in the mighty Singha Darbar or 'Palace of the Lion' and also former home of the Rana Prime Ministers, but now the secretariat office building of the Government.[3] Finding his way from desk to desk and trying to learn the structure and procedures of Government, he finally laid the offer of the project on the proper desk and discussed it with the official. "Where do you want to undertake this project?" he asked. "I don't know exactly, but someplace in the east," he replied. "Well, go and survey and find a place and come and talk again," he was advised. The Mission was thinking that a project in the far east, rather close to Darjeeling District of India, would offer an opportunity to draw interest and partnership from the community of

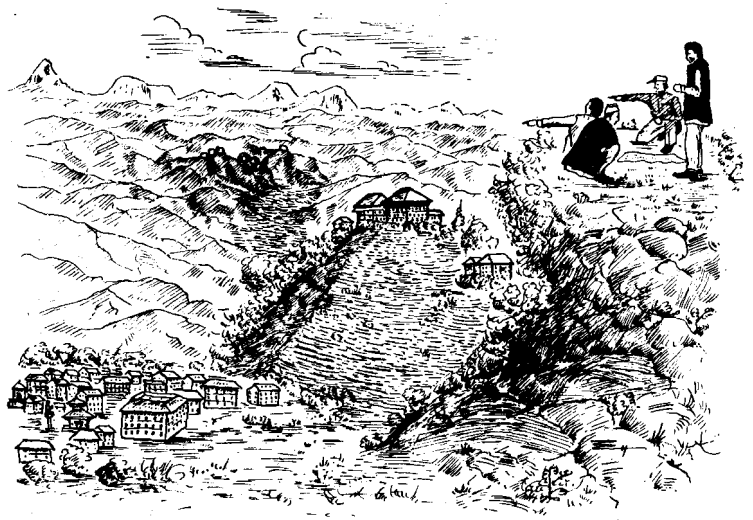
[2] Jonathan and Evelyn Lindell were missionaries of the World Mission Prayer League, a Lutheran missionary fellowship based in USA and Canada. It was one of the charter members of the emerging United Mission to Nepal and because of its work in India was able to send workers of experience and language ability into the UMN from early days.

[3] This European style palace contained some 800 rooms, in four storeys, surrounding four inner courts. When the last Rana Prime Minister evacuated the building it was occupied at once by the new burgeoning ministries and departments of His Majesty's Government. For 19 years the leaders of the United Mission made their way into the corridors and rooms of this venerable palace to transact business of the Mission with concerned departments. On July 9th, 1973 a disastrous fire broke out in the evening and burned away all of the building except the front facade, together with all the papers and equipment in those many offices. The heat currents carried thousands of burning papers and ash high into the sky and showered them onto the city—an awesome and dreadful sight. The destruction of this symbol of national unity was deeply felt by the people and in the days which followed this news there poured in from all over the nation gifts and pledges of money for the reconstruction work. Government offices had to be relocated in other places of the city. Important documents and files had to be replaced. The United Mission was asked to replace, with copies, all of its important documents relating to various departments of Government and carry on from there. The Government is undertaking to rebuild the palace in its former style, though much improved for present-day use, as well as to construct new buildings for Government use in the wide grounds of the palace area.

Nepali Christians who through their forefathers had connections in this part of Nepal. Also, a native of that area, the first Limbu to earn a B.A. degree, was asking the Mission to start a school in his home region. So this Iman Singh Chemjong escorted Mr. Lindell on a trip into Limbuwan area of east Nepal from which came firm requests from local communities for opening a Mission project.[4] When these were offered to the Director of Education he explained that the Mission should not go into the far east because it was too *jungly* and dangerous, not enough under the general administration of the Government. He advised to go west and he told his secretary to take a scrap of paper and write the following names of districts to the west. Then he leaned back in his chair and thought a bit and recited ten names which the secretary wrote down. The Director gave the slip to Mr. Lindell and told him to take it home and decide in which district the Mission wanted to work, come back and report. So after due consideration the word was brought back that the Mission would like to undertake this project in Gorkha District. "Very well, but you can't just decide that way; you have to make a trip out there and survey the place, and find a suitable location. So go and survey and report again."

Bob Fleming, Jonathan Lindell and a Nepali worker borrowed from the Bhatgaon dispensary, together with porters, made up the party that trekked westward for several days to Gorkha town. Along the way Bob kept his eyes open for birds and especially in the morning and evening, when the others were in camp he wandered off to look and learn. He carried his shotgun which fired a volley of fine shot the size of birdseed. These tiny pinheads went through the feathers and skin of even the smallest birds, to kill the bird, but without injuring the specimen. In the evening, while supper was cooking, Bob would skin his specimens and stuff them with cotton, tie on the data tag and lay them in his tin trunk. One afternoon while they were hiking along in a wide valley Bob pointed out several kites circling in the sky and explained about the varieties of this species in Nepal. "Watch them," he said. "If they come near enough I'll take one." Sure enough, one came quite low, Bob shot and it fell flopping in a nearby empty field. "Run and stand on it and it'll soon die," shouted Bob to Jonathan who ran over and

[4]The location chosen was in Phaktep village, in Panchthar sub-division of Dhankuta District, about twenty miles northwest from Ilam on the main road between Ilam and Dhankuta. At least ten leading *Subbas* of villages in that locality gave personal invitations to work in their areas and offered local help and cooperation.



While looking across Gorkha District, a circling mountain and valley took shape and drew their attention ..... "What is the name of that place?" they asked.

gingerly stepped on the body of the large bird. By the time Bob arrived it was all over and Bob gave a lesson about how to identify this bird.[5]

On arriving in Gorkha town they called on the acting Governor, presented their letter of introduction from the Ministry and explained the purpose of their visit. Did he have any ideas about where they might go to establish such a project? No, he didn't know; all these villages and mountains and rivers are much the same. "But," he said, "come at seven in the morning and we'll go up on top of the Gorkha mountain and you can look over all the district and decide where to go." So the next morning the party went to the top and looked around a full circle over central Nepal. Across the north was the long line of the snows and everywhere else was the jumble of mountains, cut apart at their feet by flowing streams and rivers. It was just as the *Subba-Sahib* had said, they were all so much alike. Where to go? Then, to the northwest a circling mountain and valley took shape and drew their attention. The valley and well up the slopes were golden with rice harvest and some patches of

[5]This was the Dark Kite, *Milvus migrans*, pictured on page 44 of Bob Fleming's book, *Birds of Nepal*. To identify or to keep large birds collectors do not take the whole body; they take the bill, wing, leg and tail. The sex is determined by opening and observation.

forest. Thinking there must be people there they asked, "What is the name of that place?" "Yes," perked up one member of the party, "that's Amp Pipal Bhanjyang. I know people there. I can take you there and introduce you." He was the secretary of the *Subba-Sahib* and a relative of people in that village. So it was decided, and next day Jonathan and his Nepali companion together with the secretary and a policeman escort hiked over to the other mountain and looked around. That evening they visited with the villagers, explained their purpose and received the welcome of the local headman. Very early the next morning the villagers took the visitors to the top of their Liglig mountain, showed the remains of five old forts and told them the history of the early Twenty-four Kingdoms and of Gorkha Kingdom. They told the story of early generations, before King Prithvinarayan Shah's time, when petty chieftains ruled their mountain. Each year they held a race, from the stream at the bottom to the top of the mountain and the winner was king for the year. Then came an able and ambitious younger brother from a ruling family of the Lamjung mountains to the north. He was looking for a kingdom and joined this race. But he first studied the mountainside and found a more advantageous route. Instead of charging straight up through thick and thin, he zigzagged his own way and won the race. When he was king he postponed the race indefinitely and established himself on the throne. Later kings of his descendents took Gorkha mountain and enlarged the kingdom over several mountains. They brought craftsmen from Nepal Valley and built their complex of palace and temple in the style of the Valley, stuck on a neat outcrop partly down the side of Gorkha mountain. Here King Prithvinarayan was born and grew up to be the founder King of Nepal. The mother shrine of the dynasty is in this place and even more in a deeply cleft rock under a temple where their special god dwells who brought them their success.

Those of the Mission concerned with this project thought it well to locate in a place other than the larger centers where Government no doubt would first establish its development efforts; to contribute the Mission's limited resources in more out-of-the-way places where people would be a long time in getting such help from any other source. They thought their project should go to a place well back in the mountains, but within reasonable reach for communication and supplies. Returning to Singha Darbar the Mission reported its trip and said it would be pleased to go to Gorkha

District. The Education Ministry wrote an Agreement in Nepali with 13 terms covering two pages whereby the Mission could undertake a Community Service Program for educational progress in West No. 2 Gorkha District.[6] In this way the Mission found that it was sending an extension of itself five days away into the central mountains and learning later, when people caught up with their social studies, that they were in the backyard of historic Gorkha Kingdom. But by this time history had passed on and left Gorkha in disuse, a backwash, with its Government buildings in decay. The people of the district saw their land as difficult and troublesome and the daily round of life made up of digging the fields so they could eat some food.

Many people, both native and foreign, who have travelled in Nepal say that leaving the Kathmandu Valley and going into the mountains is like going into another country because there is such a marked difference. This has been the experience through history. People have called the Valley 'Nepal' and the mountains the 'Hilly Regions'. The Valley people build and dress and work and farm and carry burdens their own way. The mountain people build their houses differently, do their farming differently, speak their own way, and of course carry their loads on their backs. The little Mission team of four men and seven porters climbed up over the rim of the Valley and struck out westward into that hilly region, their senses alert to new sights and sounds.[7] They found themselves on the old Government Main Road, a kind of post road, over which passed officials, runners, soldiers and many kinds of travellers, reaching farther and farther west in 33 stages to the far border. It ran like an artery, a life-line, east and west through the length of the country, serving and binding the hilly regions together.[8] On the seventh day the Mission party climbed up their last hillside and stood in a

---

[6]This was signed on February 20, 1957. In the process of negotiating for this project Mr. Lindell visited Singha Darbar 70 times over a period of nine months. In this process he learned much about procedures in negotiating agreements, 'stamps', 'signs', the right man, working hours, holidays and Nepali language. The Government was feeling its way about letting foreigners into the interior regions, about this new Christian mission and about how to make terms for such an agreement. Again the desire for development and the urgency to take offered help to build the new Nepal prevailed. Great desire and strong faith gave birth to this project.

[7]The members of this first team were Jonathan Lindell, Ron Byatt of UK, Shilling Ford Mukhia of Darjeeling and Hem Lal of Kathmandu.

[8]See the article by Jonathan Lindell, *From Kathmandu to Palpa, The Old Main Road*, with colored illustrations, in *Swatantra Biswa* (Free World), Vol. 13, No. 2, page 25, published by USIS, Kathmandu.

low pass on the ridge, among huge and ancient trees and the scattered houses of Amp Pipal Bhanjyang village. This was their destination, where they had come to join the people and do their part in the national push for a better life.

Their first job was to make arrangements for living and then work. There was not a house or even a room to rent in the village so they pitched a tent in the *Mukhia Sahib's* (headman's) open field and moved in. Cooking was done Boy Scout fashion outside. On the second day, by invitation, a large crowd from surrounding villages gathered and the team explained who they were. They stretched up a collapsible chalk board and drew four pictures representing who they were and what they would do in the community. There was a schoolhouse representing educational work of various kinds, another house representing a dispensary and public health teaching, some fields and a barn to indicate work in farming, and then a book to explain that these new people were Christians by religion who followed the Bible book in their worship and manner of life. Then the question was placed before the crowd: "Do you want this mission project with its people in your community, or not? If not, fine, they'll go and look for another place." The elders went off in a huddle to discuss this. Their discussion continued for two days and concluded when they brought to the missionaries a long document containing an amazing contract written by their scribe in old-fashioned Nepali. They said in effect: "We now know who you are and why you have come; we invite you to stay in our place and do your work and we want to join you in working together for the fulfillment of your aims." It was signed or thumb-printed by 53 leaders from several surrounding villages.

That same day the acting Governor arrived to see how things were proceeding and read the document. Sitting in their tent he asked the missionaries what help he could give. They replied that they needed a piece of land, on which to build a house, which they had found; they had looked around and wanted a certain small knoll with dry fields on it. Could he help them with buying it? He went out and made enquiries. It belonged to the village headman, the *Mukhia Sahib.* He was willing to sell. So the elders were instructed to go out, assess the land and fix a fair running price. A large crowd walked over the knoll, had their picture taken, and put the price at Rupees 700 ($100). The missionaries dug in their pockets and came up with only half that amount; they hadn't expected to do this kind of business so fast. They called aside a friendly

village leader and asked for a loan and he readily assisted. So that same afternoon the land was bought, the deed written, signed and sealed, under the instruction of the acting Governor. To cap this crowded business day the big man lectured the villagers and told them how to act and cooperate with the mission people so that all would go well for everyone concerned. In four days of strong actions the basic footings were established and the project was launched.

The next day the newly-hired runner was sent off to Kathmandu with letters and business and to bring back money and supplies. That man, on his two legs hiking back and forth for the project, was the equivalent of the postal, telegraph, telephone and parcel service combined. He was a mighty good one, too. Mail and important items were in the knapsack on his back. Then he organized porters with loads of supplies and managed them over the trail. He escorted new team members and introduced them to life and lodging on the road and to clean springs of water. He carried and cooked, taught how to ford rushing rivers waist high, scrounged for food, ran in emergencies. On one round trip he extended his time at the Kathmandu end to run eastward to his home village to get a wife. He found another fellow trying to get his girl-friend so he beat him up, took the girl for his wife and brought her along with his knapsack of mail on his return to Amp Pipal. Later on, it was in their little thatched room that the Mission people tried out a smokeless cooking stove—meant to be a household improvement. They built the parts according to the instruction paper and installed it. It worked and kept on working and the room was pleasant without smoke. But after some days white dust started falling from the network of poles and thatch in the roof. Bugs were burrowing and eating thick and fast. The smoke, while blackening the walls and roof, also acted as an insecticide and preservative on the sticks and thatch. To save the roof they let the smoke inside again. Later on, Mission people tried an alternate village roof which they expected to last much longer than thatch, to be within the understanding and pocketbook of most villagers, and also to allow the use of a smokeless cooking stove. In place of poles and thatch they laid a gently sloping mud roof which rested on beams, boards and a polyethylene kind of black plastic waterproofing. The principle of earth roofs was, of course, in practice in several places in the world. Why not in Nepal? The plastic sheeting was advertised as bug-proof, rat-proof and cheap. Before the first monsoon season was through the bugs were in the roof, through the plastic and into

the woodwork. These roofs were tried in at least three places in Mission projects and in time all were abandoned and replaced. They leaked. Bugs and rats won. In 25 years, to our knowledge, no one in Nepal has been able to bring an improvement to the thatch roof and cooking smoke of the poor man's village house. Our Mission has not.

A few days after the runner was sent on his first trip to Kathmandu a dozen boys sat under a tree near the tent and the school began. The next morning a mother brought her burned baby and medical work had its humble beginning. From the first days team members held their simple worship meetings with Bible and songbook and curious villagers observing. A villager went to the District Government seat, returned with permission to cut 50 jungle trees and the building work was under way. The men got an early introduction to the meager amounts and variety of food in the area as they ate the staple food of the village. They lived on the floor; there was no furniture. Villagers didn't have a saw, hammer, nails or crowbar for house building. They used an axe to shape their door and window frames and rough stone hammers to shape stones for their walls. So the project brought tools and materials for building over the trail, even the first roofing tin, into the area. GI sheets were awkward to carry, three or four sheets bound together, spreadeagled across the back of the porter and manoeuvered over trails, stepping sideways past trees and boulders and braced against winds. Those porters took 18 days from Kathmandu to Amp Pipal and got good pay. A young PAX Service man came and led in the building.[9] When the first *pakka* (proper, permanent) house was mostly completed women and children arrived. Then other houses came up on little plots of land here and there in the village. The team grew. Rapidly they set to work in primary school classes and then night classes for adults; then a dispensary for the sick and health teaching

[9] In the early formative years, the Mission was very fortunate to receive the services of numbers of young men of the Mennonite Church's PAX Service from USA and Canada. These men were conscientious objectors doing a three-year stint of alternate service. They were usually young men off the farm, just out of high school, with goodly portions of the old-fashioned pioneer ability to live the simple life, invent, make do with what was at hand and get on with the job. They were in all the projects of the Mission, building, maintaining, repairing motors, even keeping accounts, filling in gaps and holding the thing together. They were greatly appreciated. When the military draft in USA was discontinued this PAX Service was dropped. Nowadays similar volunteers serve through their Church's Central Committee and usually are older, more trained and sometimes married. These volunteers are now doing fine work in many posts in the United Mission.

in the school; then farming with a variety of efforts plus teaching agriculture in the school. A community hall was built and used for several kinds of gatherings and endeavors.

The undertaking was a thoroughly captivating enterprise from the very first day and called out the very finest gifts and energies from members of the team. They were in daily contact with 500 people of the community. Dug down and in as close as they could get among the people, they met them on the path, on their porches and in the yard, under the shade tree, at the dispensary, in the school, in meetings and classes, on the building job and in fields. Travellers in droves stopped by to see and visit. There were talks with parents, officials, shopkeepers, neighbors and people from four days away. In this close exchange of living, the team members were learning in great gulps. Questions came thick and fast. Consider some of these lively items in the society.

Will you really be childless if you plant bamboo on other than the south side of your house?

Are small eggs and small potatoes better than large ones, as people say?

Yes, we know for sure she stole the eggs, even though she doesn't admit it, but what to do about it?

Will it really put the people in a bad way with their gods if team members enter their houses to spray against the hordes of bedbugs?

Is there any other usable kind of fertilizer than dung?

When you say "Yes, I will." what does it mean? How far can you get in real social living without 'yes' meaning 'yes' and 'no' meaning 'no'?

Can't you really read in literacy class when the moon is in eclipse?

How can more children be released from grass cutting and cattle herding to attend school?

Suppose people do diversify their farming and raise a crop for cash sale, where can they market it for profit?

Can there be substantial material improvement without substantial trade and business with the outside, the flow of money and goods? Can this take place without suitable means of transportation, communication, knowledge?

Where do you begin in the sea of scabies, worms, bedbugs, rats; among the fevers, runs, rot, broken bones and spoilage

inside? Do you begin with the medicine shelf, the knife? Or at the home, in the school, the water spring, the toilet, in the legislature, with the gods, with men's minds, or where?

What is the relationship of person, position and wealth to law?

What is a woman?

How do you develop motivation, or group action, or a will to do? How can you connect academic learning to practical living?

Are there springs in a man's nature of real concern over social ills; or other-interest rather than self-interest?

How do you get a conscience for truth, integrity, righteousness?

Will educated young people stay in their villages and apply their education?

Whose are the natural resources of the earth? How ought people to care for them and use them?

These and many more were not academic questions. They were alive in men's hands out on that mountain. They were the raw material that must be worked with to make the new Nepal. To work earnestly at problems of community improvement brings one sooner or later to the realization that such improvement depends primarily on the character of people. On that mountain has come to light the timeless truth that in the last analysis man's struggle for a better life is a moral problem, a moral problem can only have a religious solution, and the only able solution is God's Law and God's Gospel. These elements need a place in the effort of nation building.

The team worked hard. In the primary school of five classes the teachers taught the three R's and tried to create lessons about everyday village living. Social studies were strongly emphasized. The medical people came in to school and taught health and students applied their learnings. One result was that scabies disappeared among them and they felt so relieved that they ostracized any student appearing among them with the contageous itch. The agriculture people likewise came in to the school and taught classes; they led the students into practicing their learnings on their home farms and supplied the means to do so. Classes in the early mornings and at night were started for adolescents and adults to learn to read and write and through the books to learn about better everyday living.

Then in the second year of the project village members of the

School Committee came to the project Director and asked, "Sir, when are you going to make a proper school?" "What do you mean?" he asked. The reply came, "When are you going to teach English and other proper subjects? We want our children to get the required teaching so they can pass SLC and go to college and get government jobs. We want a high school." Here was an early twist at the philosophy of fundamental education to which the project was committed. There would be other hindrances to its largest possible fulfillment.[10] So began the trend to follow the Government's academic curriculum in the Mission-aided schools. Shortly, the staff began to train older students in six months training and sent them to be teachers in primary schools in other parts of the district. Requests have come every year for the Mission to aid in schools throughout the area. This meant to manage them, appoint teachers, give partial subsidy and thus make them better schools. The Mission was able to assist in ten such schools. In keeping with the Project Agreement one school rose to be a high school. It was in Luitel, about two hours south of Amp Pipal. Over many years this school has led the country in the highest average achievement in the SLC examinations. All students have passed. Its students have gone on to higher education and to jobs in many places in the country.

The nurses in the dispensary were real pioneers, strong, experienced and capable. They diagnosed and treated the hundred-and-one kinds of body troubles which came to them out of the hills—heads eaten by lice, bodies mauled by bear, burned babies who had crawled into the cooking fires on the floor, mothers who couldn't deliver their babies, TB in all parts of the body, troubles inside the body, in lungs and bowels and bladders and wombs. They referred difficult cases to hospitals three or five days away, but not many could make such a trip. Part of the concept of the project was to keep it small; this was a small place with limitations; have a base

[10]During 21 years of history of the Gorkha Project the concept of 'a group of coordinated services' has worked well. More services could have been added to more areas of community life. The philosophy of 'fundamental education' started out strongly but gradually weakened, or perhaps shifted to other concepts and concerns. Factors involved in the degree of success of the original concept of the project are such as: (1) A relatively new philosophy of Mission work needs to be learned by the staff concerned, believed and frequently reviewed. (2) A turnover of staff weakens continuity of the philosophy and of the work; this project has had its share of staff changes. (3) The number of staff, the kind of staff, and their resources determine to some extent the direction and effectiveness of the project. (4) Ideas and actions of local people and Government profoundly effect the work of the project.

here but repeat services in other places; there should be several of these projects. The nurses believed in this philosophy and tried to hold things down. But the sick were just too many and from too large an area. It became evident that it was not right to try and diagnose and treat over 20,000 annually of every kind of trouble with the limitations of the staff and their means. So a doctor was added and some beds. But that wasn't enough either. So the decision was made and permission received from Government to make a small 'pocket size' hospital on the hillside. This is now served by three doctors and supporting staff. The health classes in the school continued and health care with immunizations were given to hundreds of students in Amp Pipal school as well as in other schools in the district. In time this teaching and preventive work grew into a strong community-wide public health program of many parts. One early contribution of the team was manuscripts on health given to Government which were printed and used in its early adult literacy campaign.

The agricultural members of the team, in their few narrow fields, experimented with vegetables, fruits, fodder grasses, grains, pests and diseases, and these in relation to soil, seasons and weather. In their sheds they worked with chickens, pigs, buffaloes and imported Israeli Saanen milk goats.[11] Out of their trials and learnings they taught regularly classes in agriculture in the school and discussed business with farmers of the community. A veterinary doctor was in the team for some years and worked at the diseases and improvement of livestock, so valuable to the farmers. They used their farm animals for distribution and up-breeding in the community. One problem was that farmers were days away from a supply point for obtaining items which they gradually came to want. So the project opened a general store and traded products or sold items such as seeds, fruit tree-lings, rat poison and rat traps, pesticides, animal medicine, hardware and setting eggs. They ran a buffalo breeding and cattle castrating service. Literature was

[11] In 1968 the entire herd of 12 Saanen milk goats died at one time through poisoning from the plant *Lyoma Avolifolia*. Its sprouts contain cyanide which is lost in the later stages of growth. Due to a late rain the plants started to resprout and were grazed by the goats. Work with these goats has been reported in a paper entitled, "Three Years Saanen Goat Breeding in Nepal". The Mission has worked with this breed of goats for 10–15 years in different parts of the country and considers them too delicate and requiring too careful supervision for average use in the country. The Mission is crossing them with a hardy native goat to develop the qualities of both for general use.

produced and distributed, such as a tract on how to care for and use manure. There was a lot of 'talking shop' with villagers from near and far. They dug a mountain well 20 feet deep. Great events were the annual agriculture fairs in which hundreds of villagers participated and displayed their products. At the height of the agriculture department's work, there were an average of 6,000 villagers passing through the farm each year to observe and talk and get supplies to take to their farms. Promising students were trained locally in aspects of the agriculture work or sent to India for degree training. Team members were constantly moving around in the district to share 'talk' and learning.

Then came the Government's large Agricultural Development Project covering the whole Gandaki Zone of seven districts. Within this huge area was located the Mission's little farm in Amp Pipal. The Government decided to transfer this farm out of the Mission's hands into the management of the zonal project to use as desired. This was done in 1970. Since then there has been the unhappy spectacle of decay and weeds on the farm. All efforts to somehow use the facilities so far have come to naught.[12]

The project has tried not to concentrate too much in its base in Amp Pipal but to spread out its efforts. A small place is inadequate for large institutions. Team members have travelled extensively to farms and villages especially of the western half of the district with their multiple kinds of work and services. Workers have resided in at least eight other villages of the area, up to two days apart. This has been in keeping with their basic plan, thus spreading out their contribution. By the end of ten years the Gorkha Project team consisted of 20 personnel from the Mission side and 70 nationals which included three or four Indians.

For the first few years the main way out to this project from Kathmandu was by hiking for five days over the trail. Some members who travelled the trail more frequently could run it in three days.[13]

[12] During the 1960s the Mission had permission from Government to undertake agriculture projects in four places in connection with mountain-sited Community Service Programs. They were in Gorkha, Okhaldunga, Tansen and Doti. Two were going well and one just starting. The Third General Agreement between Government and the Mission signed in 1970 did not permit continuance of work in agriculture so all these projects were closed. Eight years later new permissions were given and the Mission is trying to work again in agriculture.

[13] Lindell hiked this trip from Amp Pipal in to Shanta Bhawan Hospital in $26\frac{1}{2}$ hours actual walking time spread over three days. Others have reached one or the other end sooner, usually walking into the nights. Local people measure distances in the hills by an ancient *kosh*. When the English mile came along they loosely reckon-

(continued on next page)

In the fifth year a seasonal sod airfield was built in the valley about four hours walk below Amp Pipal and this has been used (1961). However, the best assistance for getting to Gorkha has been the motor highway that was constructed between Kathmandu and Pokhara, passing about seven hours walk away on the south side. This enabled project members to hike and ride between their village and the big city in one day if all went well. Of course this greatly improved services in transporting of goods and in communications. But for the project it still is very much country life and they like it that way. Here the Mission is definitely rural, in the village and for the village. Aims of the Project are being realized in discernible measure in several areas of community life. There certainly have been learnings and there are areas which have only been touched in a limited way or not at all because hands and time have just not reached.

As the Mission neared the end of its first five-year General Agreement with Government it hoped for an extension and made plans accordingly. Board Minutes stated its 'Intentions' which included this point: "To consolidate our present centers (which were in six projects) and expand them, training workers for this, ... and to reach out and work in as many areas as possible in Nepal with the maximum efficiency and speed." During these years workers had travelled rather extensively in the country and learned about conditions. From thought and discussion the Mission came to feel that the best kind of contribution it could make to national development in the hilly regions was through 'mountain projects'. These should be patterned in general after the Gorkha Project and contain a coordinated group of services in education, health and agriculture. In negotiating for renewal of the General Agreement the Mission sought terms which would make this possible. In fact in its Three-Year Plans for 1962–63–64 it defined all its work in terms of Community Service Projects. But especially for expansion in the mountains it believed in small, multiple, coordinated projects working at the basic living problems of the people. When the Second General Agreement was signed in mid 1960 ($1\frac{1}{2}$ years overtime) the Mission was given ten years more for work in the country. The Agreement stipulated that existing work could continue and implied that expansions and new work could be

ed a *kosh* to be two miles. Their markers indicate that it is 30 *kosh* from Hanuman Dhoka in Kathmandu to Amp Pipal (or 60 miles). Lindell reckons, by his methods, that it is closer to 82 miles.

undertaken but only after specific permission. The Mission was growing very rapidly in every way and was full of zeal to "reach out and work in as many areas as possible in Nepal with the maximum efficiency and speed". With regard to the hilly regions it proposed to start projects in the east at Okhaldunga, to be reached by walking straight through the mountains for six or seven days. In the west it proposed opening a project in Doti District, so far west that the best land route for reaching it was to circle around through India by rail and then by foot into the interior. As ideas for mountain work evolved, especially of people at work in distant and isolated places, it was proposed that the Mission have its own airplane service, make airfields and serve these projects by this means.[14] Soon there was a handful of proposals laid before the concerned Ministries of Government for agreements to open mountain projects, each with multiple sites, to conduct work in education, in health and in agriculture, with these remote places to be served by airplane and inter-station radio communication. Many pages of carefully detailed plans were written and approved internally in the Mission, to cover work, budgets and personnel.

But it was too much. The Government by general policy does not want private flying nor private radio communicating around the country, probably for security reasons. The Education Ministry said, "No more Mission schools." It also decided that Government agencies would do all literacy work and did not need assistance from other agencies in this work, at least not in the field.

From the first day of its entrance into Nepal the United Mission knew it was in the country under certain conditions, within certain fences. Only actual situations could teach the fine meanings of those conditions. Cattle learn where the fence is when they touch the electric wire. The Mission was having the meanings of its position in the country further defined in these current negotiations concerning mountain work. Altogether it has probably negotiated about its position and work at least 50 times. Its people and their

[14]In preparing plans of airplane service for mountain projects, extensive surveys were made by foot and from the air. Suitable fields were sited. Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) was approached and tentative agreements were made for that organization to give flying service to UMN. Designated gifts were received and held by the treasurer for this aviation program. These plans were not implemented. Later, the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), during its several years in Nepal, did have its own airplane service under its contract with the University. Their plane also did charter flying and was able to do considerable very helpful flying for the UMN.

work are always moving within the terms of the General Agreements and subsidiary project agreements. The first Agreement of five years had four terms. The second Agreement covering ten years had nine terms. The third Agreement extended the Mission stay for five years and contained 12 terms. The current Agreement (to 1980) has 16 terms. The Mission takes these terms seriously. Through the years it has learned that its stay in Nepal rests on a mixture of invitation, permission and mutual agreement; that it is temporary; that each person and place and work is given a status after careful thought by the Government; that the residence visa given to each mission worker limits the time and place of his stay; that within those limits the worker can experience friendly acceptance by the community where he or she lives; that their work in that community is a cooperating assistance at various points within the larger development plans of the Government; that what they do and have is not owned and kept by themselves but given right into the society. The Mission does not go its independent, private way. It is in a partnership with the Nepal society. Within this arrangement the Mission works true to its nature and to the best of its ability. If an evaluation were made of how this works the outcome probably would show that the Mission has had plenty of scope for work at fulfilling all its aims; that if there have been constraints on what it would want to do they have come as much from its own people and its resources as from the terms of Agreements.

The outcome of those negotiations for new work in the hilly regions was that the Mission received permission to open a dispensary and undertake agriculture work in Okhaldunga, East No. 3 District. For the far west it received permission for the same in Doti District. So the Mission set about moving in these directions.

Okhaldunga. You can locate it in your imagaination if you climb to the rim of Kathmandu Valley and look down the line of snows carefully, east and more east until you see the cluster of peaks containing Mt. Sagarmatha (or Everest). In your mind then drop down among the green mountains where people live. Among them is Okhaldunga. In those days there were six mountain districts in a row across eastern Nepal. Okhaldunga District and the town by that name were about in the middle. The old Main Road threaded through those districts, touching each center where the Governor lived. This was the road used by Ganga Prasad Pradhan and his father 100 years before when they emigrated to Darjeeling.

The Mission made its first approach to this area from the far side and by a woman. Mildred Ballard was one of those who had worked for many years along the border when Nepal was closed. When the country opened she was taken into the United Mission and received a visa to travel in eastern Nepal to survey health conditions and find a place to begin medical work. She was gone on this trip for about two years. Six months were spent with colleagues in Dhankuta running a dispensary. She and her Nepali companions travelled in all those six eastern districts and came one day out of the hills into the Mission's 1958 Workers' Conference. Colleagues listened with great interest to her accounts of her experiences, observations and recommendations about the eastern half of Nepal.[15] She turned in a report also to Government. Others made a similar trip along the same route. Putting this information together it was recommended that the Mission open a rural development project, including a hospital, in Okhaldunga and this was applied for to Government (1959). Two years later permission was received to open a dispensary (April 1961) and agriculture development (June 1961). There was no answer yet about education work. The Mission selected workers from other projects, made up a team of five or six, under the leadership of Dr. James Dick, and sent them to open this new program.[16] The men went around through India and up into the hills and the women went straight through the mountains for a week. Amazingly the two parties reached Okhaldunga town within an hour of each other.

In those days the Mission was working with the idea of airplane service in the mountains so an extensive survey in this general area was made with a view to placing airfields with clinics in three or four places as well as a base hospital. Government turned down

---

[15]Mildred Ballard came from UK to India as a missionary in 1929. She assisted Dr. Cecil Duncan in the hospital at Raxaul. Later she opened a dispensary in Jogbani, a rail-head along the eastern border. In 1954 she was accepted into the United Mission, being a missionary of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union, and went to the Bhatgaon Clinic where she took up residence and made it a regular dispensary. She was there for about a year and then went on furlough. On return she made the survey trip into the east and the temporary stay in Okhaldunga. She was helping out in Kalimpong when she died in 1959. It was Dr. James Dick and Mr. Bergsaker who toured the same districts in the east and reported similar information.

[16]James and Anne Dick were medical missionaries of the Church of Scotland and worked in Kalimpong, India. Their mission had a long history of work in Darjeeling District, and, together with the Eastern Himalayan Church Board, UCNI, was a charter member of the UMN. This member body offered the Dick Family to the UMN as early as 1956 and they entered Nepal for work in 1957.

Six days east from Kathmandu, the Mission project in Okhaldunga looks like a cork bobbing on the waves of the ocean.

airplane plans and gave permission for only a dispensary. The result was that the team lived temporarily in rented quarters in the town and later obtained land and settled in a small Rai village about half an hour out of town. They set about building simple and improved-hillside houses. In that remote area they had to use as much local building material as possible. Window-glass, hardware and plumbing were brought from India. They tried the gently sloping mud roofs but these proved unsatisfactory after patching and patching again and were finally replaced with aluminum sheeting. Water was piped in from a tiny stream nearby. A runner was employed to shuttle mail and business back and forth to Kathmandu. An arrangement also was made with an agent shop-keeper at the border town of Jainagar to receive ordered supplies from India and dispatch them by porters to the project. The team members lived the simple, village life, using candles and kerosene lamps at night. When Jimmy opened the runner's bag on one trip and found a radio for himself he wept for joy—it opened his window and he shook hands with the world beyond again.

From the beginning the small team had to interpret the meaning of their permission to 'run a dispensary'. They took it to allow them

to do preventive work, curative work and training work. Jill Cook, who had been in the Gorkha Project, had the 'fundamental education' idea in her blood and went to work in the trails and villages. She was a new kind of missionary—a Community Service Program all rolled into one: promoting seeds, toilets, education, prohibition, private health, public health, literacy, the Gospel of God, music and any other useful thing. Her reports were hilarious, thrilling, inspiring. Jimmy Dick was a mixture of medical and surgical doctor, of a spirit to learn and press ahead with courage, of make-do with what you have. His 'dispensary' for $2\frac{1}{2}$ years had a thatch roof, mud floor, examining table, simple bench and shelf of tools. He examined thousands of out-patients in this place and then performed his surgery there. He adopted the antiseptic method and performed scores of major operations without serious mishap. This method was based on the principle that everything coming into contact with the wound should be disinfected by immersion in a solution of chlorhexidine, which looked like water in the basins. Everything went into it: towels, swabs, instruments, sutures, the surgeon's hands and forearms and gloves. The surgeon and assistant wore clean laundered gowns with short sleeves. No masks or caps were worn. Before sewing up, the wound was irrigated with the solution. For at least six years Jimmy worked this way because of the remote and limited conditions and was successful.[17] Both young women and men were taken into the project from the nearby villages and given on-the-spot training to assist with the patients, treatment, laboratory, surgery, mid-wifery, and in turn teaching others. The agriculture part of the project came only in the seventh year when the Mission finally was able to send two men. They started on a small patch of land, visiting neighbors, trying and sharing and teaching with vegetable seeds, grains, rabbits, milk goats, poultry, a ram to service the sheep of the area, an exhibition, and a stall in the weekly town market. Their work was cut short after two and a half years by the Government decision which closed down all Mission agriculture work in 1970.

It's hard to name these kinds of institutions. After a while the team named the dispensary *Shanti Sur* which means the 'cornerstone of peace'. But the people had already made their own name and simply called it 'The Dick' after the doctor. Being technically only

[17] Dr. J.F. Dick wrote an article about this method of work, with data from one year's operations, which was printed in *The Lancet*, October 22, 1966, pp. 900–901, under the title *Surgery Under Adverse Conditions.*

a dispensary for treating day-patients, it was hard to know what to do about seriously ill patients. The solution was to build very simple village-like sets of rooms called *deras*, which could house 20 patients. Their relatives stayed with them and cooked for them and helped with their care. This was their home, a kind of inn, where the medical staff treated them. A reading room was opened, stocked with magazines, books and playing records. Patients used these facilities and students also came out from the town and enjoyed the reading matter. In time a generating plant was brought in and x-ray with their improvements. Four hours away on the other side of the mountain the Government built an airfield and little by little sporadic visits of a small plane strengthened into scheduled flights, with the possibility of charter flights as well. A radio-telegraph-telephone unit was installed near the Government office and the Mission used this means of communication with on-again, off-again success.

There has been a turn-over of personnel in the project, probably at about the same rate as in other projects. Team personnel have

A common tragedy occurs in the homes of hill people when small children crawl or fall into the cooking fires which are on the earth floor. The skin and limbs often contract when healing and need a surgeon's work to release them.

been from Nepal and from just about all the countries represented in the United Mission. Through all the years the Okhaldunga Project has been the Mission's farthest-out post. It has been small, isolated, distant. These factors have given to the project some measure of built-in difficulties, to administer, to live there and to work. But the team has carried on with a high degree of dedication and a goodly measure of results.

In the far western mountains the Mission was not able to start any work in the Doti District. It carried discussions and plans for several years and tried to go there but was never quite able to find the men and means. When airplane service was out of the question the plans were suspended for that district. But there came a chance for work still farther out, in the last district on the western border at Dandeldhura. Dr. Kate Young (not of the United Mission) was running a Christian Dispensary in this place. The United Mission arranged to send someone to do agriculture work nearby. The Government gave permission for this and even granted customs exemption on supplies brought in for it from India. John and Marion Cook went out there in 1962, built a little house beside Dr. Young and began to do what they could for agriculture improvement. The logistics of sustaining a very distant and interior project in a place like this are very difficult. The only way to get to the place was by entering Nepal from parts of India to the west. There were visas and permits to negotiate from far away. It was possible to send telegrams and even to radio-telephone but the telegraph office was four miles from the project site. In Kathmandu someone had to go to a special office in town at an appointed time for the contact. Consultations over plans and budgets for work, rents, travel and unexpected exigencies needed to be cared for. Just to live in the Mission's way in such a place can take a lot of supportive effort. All went well for two years and then a serious physical disability came to Mrs. Marion Cook and she had to be evacuated out to Delhi. The Cook family had to close their affairs, lock their house and leave by foot over the mountain road in the middle of the Rains, accompanied by Dr. Kate Young and her colleague to be ready to give medical care if it was needed on the road. They went to Delhi and the Cooks flew to UK for surgery. The young agriculture work closed for years. The United Mission was unable to send any other workers in to Dandeldhura. In 1968 His Majesty's Government gave permission to Dr. and Mrs. Maynard Seaman and colleagues of the Evangelical Alliance Mission to go in and take

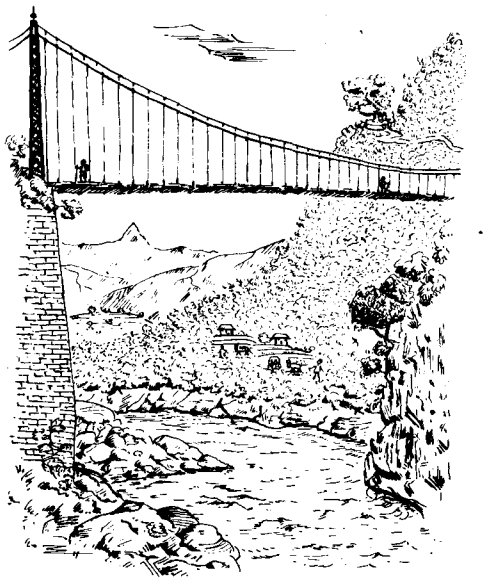
over the dispensary from retiring Dr. Young. This mission has strengthened the work considerably in ten years and is now under agreement with Government to build the District Hospital in that place.

In these mountain projects, as in all the projects of the Mission, there was something going on which deserves some consideration. People in the projects were filled with a compelling desire which set them on their daily round of living with zest and faith which was truly thrilling and creative. It kept welling up in them and sustaining them through days and months and years, among strains and lacks and hardships. It was this that pressed out of the team members the giving of themselves in concern and work in the society. This controlling desire was a part of the desire of God to redeem and put right the brokenness of earth. They had themselves experienced the beginnings of God's righting of their lives and they wanted—no, they strongly desired to do their part to further the redeeming mission of God among others. They reckoned it a gift from God to be able to work hard and creatively in these mountains. Often, through their own words, they spoke to God the feelings of this poem by B. M'Call Barbour:

> For songs divine, half heard and half withholden,
> That drop on silver pinions down the sky;
> For visions fair, half hid and half beholden,
> Compelling hopes that knew not how to die.
>
> For all ungathered roses, red as fire,
> That lit my way with lavish fragrant flame;
> For all the old sweet pain of great desire,
> That led me hither captive as I came.
>
> For all on bended knees, I make thanksgiving;
> The unachieved that spurred my steps along;
> The unattained that made life worth the living;
> The unfulfilled that kept my spirit strong.

Life in Nepal was to change forever when once they threw open the windows to see the great world that lies outside, and then opened the doors to let themselves out and to let the world in. Nepal was on the move with leaps and bounds. Initially, at least, the large changes were able to begin because the world came in. It came in the form of foreign embassies and aid missions. Nepal

joined the United Nations, settled its borders and made treaties with its strong neighbors, opened international relations with many countries and contracted to receive hundreds of advisors, technicians, assistants and large sums of money in order to get moving in the new job of nation building. The getting moving meant training of large numbers of Nepalese at home and abroad. It meant creating the underlying service structures for everyone to use. It meant the writing and them implementing of nationwide plans by the different Ministries for development works. The aid agencies joined hands with the Nepalese to make these moves.



Steel cable suspension bridges assist communication and travel to isolated communities in many parts of Nepal. This one at Ramdighat was removed and a vehicle bridge on a highway has replaced it.

To begin with, most of the moving came in the Kathmandu area. This was normal. It was needed at the center. Here came motor cars, paved streets, electricity, telephones, a postal and telegraph system, running water and a host of Government offices. As from a hub and out through the spokes of a wheel, the infra-structures and the development works spread across the country. There came highways and airfields, ropeways, land reform, industry,

business, trade, taxation, treaties, almost every kind of new arrangement to make possible the desired changes. Every time one travelled through the country one saw something new. Here was a school noisy with crowds of children. A new bus line was moving traffic. Red and white signs caught the eye and labelled Government offices of various kinds. There were new reinforced concrete buildings, billboards, newspapers, libraries. Mission people saw the first little factories start in Kathmandu Valley where a handful of people in a single room 'mass produced' consumer goods; now there are hundreds. The first ten development works have become a thousand, managed by the Ministries and assisted by many aid agencies.

There is such a radical change taking place across society that it must be called a revolution. Powerful forces are at work not only in the hands but in the minds of many people. The basic issues of life, once quiescent, are in heat. Consider, for example, the farmer and his family who lost their house and fields when the highway was cut and blasted through their hillside. The farmer knew and could adjust to the powers of nature in the violence of spring storms, swollen rivers and sudden landslides. But this road came by the purpose of man, in an unholy destruction. In the way he saw it, he and his family drew their life from the soil, like a babe sucks nourishment from its mother's breast. To come and deliberately pitch it down the bank like refuse was beyond his comprehension. It seemed like the father would die in this experience. Who owns the earth and its resources? Or even just a little of it, enough to raise some corn, and to gather some rocks and poles for a house? Who can own some sacks of rice, or have enough cash to pay school fees, or own a car, or get a Government job?

Or, follow the neighbor's son to the college campus. Here were young, keen minds tossing back and forth what they saw and heard and read, anxious for their country to move fast, to move rightly, and for themselves to have a desirable place in the new order. One week their 'bull sessions' were about their school's shortcomings, the books, the teachers, the fees, the food. Another time it was about town sanitation, lights, water, the price of rice. Then they would turn their tongue on the bus transportation, school holidays, examinations and marks. Students did not hesitate to make pronouncements and demands concerning local, national and even international affairs, sometimes backing their demands with strikes and violence. Their cases were often brought to the

door of Government. They wanted to see things changed and they understood that this would take either the approval or the action of Government. This naturally led to questions about where power comes from, who has it, how does a government get it, what are the duties of government, what is the best form of government, and if it is desirable how do you correct government?

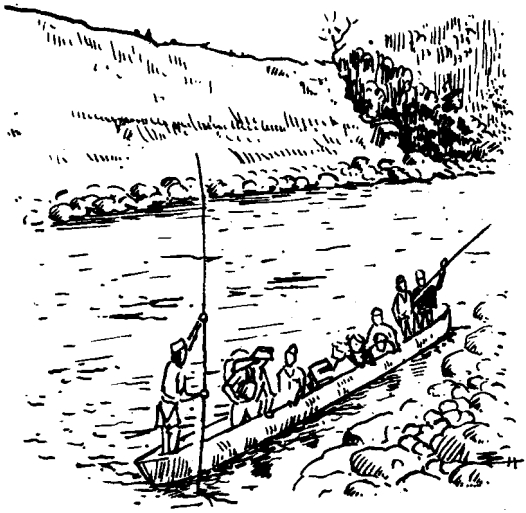
Hundreds of development projects are seeking to better understand and use the natural resources of the country: soil, water, animals, vegetation, rocks, minerals and even sunshine and wind. But the most valuable resource of the country is its people. They, too, need to be changed, to know and to do new things. This may be called education. What should be the content of their knowledge? In what ways should they change? For what purpose should they be educated? What will happen if they are educated?

Wherever you look in history you find religion deep-seated and formative in culture. It is like a sap in the tree of society. Religion has supplied to people much of their inner stuff of life. It has given to them their highest ideals, noblest ethics, guiding morality, spiritual values, their meaning and purpose in life. It serves as a unifying element in society. It helps to give assurance and security in the family. Religion should be retained and encouraged; it is valuable and helpful. But in the social revolution in Nepal, in the climate of open study and free speech the institutions of religion are exposed. They come under pressure and criticisms in some quarters. What should people do in these upheaving times with regard to their religion? What changes should be made, if any, in the practices of religion? What is the meaning of freedom of religion? What is allowed a person in his search for truth and his obedience to conscience?

Those who work deeply in the ingredients of nation building in time get beyond dealing with roads, farms, electricity and factories. They talk about "making people". Like the Minister of Government who ended his speech by saying, "Today's Nepal, which is marching ahead in the path of progress, needs enlightenment, discipline, honesty and cooperation in children, youth and adults if it is to reach its goal." He sees the need to make virtuous people. In the heavy tempo of hard work, the late King Mahendra said words to this effect: "My Government is instructed to make good laws for the guidance and conduct of the people, which if they follow will bring improvement to society; but laws by themselves are not able to bring about good behavior; there must be a change in the

hearts of the people in order for them to improve their conduct and thus bring about a changed society."

These are inner family affairs. The United Mission is conscious of having been invited in to the household of Nepal, to share in many of these lively issues of society-making and to press along with the people of the household in search of a better life.



CHAPTER 9

DEVELOPMENT IS A MANY-FACETED PROCESS

In very elementary terms it may be said that man's first concern in the earth is to take the natural resources around him and use them to sustain his life. This is not by any means the whole purpose or meaning of life, but it is certainly an elementary necessity. The Nepalese have their portion of the earth from which they must make their living. They have about 54,000 square miles of fertile plains, rocky mountains, plenty of snowy peaks and all of it washed with an abundance of sunshine and water. On their land area they have vegetation and forests, farm animals and of course the people themselves. In recent years the Nepalese have looked over their resources quite carefully, in aerial views, land surveys, geological testings together with back-and-forth measuring and counting. They haven't found great riches. One strong resource is water. Forests are a ready wealth. Rather, facts known thus far indicate that Nepal is poorer than most countries in the world and has a low ratio of natural resources which can be used for development. But it has enough with which to work.

Nepal is studying to understand better its resources and at the same time is using them to shape a better country. In this sense Nepal is on a potter's wheel. The country is like a lump of clay, swiftly turning on the wheel and being shaped into a new vessel. The vessel of the old Nepal is broken; a new Nepal is being formed. Many hands are on that clay, with many interests. There are business hands and religious hands, educated hands and common hands, each contributing its shape to the lump. His Majesty has his hands strongly on the clay, together with the many members of his Government. Nepal is in the making.

Nepal is like a lump of clay on the potter's wheel. Many hands are at work to shape it into a new nation.

As countries in Asia came under self-rule in the last generation they struck out strongly for economic development. To reach their goals, their governments adopted the method of 'state planning'. When Nepal started on this same road it too adopted this method. A part of such planning has been to encourage citizens to move ahead on their own initiative in business and endeavors. Such people are called the 'private sector' of society. But the main body of effort

has been undertaken by Government, called the 'public sector'. The Government began by formulating a set of carefully prepared plans to be undertaken within a defined number of years. In this way Nepal made its first Five Year Plan (1956–61).

In order both to write and implement these plans His Majesty's Government has sought and received assistance from many outside sources. Friendly governments, the United Nations organizations, foundations and private agencies have sent scores of advisors and technicians to help with this work. They have contributed large amounts of money and materials. In the beginning these agencies gave all the money for the Development Plan, but gradually Nepal has been giving more and more from its own side for this budget. At the present time there are more than 40 aid agencies involved in Nepal's development plans.[1]

From the beginning one of the major problems in this kind of government planning has been the meager supply of informing facts about the country from which to work. An early effort was to take a census of the population (1952–54). This meant setting up a central office, printing questionnaire forms, preparing teams of census-takers, canvassing the country under primitive conditions and then compiling the statistics into a serviceable book. This work has grown over the years until today there is a Central Bureau of Statistics which gathers facts on dozens of subjects.[2] It would be hard to list all the specialized surveys and studies which have been made as background for preparing plans and projects. One example of a very large study, which has been going on for many years, is in connection with the potential of the Karnali River for hydroelectric power. It has been said that this river in the mountains of western Nepal contains the world's finest natural site for the manufacture of electricity by using water power. There is so much

[1] Foreign assistance began from the USA under its Point Four Program in 1951. Other leading agencies offering assistance have been India, the Colombo Plan, People's Republic of China, Soviet Union, Switzerland, West Germany, Denmark, Kuwait, United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, specialized agencies of the United Nations and the World Bank. Assistance has been in technical work, money and materials. These resources have been applied to help implement projects in virtually every sector of the economy, in institution-building and in manpower development.

[2] The Central Bureau of Statistics published a "Statistical Pocket Book for 1974" which put together all the available statistics in 114 tables under such topics as Area, Population, Climate, Agriculture, Livestock, Poultry, Forest, Mining, Power, Industry, Prices, Transportation and Communication, Education, Health, Government Finance, National Income, Foreign Trade, etc.

potential here that it can only be considered if other countries join Nepal in treaty arrangements to utilize it.

This first-of-all need for having the facts of the situation in hand is well illustrated when in Nepal's new day there came a strong awareness of the need for education. A National Commission for Planning Education was set up and began work in March, 1954. Its first step was to prepare a comprehensive questionnaire to send to all parts of the country and in addition to send interviewers to certain areas to find out educational conditions. From the results of this study the Commission learned that there was very little, practically nothing, on which to build, so it went ahead and planned something entirely new, "a scheme of national education for all our people that will eradicate ignorance and illiteracy, and bring happiness and prosperity to our glorious country."[3] Implementing the Commission's proposals became a part of the first Five Year Plan.

This kind of development planning on a large national scale included training of manpower to do the work. A plan to open hundreds of schools must include the training of teachers, of people to write textbooks, of school supervisors and administrators of the system. Similarly in all areas where improvement was sought there needed to be trained people, for example: typists in government offices, mechanics to fix trucks, electricians to wire buildings, surveyors for land reform, engineers to construct roads, plumbers, doctors, nurses, carpenters, farm advisors, experimentors, administrators and dozens of other kinds of workers. The rapidly expanding Government structure needed thousands of people. The successive Development Plans required, for their implementing, thousands more, and so did the works in the private sector. There was almost a total lack of professional and technical personnel in the old Nepal, and this included people on the lower levels of skills. By leaps and bounds the succeeding 'Plans' gauged the needs for trained manpower and set about establishing schools, institutes, colleges and the University for training them as well as also sending hundreds of selected candidates abroad for professional training. In the current Fifth Plan it is estimated that there is a need for about 25,000 technicians in order to successfully implement the Plan. These include 15,000 newly trained persons, and among them

[3]These are the words of Dr. D.R. Regmi, the Honorable Minister of Education at that time, spoken at the inauguration of the Commission. A full account of this Commission is given in the book *Education In Nepal*, Kathmandu, 1956.

840 returning from training abroad. Trained manpower has been a very critical factor in the degree of success achieved in the development plans.

The philosophy of national development through state planning means that Government must be large enough and strong enough to carry out the plans. For Nepal this has meant a substantial reorganization and expansion of the structure of Government. The country has been organized into 75 districts and 14 zones, with the necessary Government officers and facilities in each to carry out the work. For the Development Plans, in particular, the country has been divided into four north-south Regions with central offices in each. The idea is that at the present stage each of these regions will develop with its own internal plans, which tie together the plains and the mountain areas of a Region into integrated development, in the expectation that later the Regions will gradually integrate with each other into one national region for development purposes.

Across the 25 years of state planning in Nepal the main work has been in what is called the creation of infrastructures in society. This means the underlying services and organizations which people use in order to get on with their productive works. A vast amount of such structures are needed before a country can move substantially toward producing enough goods and wealth to alter its standard of living. Farmers need trucks and roads to move their produce to market. Factories need power to turn their wheels. Business needs telephones and a postal system. People need to move rapidly in buses and planes. Similarly there is need for banks, corporations, construction companies, industrial estates, trading organizations and many such social institutions. Such infrastructure includes reforms in land tenure, reforms in laws, price controls and means of increasing Government revenue. These structures or means of service must come first. Therefore, Nepal in its early Plans has spent most of its money and work to raise up a network of underlying structures, economic and social, upon which forms of production can be built. On entering the fifth Five Year Plan (1975–80) Government felt it had used the past generation to create a cadre of well-trained and experienced administrators and technicians, with the ability to plan and implement programs, and has built up a sufficient amount of infrastructure so that it can expect substantially increased production to take place.

During these building-up years the production of goods and

wealth has been very slow. The Gross Domestic Product (or gross national product) has not increased apace with the growth of population as much as might be desired. There is danger of Nepal becoming even poorer than it has been. There are strong constraints on the development of the economy.[4] Government now feels that the country has come to the place where it can put its major emphasis on increasing production. Therefore it is carefully integrating the infrastructures with many projects for producing goods and wealth out of agriculture, industry, water resources and the rapidly growing tourist industry. This includes new sources of energy. The major portion of the present Plan is attempting to increase production and to see the results spread among as many people as possible. The Plan is thus 'people oriented'. Nepal sees itself on the eve of better days.

While Nepal, as a lump of clay, has been kneaded, watered, pressed and shaped in so many areas of its life, the political sector also has been very much on the potter's wheel. The ten years following the 1951 Revolution witnessed considerable growth of political parties and different forms of government. King Tribuvan held the reins through several years while different cabinets and councils took turns administering the Government. He died in 1955 and was succeeded by King Mahendra. The same political conditions continued and even worsened. In response to popular desires His Majesty arranged a General Election which was held in 1959, the first of its kind in the nation, for seats in a 109-member national Parliament. The Nepali Congress Party won a strong majority but the Government which they formed continued to be ineffective. After a year and a half of this arrangement King Mahendra dissolved the Parliament, arrested the Cabinet, suspended portions of the Constitution, banned political parties and ruled directly with his appointed Council. After careful preparation, His Majesty presented to the nation a new Constitution (1962) which established

[4]Economic development in Nepal is very difficult and has a number of serious constraints, such as: Very few known natural resources; the growing population, at 2.2% per year, which is 90% on the land and is increasing the area of cultivation, damaging the ecological balance and causing desertification to begin; stagnation in agricultural yields measured in per capital terms; growing idle labor on the land; substantial decline of commercially exploitable forests; low income level of the people, an average of $60 per year per person; high cost of maintaining the newly-created infrastructure; little hope for an increase of traditional exports; the land-locked situation causing high costs of imports; the rising need for imports of expensive capital goods, raw materials and petroleum products bringing on a critical situation in the balance of payments.

a stable organization for carrying out the functions of Government under the primary role of the Crown. But it also set up within the government a unique plan for practicing and learning democratic processes in a limited way. This was called "the Partyless Panchayat System". This Panchayat System called for people-elected representatives to serve in village councils (Panchayats), District Councils, Zonal Committees and in a National Panchayat or Parliament. These tiered units were given certain duties, mainly in the areas of local development. The National Panchayat serves as a legislative body. King Mahendra died in 1972 and was succeeded by King Birendra who has continued with the same Constitution and political structure. King Birendra has consistently given strong personal leadership to the affairs of state and especially to the development programs. He enjoys strong support from his people.

The United Mission had not been long engaged in its early projects in this developing country before the question arose with its Board of Directors: should we take up work in the technical, industrial and business sectors of society? In labor and management? Is it our business as a Christian Mission to work in these directions and areas? The answer came very strong and clear: Yes, for God's mission and purpose in the earth are to all segments of society, among all people; if we have opportunity and the apparent leading of God we should also move into and work in this sector. So the Mission let out its fences again and began work in the technical field.

The occasion for this move arose in connection with the building work on the Tansen hospital. It also was occasioned by a person, as is so often the case in the growth of God's mission in the earth. Odd and Tullis Hoftun were a young missionary couple, sent to the United Mission by the smallest and humblest society in Norway (1958).[5] Odd's assignment was to lead in the construction work of the young hospital in Tansen. The Hoftuns had expected to come to do just the hospital building job and then maybe go home—what else was there for the likes of him to do in missionary work in Nepal? Odd's education was broad based in technical subjects with a specialty in electrical engineering. He had some experience

[5]Hoftuns were missionaries of the 'Norwegian Tibet Mission', a tiny, free society with the Lutheran Church in Norway. This society had a small beginning in India, interests toward central Asia and then toward Nepal. It first contributed a nurse to the UMN, then the Hoftuns and others soon after. For historical reasons its name in India and in the UMN is 'World Mission Prayer League (Norway Branch)'.

in building. To a very marked degree Odd's genes, corpuscles and brain cells are technically inclined—prevailingly so, day or night, on or off duty. He's just that way—beautifully so, helping to fill into the body of the Mission this element where it often is lacking. When, as in the case of the Hoftuns, such people conform their lives to the lordship of Jesus Christ you have a strong member in the body of His church and mission.

While on the building job, Odd and Tullis began to select young laborers and give them some training in a more specialized way for doing their work. This they did without benefit of 'Project Plans and Budgets'. Twenty years later two of those men are now the top maintenance and building foremen employed in the same large hospital plant—without formal schooling and having no certified qualifications. This training idea crystalized, and as Odd's job on the building program began to near its end he proposed that they use the technical tools they had for the building work, add to them, and continue a kind of organized technical training right there near the hospital. In those days, just as the country was woefully low in trained manpower for medical or educational or administrative work, so it had practically no one who was skilled in the technical trades. Odd put his ideas on paper. The Mission studied the proposal, called it a 'Technical School', approved it and proposed it to the Education Ministry. In due time it was turned down along with two other education proposals because the Government took the policy of "no more Mission schools".

It was really a mistake on the Mission's part to call it a school and to deal with the Education Ministry for this kind of work. It really was a proposal to assist industrial development. Odd shook himself free from the traditional idea that missionary service should be in forms of giving to needy people. He let out what really was 'cooking' in him and on page after page after page he spread out plans and guiding policies, precisely organized, every word counting and carefully chosen, defining how the Mission could enter into the fields of technology, industry, business and economic development. The way to work in this area of the emerging new Nepal was not by a 'school of students'. The way was to set up a group of workshops, employing apprentice workmen, hired on a beginning salary, to work and to learn increasingly on the job, until after four years they would be skilled tradesmen in carpentry, metal work, electricity, auto-mechanics and such like trades. The workshops must be run on a business basis, aiming at profits so they could be

self-financing. They must produce, sell their products and compete in the open market. There would be no mission subsidy to keep them going. They must be a working example to the community of how small industry can be started and run successfully by the private sector. Into them day after day, would be injected the godly ways of accuracy, honesty, efficiency and hard work—right into the cold and rough world of business. The shops would have their walls and limits but the concept of the project had none. It had 'open ends' in several directions in which professional people could offer their skills for research, consultation, partnership in industry and business. The plan allowed for supplying power, manufactured goods and implements and for forming companies. The ideas thus came to shape their own name: an Institute of Technology and Industrial Development. It was to be located in the hills, to work with the rural surrounding people. Odd found five possible locations with made-to-order sites for hydro-power plants.[6] It was written up, approved by the Mission, and this time offered to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. These concepts so gripped and filled Odd Hoftun that in one late hour of the night the business-minded technology in him mingled with the redeeming mission of God and he wrote into his papers, "I can see in a vision something happening in the hills of Nepal—a harmonic growth of industry within the old community." In the proposal was a clause explaining that if no reply was received from Government within three months the men and resources would be offered to another country.[7] Quite early the reply came from the Ministry. The officials said in effect, "Yes, we will be glad for the Institute. The country needs it. It is an excellent idea. But you cannot locate it in the mountains. It must be on the plains. Survey and choose your own place on the plains." The Mission debated the question of location, within its members and

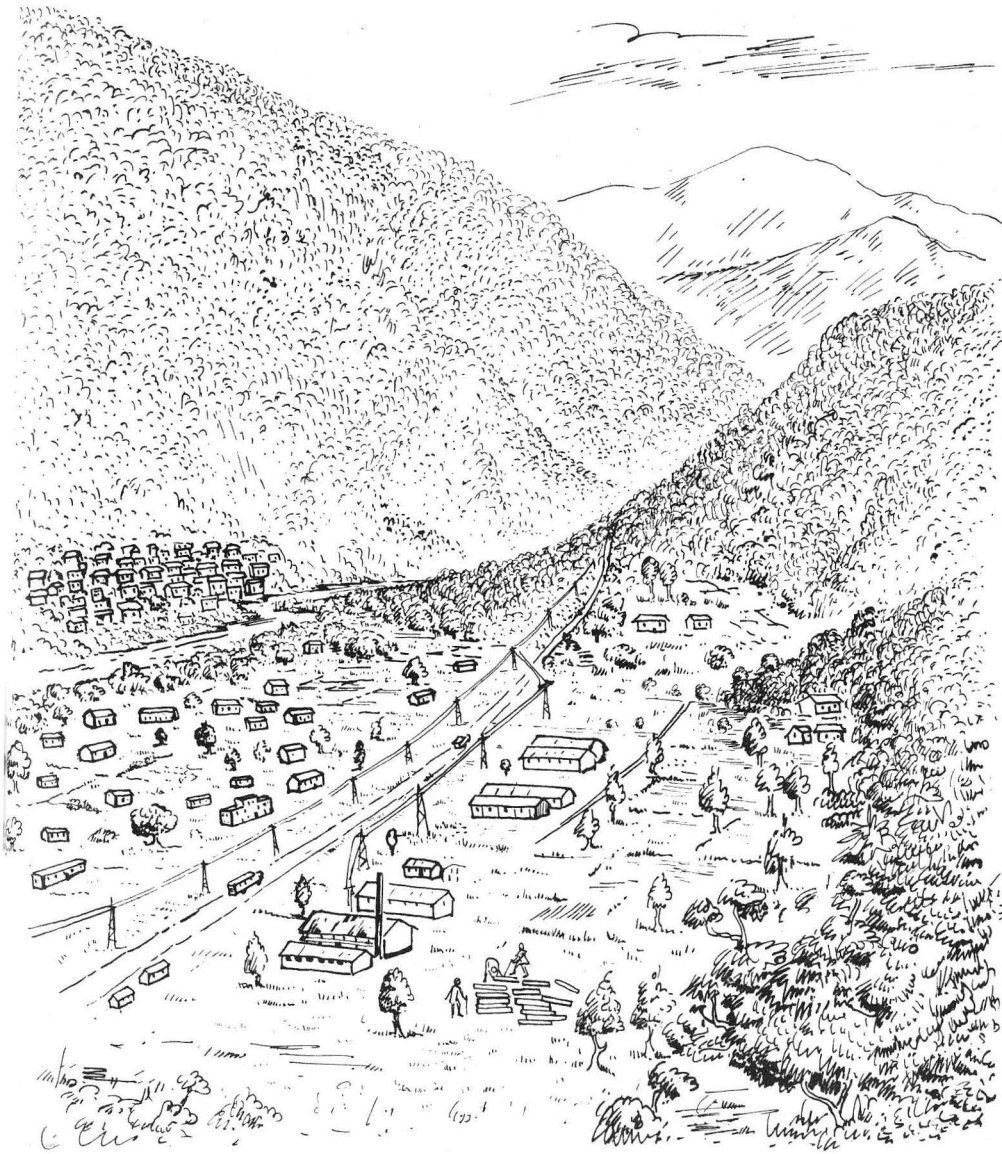
[6] All of these were on the Andhi Khola (river) and its Sati tributary, each very close to the new highway which was being dug out of the hillsides to join Sanauli on the border with Pokhara in the mountains, with Butwal and Tansen along the route. The last of these sites is quite large and excellent. Now, in 1978, the Himal Hydro Company, a direct outgrowth of the Institute of Technology in Butwal, is under discussion with Government about building a power plant on this location. In this plan the Andhi Khola (river) water would be dropped into a chute 250 meters deep to turn the turbine and generate 5,000 kilowatts of very cheap electricity. It then would flow through a tunnel under a mountain, 1,820 meters long, and empty into another river flowing at a considerably lower level than the Andhi Khola.

[7] After the 'Technical School' had been turned down, Odd Hoftun had been asked to go to Darjeeling, India, and assist in putting a technical department into Turnbull School. This was ready to move, if no opening should come in Nepal.

with the Government people. The Honorable Minister, Mananda Jha, was adamant. Industry should develop on the plains where there were growing industrial towns, where there were better means of transportation, access to raw materials, energy and people. He was right. The Mission was thinking too small and provincial. When it was able to shake off the 'hills mentality' it didn't take the Mission long to see the obvious site. It should be right at the foot of the mountains in Butwal, fronting on the north-south and eventually east-west highways which were being surveyed, within relatively easy access of India, and near the Tinau River as it came through the gorge and offered potential hydro power. The draft agreement was revised and the great day of signing came on 7th of November in 1963. The Institute was appointed to relate to The Cottage Village and Small Industries Cum Extension Department, as it was called in those days. The gate was opened and the Mission was let out to find its way into this new and little known field of Nepal's development process.

Odd was appointed Director of the Project and soon moved with a crew of builders from the Tansen Hospital to Butwal. In this development project, a microcosm of the country, certain infrastructures first had to be prepared. A suitable site had to be acquired by negotiation with local and central Government authorities. Bank accounts were opened and money deposited. An office was set up in a corner. A spring was found on the nearby mountainside and a black plastic pipe carried the wonderful water into the center of the dry and hot site. The first money went into brick, mortar and aluminum roofing for the first workshop.

Then began one of the thrilling odysseys of the missionary enterprise. The Odd Hoftun family went to Norway to gather materials and equipment to stock the workshops and to serve industry. Odd had a good thing, all ready to go in Nepal. He told his 'vision' to his engineer friends. They took it to their industrial plants and offices to see what they could do. The mission society took up the plan and spread it through their little magazine and meetings. The long list of needed materials and machines was duplicated and passed around. It caught hold. The telephone began to ring and people told Hoftun: "We have this machine in good condition which we don't need in our plant, can you use it? What about this generator? Do you want these coils of electric wire, these fixtures? Can you use these tools? We'd like to help your project and give you this turbine, can you use it?" Odd went around the country



The logical site for the Institute of Technology and Industrial Development was at Butwal, immediately at the foot of the mountains, fronting on the new highway, and with nearby potential hydro power.

to examine and decide about the offers. There was so much to do that newly accepted candidates of the society worked full time all that summer gathering and preparing the equipment for transport. A dock with storage space on the Oslo waterfront was loaned for the assembly area. They got a truck and travelled the country to bring in the pieces. An overhead crane in the storehouse lifted the heavy machinery so that strong wooden crates could be built around them. Friends volunteered their help and every night for a month a dozen people worked on packing and crating the materials. The newspapers and even radio reported to the public how the project was progressing. Little Nepal was introduced to Norway. A shipper offered to carry the cargo free in his ship to Calcutta port. Into the ship's hold the derricks laid 244 pieces, weighing from a few hundred pounds to ten tons, a total of 176 tons. Away it sailed. Then three young missionary families of the society, six adults and six children, including the Hoftuns, built a cabin on the back of their truck, packed in and drove overland on the trans-Asian highway to the Institute site in Butwal. This kind of venturing is for the young and the able, for people committed to a cause.

The shipment, on reaching Calcutta, needed the proper papers for off-loading into India and for forwarding into Nepal. Licenses and permits were needed from both countries. Mission people had been working on this and on how best to transport the goods several hundreds miles across India into Nepal. It was decided that the railway would be used. So the 244 pieces were lifted onto railway wagons of the broad-gauge track and moved across the Gangetic plain, transferred onto wagons of the narrow-gauge line and moved up to the railhead on the border at Nautanwa. One wagon carrying the ten-ton plywood peeling machine was 'lost' but showed up sometime later. There was no fear for that item to be pilfered. The goods were off-loaded to trucks. It took 28 truck loads to move the equipment over the 20-mile stony road, creeping at 15 miles per hour, to the Butwal site. The trucks backed down into prepared holes and the crates were slid on logs onto the ground, pulled by winches, and moved away to storage places. It took a year to go to Europe and get this first consignment of equipment and deposit it in Butwal. It was a prodigious job. Since then other consignments have come over the seas, over land, through borders to the Institute. In like manner hundreds of tons of construction materials such as steel, cement and oil have been bought in India

and transported to the workshops. A whole department of the Institute handles just procurement and transport.

The 'Bread For the World' organization of the churches of Germany took up the first capital budget of the project and gave DM 450,000 to see the hard-core workshops established. Mission workers were moving in and going to work. A hundred laborers erected shops and dwellings. Crates were broken open and machines placed and hooked up to power supplied by temporary diesel generators. The first trainees went to work in the *kachha* (immature, green, unfinished) conditions. They worked with hand tools and then machine tools, first making things required by the Institute itself and then things ordered or to sell to the public. Institute furniture became famous for its strength and good design. Metal products were designed and manufactured for sale or on order: wheelbarrows, water tanks, bridges, towers, trusses and car parts. Orders for special jobbing came in. Here were now workshops in metal, wood, electricity and mechanics which could serve the needs of business, offices, hotels, institutions and factories. It could assist industrial development by offering technical services and products.

One basic infrastructure utility was absolutely essential for this kind of industrial work and that was cheap, reliable electric power. From the beginning the Institute purposed to supply it not only for its own use but for the industrial and domestic needs of the whole Butwal area. It planned to do this by building a hydro-power plant one mile up in the gorge of the Tinau River. This was a rather small mountain river which flowed placidly or tempestuously among rocks and between the tight and steep sides of the encompassing mountains. The Institute people went into the gorge, surveyed it carefully, studied the rocky sides, took measurements and considered how it could use that flowing water. It's a messy gorge, with poor, loose rocky sides.

The plan for Phase One of the power plant was to dig a tunnel about the height of a man, line it with brick and stone, to run parallel with the river but quite a way inside the mountain. Upstream a low dam would divert water into a settling tank, through control gates and into the tunnel. There it would flow at a very gentle slope for about half a kilometer and then pour down with great force through a large iron tube to spin a turbine connected to a generator which would make electricity and pass it along power lines into Butwal town. This kind of thing had never been done before in Nepal. It took a new, venturing Mission, in the climate of the new

Nepal, to try it. The Norwegian Government, through the mission in Norway, backed it with money. Mission engineers and builders, joined closely with Nepali crews, struggled to hang to the gorge sides while bringing in materials and digging the tunnel.

In mid-June, 1970, the crews were well along with the job and working hard to close the entrance and exit of the tunnel before the summer monsoon rains would come in earnest and swell the river and make work impossible. In the darkness, at 4 o'clock one morning, catastrophe struck the gorge and town. In the mountains upstream 27 inches of rain fell in 24 hours and funneled down into the gorge in a great flow. Fortunately no workmen were on duty in or near the tunnel. The flood of water rose 15–17 meters (about 50 feet) up the banks of the gorge, covering both entrance and exit structures of the plant and pouring through the tunnel. The whole construction job and area were buried for an hour under dirty, churning waters. By force the river carried away three cement mixers, several wheelbarrows and the cableway used for carrying heavy materials across the river, together with its winch. The suspension foot-bridge used by the workmen was torn away. Silt and sand lay knee deep in the tunnel and the powerhouse machines were buried in sand and muck. Downstream the flood destroyed many shanty houses and drowned about a hundred people. It was short and furious, unpredicted and unseasonal. The power plant construction was not basically injured. It was cleaned up and the crew persisted in their job and finally finished Phase One with a 50 Kw generator. They went on to complete Phases Two and Three with $2\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers of tunnel ending in three generators producing 1,000 Kw of electricity. This year, 1978, the Butwal Power Company Pvt. Ltd., in keeping with the project time-table, is transferred into the hands of Nepali management. A Nepali staff of 23 persons runs the plant and the company office. It is supplying 1,000 kilowatts of electric power to all the Institute needs, to 50 shops and industries which have built up in the area, to a thousand domestic consumers of the town and is hooked into the wider grid to supply power for miles farther afield.

The hard core of the Institute has been the group of workshops which employ tradesmen, undertake production and take in trainees for on-the-job training.[8] But beyond these workshops there

[8]There have been four production shops which work in metal, wood, electricity and auto mechanics. Up to the present two of these units have evolved into separate share companies. They are the Butwal Engineering Works Pvt. Ltd., and the Butwal

is an even larger and expanding part of the whole Butwal project. It has 'open ends' so that other industries or technical enterprises can 'spin off' in useful directions related to economic development. The first, as we have seen was the Butwal Power Company. Out of its experience and learning has come a continuing enterprise called the Himal Hydro and General Construction Company Pvt. Ltd. This company already is constructing a small hydro-electric plant up in the middle mountains at Baglung and is expecting to move on to other similar jobs. It is Government policy to promote the construction of micro and small, as well as large, hydro-power plants throughout the country and use its great resource of flowing water.

Another associated industry which grew up right beside the workshops has been the Butwal Plywood Factory Pvt. Ltd. Nepal needed plywood. Nearby forests held the timber. Again work by many hands created a *pakka* factory with a high black chimney displaying the name of the company. This factory produces commercial and decorative plywood of various sizes and standards, the first of its kind in the kingdom of Nepal. In outlet stores in towns of the country this product and its trademark can be seen.

As data has been coming in concerning Nepal's resources the fact has been revealed that the country's forests and wood supply are being consumed at an alarming rate, with several adverse results for the ecology. Because the Butwal Institute is concerned with the economic development of the country it began to experiment with an alternate fuel for cooking meals in the village homes. This consisted of using cattle manure to generate gas which could be sent in a plastic pipe to the kitchen to cook the meal on a gas-burning stove. This replaced wood, straw and even dried manure cakes as village fuel. His Majesty the King and Government officials became acquainted with this trial plant, and in due time this kind of alternate fuel was written into Government plans and the Butwal people were encouraged to produce these bio-gas plants in large numbers. These plants consist of tanks made of either steel or

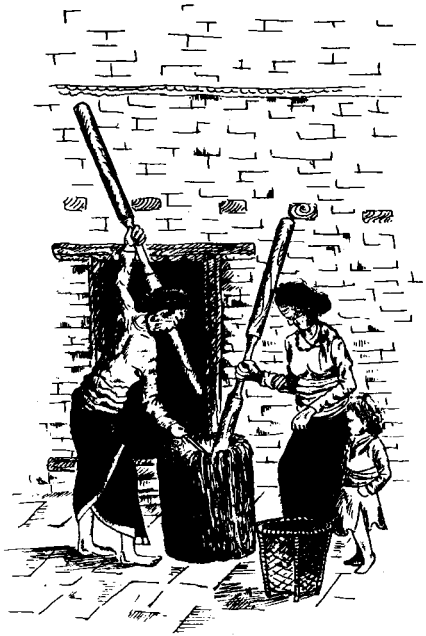
---

Wood Industries Pvt. Ltd. In its present mature form there are 60 trainees at a time passing through a four-year apprenticeship training course in these workshops and coming out as certified tradesmen. Some stay to work in the Institute and shops. Some move away to jobs in other industries. Some have started their own shops. There are about 100 employees in the workshops besides the trainees. These workshops are organized together under the management of the Butwal Technical Institute (BTI) which this year has transferred into Nepali ownership and management according to plan, without compensation to the Mission.

ferro-cement and produce 100 or 200 cubic feet of methane gas per day, sufficient for the cooking needs of an average family, using manure from four to six cattle for the smaller tank and from eight to twelve cattle for the larger tank. In addition gas can be used for lighting at night with petromax-type lanterns. The residue manure, after producing the gas, is as rich as before in its ingredients for use as fertilizer. Very quickly the construction of these useful plants developed into the Bio-Gas and Agricultural Equipment Development Company Pvt. Ltd., which manufactures the plant, installs it for the farmer, teaches him how to use it, and offers maintenance care. Several hundred have been made and put to use. People think there is a great potential use for these plants in this largely agricultural country and in relation to an alternate fuel supply. But the tanks and fixtures need more experiment, study and improvement to make them really reliable and lasting in local conditions and above all to reduce the cost. The Mission people in Butwal have an on-going department just for research into improved designs and construction techniques for these plants, as well as follow-up visits to those who are using them to see how they work. The Institute also is experimenting with other agricultural equipment such as winnowing fan, rice huller, operated pump, grain bin, wheat seeder and a twine and rope maker. When these are made successfully they will be manufactured in quantity for sale.

An especially interesting helper to the mountain farmer is another form of energy use. The rushing mountain streams, not far from every village, hold power. If an ox can be yoked to pull a plow in the field and relieve the farmer of plowing by hand, then there must be some way to harness that running water to turn wheels and work for the farmer. For generations hill people have been using these streams to turn stone flour mills and to turn a log from which they could carve wooden jars for household use. The Butwal people built a small prototype turbine, which was revolved by water and which by means of an attached belt turned machines which hulled rice, ground flour and extracted oil. These three food-preparing processes have been done traditionally in every hill farm for generations by crude devices worked by hand, foot or animal power, with tedious labor, often in the hours of the night and mostly by the women folk in the home. If much of this food-preparation work could be done by a relatively simple and cheap water turbine and auxiliary machines, the labor of people could be shifted to other useful purposes. This is now being done by a dozen such small

turbines which have been made in Butwal and installed in the hills. Given added personnel and means this useful enterprise will very likely grow into a manufacturing and installing company. It has some very attractive features, including the possibility of joining the turbine to generators for turning on village electric lights, or to turn wood saws.



Hulling rice, grinding flour and extracting oil have been done traditionally by using devices worked by hand, foot and animal power, mostly operated by women and often in the hours of the night.

The running principles which were practiced first in the Butwal workshops were applied to all the associated enterprises that fanned out under the Institute for Industrial Development: conduct your affairs on a business basis, with fidelity, honesty, efficiency and hard work; use working and investment capital from the Mission but do not require recurring subsidy from the Mission to keep going.[9] The Mission wrote into its first Agreement a clause which

[9]The United Mission, receiving money from various church sources and donor agencies, has, over the 15 years of this project, put grant capital of Rs. 2.5 million into the Butwal Technical Institute (the workshops); share capital of Rs. 4.9 million
(continued on next page)

said that the beginning Institute workshops should grow to maturity, be self-maintaining and turned into Nepali hands in 15 years. This has been done. The same idea is prevailing in all the economic development endeavors. The Mission people involved in this field of work are gradually shifting out of older projects, as conditions allow, and moving into new places and new projects. This evolution, in the nature of the case, involves a vast amount of drafting on complex agreements, setting up of companies, close work with department officials, surveying, researching and learning. What began at one place at the foot of the mountain in Butwal is now located in more than a dozen places widely scattered in the country. New endeavors at different stages of talk, planning and implementation include plans for repeating the training workshops idea in the far eastern hills in Dhankuta, opening a trade training school in an isolated mountain area in the far west, an integrated rural development scheme in the south, and continuing engineering and consulting jobs on request in many places. Some clear results of these years of work have been to demonstrate how small-scale industries can be undertaken, how apprenticeship training can be successful within industry, and how these can serve in the national goals of improving the living conditions of common people.

Within the Mission organization all of this kind of work is managed under the Economic Development Board for which Odd Hoftun is the Secretary. In his last annual report, to help explain the conditions within the country and what the Mission is attempting to do within those factors by its 'drops in the bucket', he quoted some passages from His Majesty King Birendra's speech of December, 1977 as follows:

> "Nepal's modernization began only in 1951. We then initiated our development campaign in a total state of stagnation without any modern infrastructure and institutions. The first Five Year Plan, launched in 1956–57 with a total projected outlay of about $33 million, proved to be a highly ambitious venture, and many of its modest targets remained beyond our reach. However, with increasing experi-

---

into the Butwal Power Company; share capital of Rs. 4 million into the Butwal Plywood Factory; share capital of Rs. 2 million into the Himal Hydro Company; capital grants of Rs. 300,000 into the Turbine Project; Rs. 300,000 into Bio-gas Research and into the Bio-gas Company; also Rs. 1 million for working capital across the whole program. The UMN has budgeted from its recurring treasury money for the maintenance of its Board Appointee workers, of whom there have been about 60 serving in this branch of the Mission's work in these 15 years. There are currently 40 workers of the Mission serving in economic development work.

ence and growing capabilities both the scope of planning and its implementation have steadily improved over the years. The current Fifth Year Plan is extensive in scope, and its basic approach has also been reorientated to ensure that the process of change and development is felt and experienced by the common people.

"Developing countries have some features in common: Hunger and illiteracy, malnutrition and unemployment, and lack of skill in the management of their natural resources. Over-population and the continued depletion of natural resources, such as forests, in a number of developing countries pose a serious threat to their future. To tackle these problems it is important that we work individually through self-reliance, as well as collectively through joint ventures and exchange of experiences and technologists.

"Increased production may help mitigate mass unemployment and underemployment, but experience shows that this alone does not result in a corresponding decline in the incidence of poverty. A country like Nepal, with redundant labour in the rural areas, probably cannot attain a reasonable level of development without an effective mobilization of such labour. Such participatory process of development calls for not merely an infusion of modern inputs and technical know-how, but also a positive and ongoing change in the traditional rural sector. The vast majority of the population, particularly in least developed countries, live in the villages and depend on agriculture alone. There is often a huge surplus of manpower in the rural sector which can be absorbed only through the transformation of agriculture into an agro-industrial economy. This calls for new skills and competence in these areas, as well as cooperation from developed countries in the transfer of necessary technology."

It was not long after the beginning of the Butwal Technical Institute that three men came to the office of the Executive Secretary of the Mission in Kathmandu. They were men from parts west of the Valley. One had risen to national politics. Another was in local politics in his area and a third had a high Government post in the educational system. These men came in behalf of a twelve-man committee of leading citizens and laid before the Mission a proposal-request to this effect: "The good boarding schools are all in the Kathmandu Valley. There is no proper education for our sons in the west. We therefore have joined together to make a quality boarding school in the Pokhara area and already have received the recognition of His Majesty's Government to do so. We know about the school work which your Mission has done already in Nepal and we have come to ask you please to join and help us with this school." Before we follow through to see the outcome of this request it would be well to understand something of the background involved

and the image they had in their minds when they spoke about "a quality boarding school".

During the last thousand years or more there have been mainly two kinds of cultural influences which have moved into the Himalayas and helped to shape the inhabitants into the kind of people they are today. A lesser influence has come from the north, over the Himalayan passes, bringing forms of dress, language, religion and even human disposition. The larger influence has come from the sub-continent to the south, a steady influence of Hinduism and its pattern of life. This has included influences of language, literature, business, trade, politics and social institutions. Scholars call this movement the gradual sanskritization of the peoples of Nepal. In the last 150 years an entirely new and different current of influence has come from the south. This has been the British cultural influence, of which its ideas of education were a big part.

By 1835 the British Government was quite widely spread across India. At that time studies were made to determine what form of education to promote in the country. Out of Parliament and by order of the Governor General it was declared that the best form of education to be given was English Arts and Science and that money would be appropriated for establishing English Schools. These schools immediately became popular. The education received became a passport for entrance into Government service. Thousands of educated people were needed to fill the posts of the vast and expanding administrative structure. The curriculum of the lower schools was arranged to fit students to enter college and the curriculum there was made to fit the graduate for a Government post. The great ambition of anyone who could hope for an education was to climb this academic ladder and get a Government job. Such a job gave prestige, a salary with facilities and security for life. This form of education met the needs of those times. Vernacular day schools were also encouraged to multiply but were considerably inferior in all respects. The 'English School' evolved into the 'Boarding School' and multiplied into the hundreds as more of the public became financially able and ambitious for this kind of education. The school was expensive to attend, provided quality scholastic learning, taught the pupils to wear uniforms and adopt a manner of life that would fit them to move in the upper levels of society and Government in a manner befitting the British colonial culture. Use of English was the keynote.

As the decades passed and the needs of the nation expanded it

became imperative to widen the content of the education in order to accomplish many more objectives than the earlier narrow academic stream. This was true not only for the privately managed Boarding Schools but also for the thousands of day-schools which the Government or other agencies ran for the general public. Beginning in 1882, and throughout the years which followed, Commissions and Reports have tried to bring in reforms, to turn the content of the schools into more practical lines, to fit youth for productive work which the country needed in hundreds of forms. It has been an extremely hard pull. To an amazing degree the early image of what 'school' meant has persisted in the minds of the public, even the village and illiterate public. Because of the influence of India on Nepal this image about a 'school' has spread into the minds of countless people even into the remote villages.

When the delegation came to the United Mission requesting assistance to build a boarding school this is the idea they had in their minds. They wanted their children to get a good academic education, especially in English, so that they could go on to college and get Government jobs. The Mission considered this possibility with care and proposed the following: "We will join you to create the school by contributing capital money for building work and with staff; we have no money to subsidize the running of the school; we will sit down with you and work out a set of policies about the kind of school it should be; we think that the 'Shining Hospital' Mission (INF) should be asked to join the project because they are working in that locality; you must take the initiative to get agreement from Government for the Missions to enter this school effort." These steps were taken with the result that a Boys' Boarding School was opened in temporary houses in a village outside of Pokhara, beginning with less than 50 students in four classes. Within the following 12 years a large campus of beautiful stone buildings was built and today serves 300 boys in boarding and 50 day students.[10]

The Mission decided to assist in this joint school effort with several

[10]The name of the school was Nepali Aadarsha Vidhyalaya (Nepali Ideal School). It opened in June, 1966, and used bamboo-thatch houses for several years while the permanent buildings were under construction. The campus consists of 24 acres with 25 buildings, playing fields and a large farm. The School is reached now by auto road and is served by electricity and water from the town systems. The whole building program has cost about Rs. 9 million. Three-fourths of this money came as a grant from the Dutch Government through the Inter Church Coordination Committee For Development Projects of the churches of The Netherlands. The Mission negotiat-

(continued on next page)

reasons and purposes in mind which are closely related to the schooling situation in Nepal. In the 1960s the schools in Nepal, in spite of the efforts that had been underway for a decade, were few, unbelievably poor in facilities, curriculum, textbooks, management and classroom content. Their administration was a hodge-podge of kinds and methods. They were not geared to educate youth to fit into the developing national life with the needed skills for productive work. The Government was well aware of these conditions and was struggling to turn away from rutted, old ideas and to build a structure that would meet the needs of the new society. The United Mission has seen this Boys' School as an opportunity for getting into the thick of this work, in this early stage, at the grass roots, to help build a new kind of educative structure.

Therefore, this School has fixed several basic guidelines. It has taken the policy that it will be like all the rest of the schools in the country and try its very best to follow the rules of the department. It believes that the rules related to the internal workings of a school are basically good. Where the School experiences weaknesses and lacks in the system it speaks to them and works for improvement. The student body is made up of the same kind of cross section of students that attend any other average school. It is purposely a boarding school so that it can bring into its campus boys from distant, even remote regions, and from educationally disadvantaged areas. Recruiting teams go out to find such students. In keeping with Government desires it arranges for financial aid. Currently 20% of its students who are from financially and socially depressed families are receiving aid. The School teaches in the Nepali language, which is one of the rules, uses the prescribed textbooks and prepares students for the required examinations. It puts into the classroom trained teachers, with prepared lessons, teaching aids, assignments and coaching. Strong emphasis is placed on learning vocational skills and three subjects are taught. To develop healthy attitudes toward manual labor all students participate in a roster of work

---

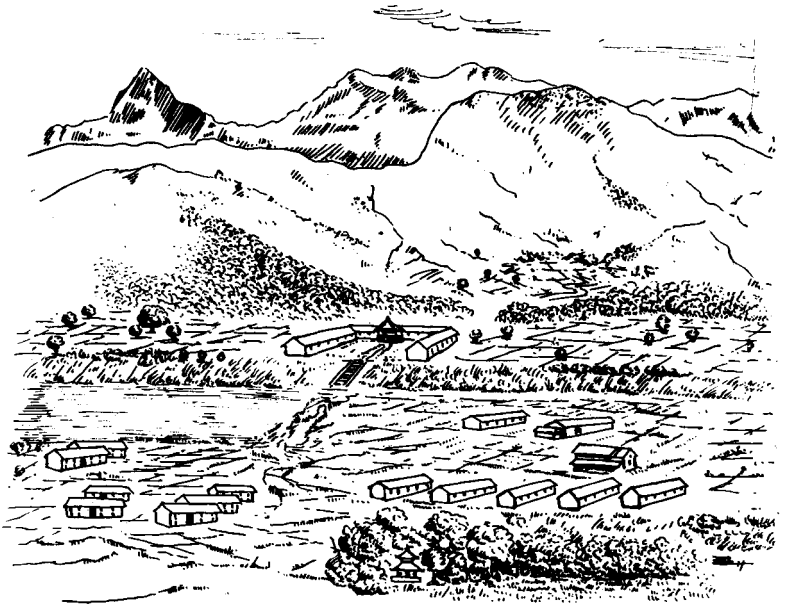
ed for two years with this donor agency and forwarded ten pounds of application and supportive papers by plane to Utrecht. When they learned that Nepal was really in medieval conditions and just beginning on the road of development they supported the project and have been extremely cooperative and patient throughout all the years of building work. Their Embassy representative, when on his first visit to the site, had to shave from a basin of cold water on a stone wall outside his hotel hut, which may have helped to convince them. The rest of the money came from UMN church sources.

across the campus. A schedule of extra-curricular activities, clubs, programs and sports is in full swing throughout the year. Special work has been done by the administration in schedule planning, teachers' job descriptions and terms of employment, lesson planning, developing subject departments, and writing of teachers' lesson guides. These materials have been shared into the system and are in use in other schools. It was hoped that the School would be appointed to be the 'lead school' in the western region and be given certain assignments to experiment, to evaluate and to demonstrate the contents of the national system, to show how schools could be run under the defined rules and fulfill the national purpose. While this assignment has not been given, it is hoped that some of the work has been done without the name.

In 1971, the Government, following on the personal instruction of His Majesty King Mahendra, launched a comprehensive and nation-wide National Education System Plan which initiated many major reforms. This has been one of the largest undertakings of Government in its nation-building plans.[11] The Boys' School in Pokhara was nationalized into this new System the first year and was placed under its rules from the beginning. The School has believed in the System and been loyal to it. It has spoken to faults and weaknesses and tried to improve them. Increasingly the foreign Mission staff members are being replaced by Nepalese and the School is standing on its own feet as a mature and leading national school. There is no end to the work that it can do, not only for its own students but to contribute into the larger educational scene around it.

It is the present purpose of the Mission to seek educators in various specialties who can be offered to serve at various places of helpfulness in the national system, in either Mission-assisted schools or as seconded staff members in other schools. Currently the Ministry of Education is in negotiation with the Mission over a request to establish another boarding school, coeducational, in

[11] Major reforms included required training of teachers, uniform salaries and employment of teachers by the System, uniform textbooks and curriculum, an evaluating system, a supervising structure, district officers, fixed fees, advisory committees and community participation. A tremendous expansion of schools is taking place so that in 1977 some statistics are the following: There were 8067 primary schools (I–III) with 769,049 students and 23,395 teachers. There were 2400 middle schools (IV–VII) with 226,739 students. There were 552 high schools (VII–X) with 82,158 students. The University and Institutes have similarly been greatly reformed and expanded.



The Boys' Boarding School near Pokhara functions within the National Education System Plan and aims to "make boys into men" in the New Nepal.

the far west at Jumla. The content of schools is so thin in those far-out mountains that the Government wants the assistance of a well-managed school to improve the conditions.

His Majesty's Government, in its development plans, organizes its concerns according to Sectors. One of those is the Social Services Sector. Within this frame are its plans for development in the fields of education and health. Work in the health field, of course, is mainly carried out by the Ministry of Health Services. This Ministry has been able to observe and study what the rest of the world has thought and experienced with regard to national health schemes. Benefiting from these learnings it has formulated its strategy for Nepal. For a long time the prevailing idea was that the health care which a government should provide for its people, especially in developing countries, should be mainly through a network of "doctors and nurses in hospitals and dispensaries". With this went modern drugs, supportive staff, specialities and buildings. Work along this line was largely curative, healing the sick. Through the whole modern missionary movement this has

been the main idea in what has been called 'medical work'. In fact, missions led the way in much of the world in this work and gradually governments took it on as one of their responsibilities. The need for this kind of healing of the sick will be with us forever, world without end.

However, with the changes that come with time, especially in the last generation, those concerned in health matters have become aware of two large factors. The first disturbing factor is that developing countries especially have found that this institutionalized and highly professional system of health care can assist only on the average about one-fifth of the population; all the rest are really getting no care. The other fact is that the practice of medicine has made such rapid and large progress in recent years that the system of "doctors and nurses in hospitals and dispensaries" has become highly complex, specialized and extremely expensive. Some mission hospitals have gone out of business because of this. Nepal has been able to benefit by observing the evolving world thought and experience in these matter and has planned a health care strategy which is today well in the forefront among the nations. Its plans are in the early stages of implementation but they are moving along. Nepal's ideas are multiple, both curative and preventive, with levels of health workers, of differing training, aiming at work in each village to reach every person, as well as to have available the professional services of hospitals.[12]

The United Mission has moved apace also in its thinking and practice with regard to services in health. As we have learned, the Mission entered Nepal on invitations to open hospital work and clinics. It has believed in this and has continued to do this kind of work with strength and with many of its workers assigned to hospitals.[13] In support of health services for the country the Mission

[12]The strategy of the Ministry of Health includes the outworkings of such ideas as: health education for improved self-care, community participation, prevention, environmental sanitation, provision of food and clean water, use of lower level auxiliary health workers, traditional medical practitioners, appropriate technologies and curative medicine. It is creating a structure of tiered workers by which it reckons that 60–80% of ailments can be dealt with by village level workers and by the health posts, and the remainder can be cared for in upper level and speciality hospitals. The Ministry's services have also included vertical programs in smallpox, family planning, malaria control, TB, mother and child health and leprosy. These are now being integrated into the basic health service structures. The idea of entrusting diagnostic and treatment care to persons with one or two years of medical training is a radical departure from the traditional viewpoint.

[13]In 1977 the UMN operated four hospitals (7% of those in the country), with a

(continued on next page)

has established schools and assigned workers to train various categories of persons to serve in the whole structure.[14] With the Mission there always has been the hope that it could get enough strength and time to engage also in forms of 'public health' and 'preventive medicine'. From the beginning small efforts were made in this direction. Gradually resources did come and step by step the Mission expanded into various forms of what at first was called Public Health. It has been a learning and evolving process and will probably continue to be so. The Mission has moved along in this process rather closely with the Ministry of Health. By the present time (1978) a large portion of Mission resources in the field of health care is being placed in what is currently called 'Community Health Programs'.[15] It is inspiring to watch this work. The programs are varied, complex, emphasizing new approaches and concepts. They deserve close observation. The change and growth and content of the Mission's work in this field can helpfully be observed by following some of the Mission people involved, for example Dr. Iwamura.

Dr. Noboru Iwamura and his wife came from Japan and joined the United Mission in 1961. He was recruited to fill a new post written into the Mission's plans for a 'specialist in preventive medicine' for the staff of the Tansen Hospital. He was the first Public Health Doctor to join the Mission and the first in Nepal.[16]

---

total of 275 beds (13% of those in the country). A fifth hospital of 150 beds is under development.

[14] In 1978 the Mission was working in a Nurses Training School, an Auxiliary Nurse training school and a Community Medicine Auxiliary training school. These schools are conducted jointly with HMG's Institute of Medicine. Some UMN workers are seconded to other medical training institutions of the Government.

[15] In 1978 The Mission was functioning in four Community Health Programs, in localities near the four hospitals. Some of this work was on its own and some was in forms of cooperation with Government structures. In June, 1978, a seminar of UMN-CHP workers prepared a definition of the role of the Mission in Community Health in Nepal to be: stimulating the communities to take increasingly more responsibility for their own health care, helping them identify their own health needs, utilizing local resources and providing supporting health services as close to the people as possible within an economic frame that the country can afford.

[16] Dr. and Mrs. Iswamura were sent and supported by the Japan Overseas Christian Medical Cooperative Service, a regular member mission of the UMN. Through the years several missionary workers have been contributed by this society. Dr. Iwamura experienced the atom bomb at Hiroshima. As a young man he became a Christian. He graduated from Tokyo University Faculty of Medicine, and in due course came with his wife to Nepal. They have served with vigor, dedication and joy for many years. Dr. Iwamura has had an unusually fine rapport with Government officials and the public and has contributed to the development of the national health service. He also has served in various ways with the World Council of Churches in health

After years of work in the Tansen area he was appointed to lead the Mission into a mission-wide public health program, to help make the Mission's work a 'comprehensive health service'. This was in 1971. Since then the names for this work have changed, the philosophy has evolved, the content has multiplied and the whole program has grown very considerably. Dr. Iwamura's life experience illustrates to quite an extent the evolution of thought and experience of the Mission in this field of work. Here is his story.

Iwamura came to Tansen in 1961 to work in public health. For a two-year term he worked as a professional, knowing what the people needed and personally giving it to them. He used the hospital lab and x-ray to test cases and went out into villages to engage in efforts at making a healthy environment and preventing the spread of communicable diseases, especially TB. Along the way he trained assistants to do these same things for the people. In the end he found that the people did not have a concept of the whole village group working together at something to help all. He felt that he made very little progress this term and gave up this approach.

After a two-year furlough Dr. Iwamura returned to Tansen again for public health work (1965). He came again as the knowledgeable professional to prevent the spread of TB using a new method. He brought with him an ingeniously designed mobile TB screening x-ray machine that could be dismantled into eight porter loads for transport over the trails and readily assembled at the place of use. With this he screened thousands of persons in the district and put those with disease on treatment. He found that he didn't need to hike out—people came in large numbers to the hospital to his 'mystery box' and expected a mystery cure. He gave the people a three-months supply of medicine and sent them home to take the cure while 'domiciled' at home. They were to return every three months for more medicine and continue the course for 18 months. He had no mechanism to keep them on the long course of medicine; there was no assistance in the village. His imposed cure did not work. He reckoned that 90% discontinued before the course was completed. He calls this method a failure.

In 1965 Tansen District was chosen by the Government as a place to try a new plan to train and use Village Development Workers (or Health Workers). UMN was asked to give to these people the training for the health care part of the job. Dr. Iwamura was heavily involved in this training, selecting the limited number of items, including TB, which they should learn to cope with or undertake. They trained 80

---

matters. The account which follows of his work experience is a condensation of his lecture, illustrated with slides, which he gave to the Nepal TB Association Conference in Kathmandu, 1978.

young men and went into the villages with them to join the work. The results were disappointing. Iwamura calls it a partial failure. The use of latrines, at least on a mass scale, was a failure. People didn't have understanding or motivation for their use. The VHWers were trying to diagnose and treat things they didn't really understand and village confidence in them was low. A turning point came for the Doctor when he held a seminar with the VHWers and asked them what they felt were the diseases they could see and recognize and want to treat. Their list was different from that of the doctor-trainer. They listed what they and the villagers saw as diseases and needing treatment.

Out of these years of experience Iwamura has been changing in his thinking and working with respect to public health work in villages. Now he advises: Join the people who are in the village life and structure (the Village Health Worker, the local midwife, teacher, the successful mother, etc.); they can do very much for health care; discuss with them about their ailments and needs and what they are willing to do about it. Cooperate and work at those points, a step at a time, at their speed, understanding and participation. This method is called 'domiciliary treatment in local dynamics'. It also is called 'primary health care' and is undertaken at the grassroots by the local people. It should be integrated with other rural development activities such as in agriculture, education and facilities. In this method the Village Health Worker must stay within his limits and must be supervised by his administrative professional. Iwamura's view, now after 17 years, is that the doctor's place in village public health is as a resource person. Primary health care can best be undertaken almost entirely by the village people themselves.

In 1974 His Majesty's Government initiated the Integrated Health Program to be carried out in Health Posts, run by Assistant Health Workers. These posts were planned to be the centers for combating mass disease, promoting family planning, holding mother and child clinics, offering midwifery care and treating illnesses. The Minister of Health called this 'Community Health' and the name stuck. The Mission was asked to help with this effort and Dr. Iwamura led in developing the Mission's planned Community Health Programs attached to the hospitals. These programs took various forms because of the kinds of people involved, what each could do and because of the degree of understanding and participation of the public. Mission people emphasize that working in community health has a different approach and attitude than what is in the training of professional medical people. Such workers need to go through the reeducation that Dr. Iwamura experienced and learn the new approaches which he advises, hopefully in less than 17 years! The Mission now is giving its new community

Mothers are the best persons for keeping the members of their family healthy when they learn the fundamentals of cleanliness and nutrition.

health workers special orientation for this kind of work to help in their attitudes, approach and understandings.

It is fascinating and most instructive to see what is taking place among village people as these new attitudes and practices are effected. A village health committee discusses health matters, seeks advice from knowledgeable people, undertakes activities and supervises health workers in its area. Mothers bring their small children to a weekly clinic where all kinds of things are done for both mother and child to keep them healthy. Babies are most important: during pregnancy, at delivery and in infancy. In Nepal on the average half of them die. Mothers are the best persons to keep them alive and they are learning how to do it. Nutrition is a big factor. Good work has been done to research and teach about foods. For example, 'super flour porridge' made of available grains and pulses, which mothers can make, has proved effective. Immunizations are given widely. Family planning is taught and offered. Individual home latrines are being built. Indigenous midwives are

being encouraged to improve their ways and continue their practice. Women health volunteers are trained and do their part. Health teaching is given in simple doses on posters, in tracts, to school teachers and students and person to person in clinics and homes. The Health Post treats ill people and refers difficult cases to the hospital.

Again, an idea often can best be understood by seeing it embodied in a person. This is true of the community health idea and of how it also reaches on to agriculture, animal husbandry, economics, technology and other areas of community life.

Gwen Coventry came from Australia (1959), trained in all that a nurse could get and with work experience. She was assigned to the Tansen Hospital. For several years she worked hard and happily with the heavy load of patients, as a ward nurse, in central supply, in the operating room, doing minor surgery, training nurse aides and holding the post of Nursing Superintendent.

She gradually came to feel that the Mission should do more than hospital work; it also should get out into villages, mingle with the people closely, and do health care at that level. By 1967 she was able to do just this. Villagers in the eastern part of the district asked her "to live among them and help them to a better way of life, especially as so many of their babies died and they wanted to keep them alive." Gwen and a colleague moved into that village of Bojha.

They were invited to visit *panchayat* meetings and school meetings and listened and talked, explaining and advising about health and communicable diseases. The people responded and organized from place to place so that Gwen and party visited 200 villages with immunizations, giving 95% coverage of children under 15 years. People came with illness and wanted medicine. So they ran a dispensary and treated the sick. With this they did a lot of teaching, person to person, about diet, cleanliness, etc. People were not interested in family planning because most of their children died and they wanted more. Before Gwen came, 55 children out of 100 died before reaching the age of five. Most people said they needed ten children to have a good chance to have two sons reach adulthood. After five years of the project influence and people's participation the death rate had dropped to nine per 100.

The project put in a water pipe and tank for its own use and ran one tap out for the village to use. People now had plenty of water to wash and for preparing food. It made a difference. The next year people came from other villages asking for similar water supplies, saying, "No one in Bojha gets sick now because they have clean water." They had observed this. So technical assistance was arranged from the outside to bring in pipe, cement and know-how and the villagers built water systems into their villages. Very few pit latrines were built. People did not see the need as pigs cleaned up the night soil. Also, their land is on rock and pits can't be dug. During the first five years the dispensary

was very busy with sickness. A Nepali couple took charge of this and they were well received and trusted.

People gradually saw that their efforts to keep clean, improve their diet and take immunizations was having effects. They began to say, "We need family planning because our children don't die now and we are too many to feed."

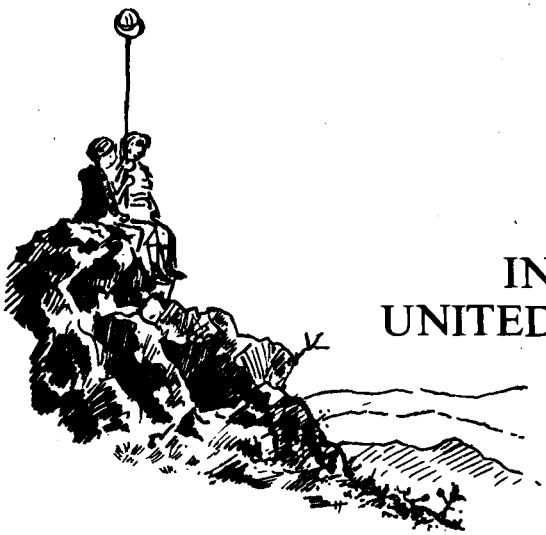
Family planning is now willingly accepted. It was not enough for the people to come to the dispensary. They needed something in their home village, especially for the mothers and children. When the *Panchayats* came to see the point of this they arranged for weekly mothers and children clinics right in the village. Villagers with some training help with this. A card is kept to show weight and health of each child. A few simple medicines are given but the main content is on cleanliness, nutrition and watching the results. Health of children has improved considerably. There are 16 such village MCH clinics now running. With water supplies there is a reduction of scabies, abscesses and skin conditions as well as diarrhea.

Gwen came promoting health, doing a lot herself, and seeing considerable participation by the villagers themselves with good results. Gradually she began to observe that the general well-being of the villagers was not only a matter of health. In fact, across Nepal most villagers' first need is not medical care. She observed that many people went into debt every year. They did not even have enough land to produce a year's food supply. A famine came in the area and most of the people had to give anything and everything they had just to keep alive. The project helped with some work-for-food efforts. Gwen realized that people had to become economically stable to carry them over bad and good years. The project started to work with animals as an added source of cash and food and learned that animals also need a health program just like people. They got into de-worming, treating and breeding and saw improvement. Villagers began on an irrigation ditch which brought into use some unproductive land and increased their food supply. The project has been talking with the people about what could be done to better use jungle land, raising salable crops and better use of natural resources. Project attention and that of the community is shifting to ways and means of increasing economic stability. It is a very poor community. They are thinking that they need food and money more than they need medical care, or certainly they are together in the same bag.

The circle of mission has a wide circumference. It swings around from the hospital with its sick to the village mother and her family. It turns over to water supplies and latrines and leads on to the farmer and food, taking in irrigation and animals, forests and rocks and soil. The circle reaches on around machines and electricity, roads and bridges together with shops and business. It enters the mind and joins in the teaching, growing and behavior of people.

It is among books and papers and money and banks. Where the spirit of man is there it is, moving with man in the present and looking into the future. Within the circle are God and His salvation.

God's mission embraces all of His creation. Because God is at work in the earth, as His Gospel explains, we have the hope of being part of His new creation.



CHAPTER 10

INSIDE THE UNITED MISSION

When the United Mission was seven years old and 'riding the tide' in the full vigor of youth, certain mission boards in America initiated a study and evaluation of the idea and experience of missions working in a united way. The Missionary Research Library of New York City gave guidance to this study and published the results in a monograph in 1961. The study was made of eight united missions and interboard committees which were working at that time in different parts of the world. One of the missions studied was the United Mission to Nepal and in the description given of that Mission the following remarks were made:

> As the youngest of the united missions, UMN has had phenomenal growth in personnel and has not been hindered by lack of funds. Approximately 80 missionaries from about 20 groups or denominations from about 10 countries are working together (1961). The variety, mushroom growth, attendant confusion, overwhelming needs tempting one to do more than one should, and human frailty—all are so evident

that one is inclined to dread the day when the seemingly inevitable may happen. Yet, each year sees more order and less chaos, a steadying of the hastily loaded ship, enrichment coming from the variety of backgrounds and nationalities, a growth in support and a real determination to minister to the needs of people unitedly in the name of Christ, not in the name of some denominational label. Given a full measure of the Holy Spirit and a staff willing to receive it, God can work wonders in these far away mountains in a way that will be a glory to His Name.

That is a quite accurate description of the Mission as it was in those days. What is said of the attitude of on-lookers is also quite true. People smiled their favor, wished it well and inwardly wondered how long it could last. The 'seemingly inevitable' crash which was dreaded by the evaluation study didn't materialize. Instead, the Mission has moved on through the years into more of the order, steadiness, enrichment, growth and unity which the study mentions. It has more than doubled its size in resources and work.[1] Today it is vigorous and productive. Within the body of workers the morale is high, the unity is strong. The people who are involved believe in the Mission, in its nature, purpose and work. The Mission has 'rolled with the ship' in the peculiar 'climate of the times' in Nepal and in the process has developed that distinctive character which it needs for its work. From observing the Mission carefully, not only in its seventh year but across twenty-five years, it must be said that this "practical experiment in ecumenicity", as one of its leaders called it, has worked very well.

The United Mission was established and has grown up at a time when the ecumenical movement was well known throughout the world. There have been a variety of reactions to this movement, from strong enthusiasm to equally strong criticism. While some roots of the Mission reach into organized parts of that movement, on the whole the Mission body as it stands today is a spontaneous

[1] In August, 1978, there were 28 regular member missions, three in the process of joining and one associate member. Through the years there have been eight other member missions which have belonged but for various reasons have had to withdraw. These 'member bodies' are based in 15 countries in Asia and the Pacific, Europe and North America. They contributed 212 'board appointees' (missionaries), wives included, of whom 34 were on furlough, and these have worked in 154 defined posts. There were at this time also 25 'direct appointees', making a total of 237 expatriates in the Mission. The member missions represent a dozen leading denominations in their countries and some represent interdenominational societies which cross church and political boundaries. The Mission personnel work in more than 40 projects, widely scattered across the country. For further details of this kind, see the Appendices.

and quite original organization. The 'united-ness' consists of a true and practical union of the members in Christ and in His mission in this land. Here are Lutherans from the large state churches of Scandinavia and Germany joined with Christians of the free churches of those countries in a common faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord, worshipping together, listening to God speak in His Word, and going out as one body of Christians to do His work. Here are Anglicans from their worldwide communion in a like Christian faith and fellowship with members of non-conformist churches. In the family are Mennonites from conservative communities of America, members of the 'no church' group in Japan, people from already-united churches in India and Canada. There are people from the regular-line denominational churches: Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Pentecostals. The 'United' part of their name means that they are one body of Christians and that they take part in the worship and witness of one church in the place where they are.

There are some reasons worth pointing out which have brought about this unity and sustained it over the years. In the chapter describing the formation of the Mission there was mentioned the satisfying conviction of the founding members that this was the way God wanted them to live and work as they entered Nepal. Then they worked out a statement of their faith which is Biblical and orthodox and which defines them as a distinctly Christian missionary organization, committed to and working within the historical church and its mission in the world. Their definition of the sacraments and church order is wide enough to allow for variety in faith and practice. Another factor which has helped them stay together has been the fact that the Mission is not engaged in the traditional work of church building and thus is not directly involved in the theological issues of faith and order. The church has been growing in Nepal on its own, organizationally independent of the United Mission and of other missions.

There is still another factor in the very nature of this kind of united mission which has had a significant influence in holding it together. This is the fact that resources in men and money have been given away by parent bodies to another mission—to the United Mission. The parent missions, as such, have not entered Nepal and do not exist in Nepal. So, within the country all the workers belong to and constitute the United Mission, find their status through it, and work for its aims and purposes. This transfer

or secondment to another organization is significant. It means that the missionaries are in Nepal not to extend the properties, managements and churches of their sending bodies. They are freed from that traditional role. Instead they give themselves to the United Mission and become a part of the worship and work of this body of Christians. For many this has become a 'blessed liberty' and has set them, as well as the Mission, free to work in joyful faith and abundant labors within the aims and ways best suited to their situation.

Such broad-based working together with so many kinds of other missions and which does not result in something which is 'ours' has not always been appreciated in home church constituencies. It is not the 'done thing' in many churches. In the beginning some members hardly dared to explain to their constituencies what they were doing. But gradually church papers, mission magazines, literature of the United Mission, and the enthusiastic testimony of missionaries on furlough have built understanding, appreciation and supportive strength in the whole endeavor. All who have been deeply involved in the Mission for some years are strong in their belief in the rightness of this way of working and testify to the blessing and joy they have personally experienced in this fellowship. They wouldn't want it to have developed any other way. For many members it has been the same as for one of the leaders who wrote after several years, "I am still awed and amazed and thankful at what God the Holy Spirit has done to form such a United Mission for His redeeming work in this place."

The member missions, though not having each its own separate status in Nepal, are certainly present and controlling in the United Mission. They created the Mission initially and continue to sustain and shape it. Each member body sends its representatives to the Board of Directors which meets in the office of the Mission in Kathmandu. In the early years this Board met in India because the mission resources came largely out of churches and missions in India. There was some thinking in those days that the Mission should be exclusively the work of the church in India. This was not practicable. In fact some boards which were making their contribution in the beginning through churches with which they were joined in India, shifted their relations to take direct membership in the Mission. Their related churches in India have kept direct membership as well. Furthermore, God led and brought resources from His church in many parts of the earth. It was not long before

the Board was meeting alternately between Nepal and India. As its connections were growing wider with members in many parts of the earth, with workers and money similarly coming from many places and as the administration of the Mission became settled in Nepal itself, the Board met increasingly in Kathmandu until today it meets only in the Headquarters Office of the Mission.

The Board did its best in the beginning to write a Constitution which would define the nature of this new and strange mission, of its membership and how it should function. This was a good document. But with growth and learning this Constitution has gone through changes and the Mission is now running according to the third and considerably enlarged Constitution. This kind of change and improvement is inevitable, especially for this Mission in its place and time.

It was clear at once that these member bodies were widely varied in their ways of supporting their missionaries. It became a policy from the beginning that each parent body should support its missionaries and their families according to its own salaries, allowances and rules. This has meant considerable differences in income but there has been a healthy understanding of the situation and no jealousy or cause of dissension. One by one as issues arose they have been discussed in the Board and policies worked out. For example, it is an easy tendency for a mission to give a higher priority in use of resources for what it calls its 'own work' and lesser concern for an organization where it is only a member along with other members. This could mean that a member body could withdraw its seconded workers or reduce its financial grants to the United Mission in order to better serve the needs of its 'own work'. This makes the United Mission a second-rate concern and can cause it to get into severe difficulties. So, attitudes of equality have been developed.

The method of support of the United Mission had to be developed. It began by irregular free-will grants from member bodies. This was soon changed to a system whereby each member mission gives a fixed grant along with each worker to the general treasury of the Mission. This is used for the recurring budget. Member bodies may give more than this as they are able. Then, money for the support of the capital budget (for buildings, equipment, etc.) may be sought from the missions and churches or from other suitable sources.

A helpful understanding in the Mission family was reached when it was realized that the member missions were all different and

legitimately so. Each had its own internal policies and practices, arising out of its history and philosophy of mission, which each held in the faith that God had led it to work in such a way. Roughly half of the member missions were boards of denominational church bodies and the others were free, interdenominational societies. There are often considerable differences in the inner workings and resources of these two types of missions. Here both types were attempting to work together. One type could not expect to shape the United Mission according to its forms and require the others to change. Rather, in this form of uniting, a way must be found whereby the diverse members could keep true to their individual identities and still work in the new organization according to its aims and ways. One procedure has helped. Certain items have been left to the responsibility of the parent body, such as salary and allowances for the worker, health costs, education of children, language study costs, travel to and from Nepal and length of terms and furloughs. On the other hand the United Mission has taken responsibility for such items as to obtain visas and arrange the status of workers, offer language study and orientation, assign to posts of work, provide housing, pay for duty travel, fix annual holidays and plan and administer the work. By now a little *Ready Reference* booklet has been prepared which is used to initiate new workers to the inner workings of the Mission and is a handy guide for the others to keep refreshed in the Mission procedures. From a small and simple beginning the Mission has grown into a large and involved organization requiring considerable structure in administration, in committee and boards, of manuals for business, in forms of communicating and means for keeping the body living in a healthy manner and moving in its work in an orderly way.[2]

This growth in internal structure can be seen, for example, in the logistics of supporting scattered projects and posts. There was a day when the office secretary stepped away from the typewriter desk and packed baskets and roped boxes and sent them with porters into the mountains. These men needed identification

[2]The office of the Mission began in Kathmandu in one room of the Executive Secretary's home, in the Thapathali part of town (1959). The functions of this office have since expanded until today they use 50 rooms in buildings in the same area of town. It is sometimes thought of as the 'Headquarters Project of the Mission' and includes offices of the Executive Secretary, three Functional Secretaries, Personnel Secretary, Personal Counsellors, Information Advisor, Treasurer and Accounts, Mail Room, Central Services Department, Maintenance, Language and Orientation Center and two Mission Guest Homes.

letters to pass police check posts along the way. Runners were employed from the earliest days to carry internal Mission mail to and from outlying projects. They are still used to serve some projects while Mission mail pouches to other projects are carried by buses and planes. Today there is an HQ Central Services Department with staff, offices, storeroom, packing shed and a truck which serve many of the needs of the large Mission family in matters of supplies and travel arrangements.

Or observe this kind of growth in the area of language learning. This has always been a major job when missions go to other countries. It has even acquired a considerable place in the traditional missionary image. When the United Mission began, missionaries went at language learning mostly on their own as best they could. This was unsatisfactory and gradually the Mission formed a Language Committee which made a curriculum, rules and arrangements for study. The Hindi Language Course book used widely in north India was taken and with some modifications translated for use in Nepali. It appeared in a bound volume of over 150 duplicated pages. A student sat with a tutor and worked through this book and other assigned materials and then sat for the First Year and then the Second Year Nepali Examinations. It was slow and hard work. After a few years this course book was revised. But the methods of learning were 'old fashioned' mainly because students and teachers were untrained in how best to go about learning. A better day came when the Mission was able to appoint a person to be supervisor of language study and give sufficient time to manage students and teachers in a school arrangement. They were able to use the *Conversational Nepali* course book prepared by the Summer Institute of Linguistics which followed improved methods of learning (1969). Students were applied full-time to language study for their first four months and to a varied schedule later. Along with this the Mission arranged materials and sessions of orientation. This structure and content has been even further revised and improved so that at present the Mission has a full-time supervisor of the Language and Orientation Center, hiring six or seven trained teachers, following mainly mono-lingual methods of learning and enrolling 25–30 students per term (1978).

Language learning has always been a hard mountain to climb for most people. It has been difficult to fit in with pressures of work and other concerns. For many years there was only an average of 5% of the Mission's personnel who had passed the Second Year

Exam. They became members of the Five Percent Club. Under the strengthened content of the present Language Center there is more pleasure in the job and much better results. To speak the Nepali language well, of course, is a very strong tool for work in the country. One of the beautiful things in the Mission life is to see members speaking Nepali with fluency and a breadth of vocabulary. Nepalese very much appreciate this. There are variations among the missionaries. Some retain their mother language brogue in speaking Nepali. Some learn wrong pronunciations in the beginning and keep the mistakes ever after. These are minor items and may not hinder work. But a few persons have a most difficult and very slow experience of learning. Even over many years their Nepali is still weak and slow and a drawback in work and a severe personal discouragement.

There are many areas for new learning and adjustment by the missionary. Language is one. Others are understanding the character of the people and how they carry on their affairs within their culture and institutions. Learning to relate to people, to understand each other, to know mutual trust, takes time and effort. There are adjustments to be made with regard to food, housing, dress, transport, climate, the mail system, insects, and many other things. This, of course, is true for anyone crossing political, racial and cultural boundaries in any direction. It is true for Nepalese going to overseas countries. It is part of the 'game' for the United Mission people as they live and work in Nepal.

Inter-personal adjustments are experienced within the Mission even before they are met at large in the country because the Mission, by its nature, is a little world in itself. Its people are from many churches, cultures and nationalities. Communicating with each other, even before trying to talk with Nepalese, is a job needing attention. The Mission has discussed this and wondered what language medium should be used in conducting business and fellowship with each other. Nepali could not be used because not enough persons know it sufficiently well. So the Mission has settled on English as its internal language. Hence many missionaries have to learn English as well as Nepali. A Norwegian may be teamed with an Australian, a Japanese with a Canadian. Others criss-cross boundaries in different directions in the partnership of mission. They learn that there are several kinds of English language in the world. There is Australian English, Indian English, variations in British English as well as in American English. There are differences, which are still correct, in pronunciation, spelling, grammar

or penmanship. Some names for things may be different, and peculiar idioms come out, not many, but enough to have to pay attention to learn them. A person slows down and becomes more careful in his speech, paying closer attention to the speech of others and choosing his own words with more thought.

This kind of thought for one another within the Mission's 'inner world family' is true not only with regard to speech but relates to many other cultural features such as table manners, kinds of food, manner of dress. People differ in their use of weights and measures, in office procedures and accounting, in names and practices within their profession and in the side of the street on which they drive. People pray differently. They relate to God in their own way, as it should be, and express their faith and worship in varying forms. People have relatives and home country places which they love. Within and around them are strong experiences and influences which have gone into molding them into what they are. They come from countries with rich histories, politics, social movements and world involvements. A missionary coming out of a small provincial town in middle America finds himself in a miniature 'World Book of Knowledge' when he enters the United Mission. If he opens his eyes and ears and pays attention he can get a free education from his colleagues. Some years of this kind of exposure sends a person to his home place wondering how people can live in their parochial smallness. To make this united mix work, people have to learn to respect one another, to listen, to adjust their national and cultural prides. It takes patience, consideration for one another, growing into true respect and love. It means to look not for external forms of religion but for faith and obedience in the inner man toward Christ the Lord and coming to belong to one another by belonging to Him. The reservoirs of knowledge, skills and experience within the peoples of the Mission are wide and rich. One weakness is that members do not sufficiently draw on these riches from one another. This is a measure of man's smallness.

The 'united' part of the Mission is certainly a prominent and unique feature of this organization. But there are other features also which should be noted when looking on the inside of the Mission in order to get closely acquainted with it. They have arisen largely as the Mission has tried to shape itself and its work to fit the lively factors of the Nepal situation. In this book we have tried to follow the drama taking place for 250 years to the present time. It is precisely among the elements on this stage—that is, in this

place and at this time—that the United Mission has come to form its shape and play its role.[3]

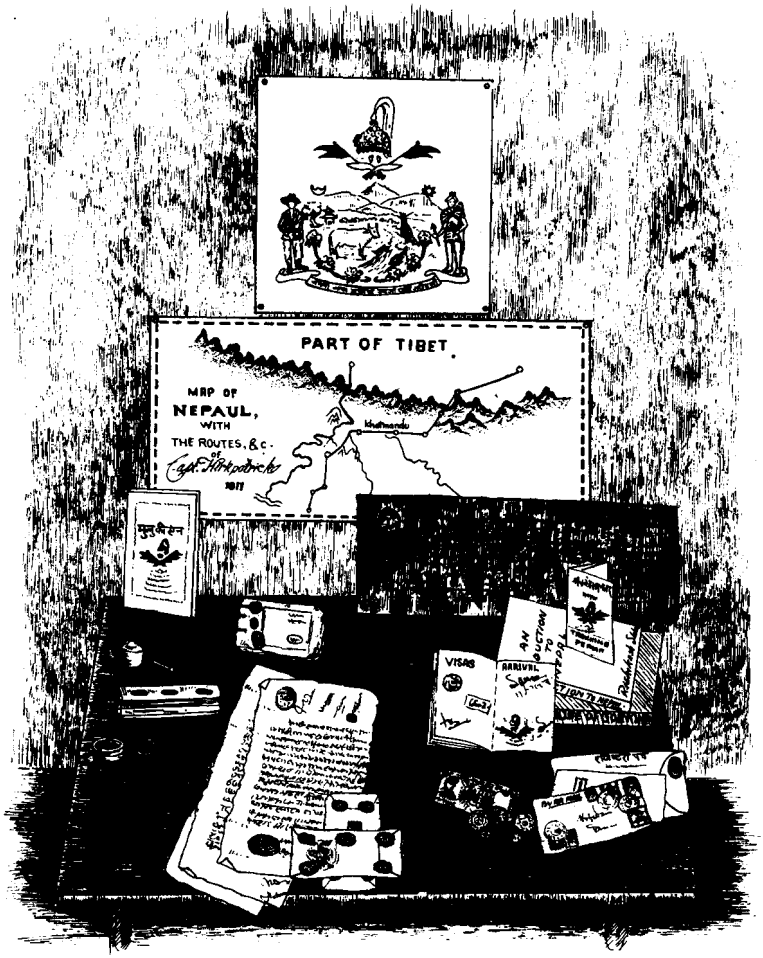
On the Nepal stage the people are represented by His Majesty's Government. That Government, through its General Agreement with the Mission, has largely set up those factors with which the Mission must relate and within that relationship find its way for carrying out its understanding of God's mission to it. It is at this very alive point—in the relationship between Mission and Government—that the Mission has found the content for the second word of its name,—its 'mission' in this land. What is it doing? And, how is it doing it? Out of this vital point grow other major, distinctive characteristics of the Mission.

We have already read the Dikshit letter of 1953 from His Majesty's Government which opened the way for the Mission to enter Nepal and begin medical work in Kathmandu Valley and in Tansen. It had four simple terms. Since then there have been three other renewals or extensions of the General Agreement, each negotiated by the parties concerned. They have become more sophisticated until the last and current Agreement has 16 terms under which the Mission has agreed to work. (See Appendix II.) The Mission takes these terms seriously, negotiates about them with Government, and does its best to follow them.

One early term stated that the Mission should give medicine to patients without cost, to more or less do its medical work free. The Mission explained its point of view and came to an understanding that in principle the Mission would charge for its medical services while at the same time giving free service to cases of special need. There have been several occasions to discuss Government and Mission viewpoints on this subject. This has been mutually helpful.

Another point from the first Agreement which has followed all through the years is that the Mission is responsible for the financial construction and running of the projects which it establishes, without financial assistance from the Government. Thus the Mission has raised all capital money for its work from among its church constituencies and from donor agencies. It has run its

[3] In the towns, villages and neighborhoods of this Nepal stage, among the hundreds of thousands of Nepalese with whom the Mission personnel have joined in the daily drama of life, there have been overwhelming openness, friendship and acceptance. The fact that His Majesty's Government has four times renewed Agreements for continuance in the country and is currently negotiating with the Mission to undertake several new projects indicates some measure of the Mission's acceptance.



The foreigner in Nepal, since olden days, must deal with maps, laws, passports and permits. The United Mission has formed some of its most distinctive characteristics because of its General Agreements with His Majesty's Government.

projects from money of its treasury and from fees and charges. The last Agreement made room for possible financial assistance from Government in particular cases.

Succeeding Agreements have emphasized that Nepalese should be trained and employed in the work of the Mission and take over posts of foreign workers as soon as possible. From the beginning the Mission has had this policy written into its Constitution and

has worked seriously on this point. It has given in-service training of many kinds to Nepalese employees in its projects, all the way from cleaners to cooks to office workers. Selected employees have been sent away for further training to return to do better work in higher posts. Scores of students in schools and colleges have been given financial aid for their studies. The Mission's Scholarship Committee selects and assists on an average of 100 students per year in special studies. Several of the projects of the Mission are specifically training institutions, preparing students for specific trades and professions. More than 500 Nepalese are employed regularly in Mission projects, receiving terms of employment comparable to those of similar institutions in the country. Some of these workers are highly competent and are holding responsible administrative posts. Steps have been taken consistently to place Nepalese in posts held by Mission Appointees whenever this is possible. The Mission believes in it. Its role is temporary and it is trying its best to establish institutions which society wants and needs and can in due time carry itself.[4]

One term which should be expected and considered normal is that "the Mission members shall be subject to the laws of the land." For the people of the Mission this point at once applies to obvious regulations regarding visas, residence, licenses, taxes, traffic rules, behavior and the like. On the last pages of the law book is an article of special interest to the Mission. Its subject is about discipline or control and says, "No person shall propagate Christianity, Islam or any other faith so as to disrupt the traditional religion of the Hindu community within Nepal, or convert any adherent of the Hindu religion into these faiths." To try to understand the meaning of this article so as to be able to define what the people of the Mission can do and cannot do religiously has caused continuing discussion. From the beginning and all along the Mission has made clear to officials and society that it is a Christian missionary organization. People know this. And knowing it the Government has continued to permit the Mission to carry on in the country and engage in work in many places. The Mission personnel in their various places have considered themselves members of the church in their place and joined in worship and activities of the congregations. They bear witness to Christ and the teachings of the Bible

[4]See the paper entitled "Policy Guidelines" which was approved by the Board of Directors in April 1970. It describes the policies of the Mission on this point as well as on several other important subjects.

as they have opportunity in informal, unscheduled and unstructured ways. They do not baptize or engage in what might be called church building acts. This area of religious practice is certainly an area of tension, not only for the Mission, but for the Nepal society. Religion is such a large part of culture and life. Issues related to it cannot but be alive and prominent in the national development process.

There are several clauses in the Agreement which are concerned with the Mission's work. In the current Agreement the Mission may work in the fields of education, health services, agriculture, technical and development services. Under the umbrella-like General Agreement there must be separate individual agreements for each project and each place of work. In all its activities the Mission should attempt to work within the framework of HMG planning, advice and guidance. It submits annual reports to concerned Departments. For quite a stretch of early years the Mission forged ahead with its projects in rather independent ways, learning how to get on with the job and doing it. Gradually the Government plans and structures have developed and spread across the country. Works like those undertaken by the Mission then have been related into the larger national plans. We have watched this trend as we have reviewed the major Mission projects in the past chapters. At the present time there is quite full "agreeing together to cooperate in projects", as the current Agreement puts it. This cooperation takes place between Mission personnel and Government officials at all levels from village leaders to Cabinet Ministers. The people of Nepal are represented in their Government and a foreign organization coming into the country of necessity must live and work in close cooperation with that structure.

The term in the Agreement which restricts converting and the term allowing many forms of service both have sent the Mission into deep study of the New Testament to understand better just what the Lord assigns it to do in the place where it is. Certain passages have become especially illuminating and personally instructive. The Mission finds Jesus' words after His resurrection a particularly fine summary of His overall instructions to disciples about mission when He said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." (John 20:21.) Another instruction in the Letter to the Colossians has prodded the Mission people over the years to study, prayer and application in their lives. They have placed it as an aim in their Constitution. It is the word: "Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord

Jesus." (Col. 3:17.) Still another passage has become strongly instructive from God to them in the daily round of duties at their posts: "Whatever gifts each of you may have received, use it in service to one another, like good stewards dispensing the grace of God in its various forms." (I Pet. 4:10.) If we could look deeply into the 'inner spirit' of missionaries we would find the truths of these and similar passages at work as leaven as well as springs of daily inspiration and creativity.

The clauses limiting the time that the Mission may be in Nepal certainly have been influential in the attitudes and planning of the Mission. It realizes that its presence is temporary and it tries to be ready to move on. With this in mind it seeks to undertake with the people forms of beneficial service which are fitting, desirable, given into the society and, if truly wanted, then carried by the society. In this situation the Mission has learned that the money and goods which it has received from the Lord, as it believes, it does not hold for itself to possess but to give it away, as best it knows how in its projects, right into the society of Nepal. At the same time it does not come easy to live as a transient in the earth. People, including those of the Mission, instinctively become attached to their homes and goods, to the earth and people around them. Emotional affections develop. There are strong ties of a person to the works of his hands. It takes some learning to hold these relations lightly, to be able to leave them and move on.

It is certainly true that the terms in the General Agreements have been shocking to members of the Mission and its constituencies. On first view the restrictions, limitations and instructions seem impossible. How can a Christian Mission agree to such terms? But given time and thought and especially when moving around to the other side to take the Nepal viewpoint they seem appropriate. Little by little, over many days stretching into years, the Mission has learned lessons of attitudes, status and relationships so that its people have come to work in faith and joy in a warm association with the Nepali people within the framework of these Agreements. There has grown a valued measure of mutual confidence, appreciation and friendship in this association. This is experienced in the course of numerous daily incidents. It has been expressed publicly by the Nepalese when awards have been given to certain members of the Mission.

His Majesty Mahendra conferred on Dr. Edgar Miller (1963) an award in recognition of his medical service in the palace and to

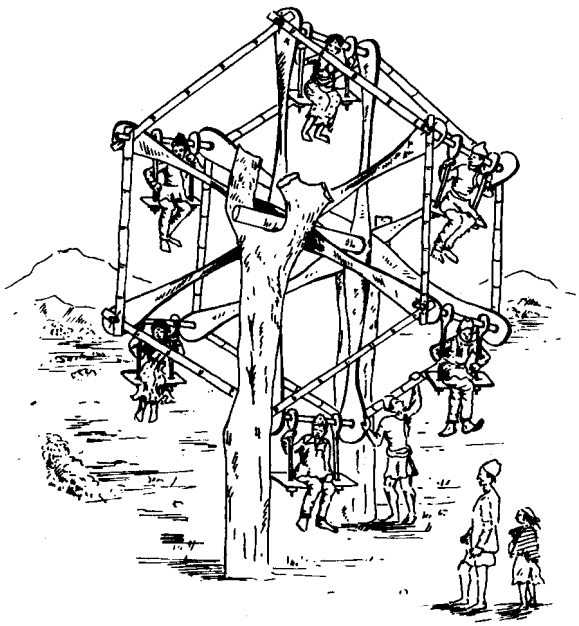
the public. In 1977 His Majesty Birendra conferred on Mr. Odd Hoftun the award of "Gorkha Dakshin Bahu—Class IV" (the Right Hand of the King) for his service to the country in economic development. The Tribuvan University awarded Dr. Robert L. Fleming, Sr., a Doctorate of Literature in recognition of his contributions to biological studies in Nepal (1978). In homelands recognitions have also been given to Mission personnel related to their work in Nepal. Both Dr. Robert and Dr. Bethel Fleming were awarded Doctorates of Humane Literature by Albion College in USA (1972). Dr. Helen Huston was given the "Outstanding Achievement Award" of the Medical Alumni Association of the University of Alberta, Edmonton (1978).

There was a clause in the second General Agreement which needed some explaining. It required the members of the Mission to confine their activities to the achievement of the objectives of the institution to which they were assigned and not engage in any extra-curricular activities. On the surface of it, this would, for example, stop Dr. Bob from pursuing his study of birds and giving helpful talks and displays about them. The clause rather intended to hinder personnel from involvement in political activities and what a later Agreement called 'proselytizing and other activities which are outside the scope of assigned work'. Personal, side-line interests and pursuits, understandably, are certainly permitted and encouraged. Many a person in the Mission after coming to this land of abundant, colorful and ever-present birds has been awakened to begin birdwatching. Dr. Bob Fleming, after his retirement in Nepal, together with his associates, published a book on *Birds of Nepal* which has been very popular. People have come late for breakfast, not held up by prayers or traffic or an accident but by birds on a morning watch.

A few have gone in for butterfly collecting. There are some cabinets of beautiful specimens within the Mission family. One former Mission teacher is now employed by the University to make a carefully planned collection and study of butterflies from all regions of the country and in all seasons. Some have taken to stamp collecting. Nepali stamps at present number less than 400 and are full of information about the country. One person has made a slide lecture and explains "What you can learn about Nepal from its stamps". Others have gone in for photography in this photogenic country, or enjoyed painting and drawing. Of course many have hiked in the mountains, some modestly in the populated parts and others with proper equipment in the higher snows. A few have

tried fishing in the rivers as well as boating and rafting and even experienced capsizing and loss of equipment. Bee keeping has been tried. Trees have been studied, enjoyed and scores have been planted. Roses and strawberries and flowering plants have been passed around and started in numerous places. Flower gardens are inside and outside of houses. Orchids are a specialty. If they could have, some would have tried aviation and radio communication but licenses are not available. People have produced musical programs, vocal and instrumental, written and produced skits and dramas, participated in clubs, enjoyed picnics. Sports, especially in the towns, have attracted many. One year a UMN basketball team won the Coronation Tournament. The Mission believes in holding three kinds of meetings in its locations: work and business meetings, prayer and Bible study meetings, and fun meetings.

Along a different line members have done serious study on various subjects and shared their learnings within the Nepal society as well as elsewhere. There is for example the study and treatment of mountain sickness by Dr. John Dickinson. He has been medical



During major festival-holidays country folk erect amusement wheels which offer enjoyable rides when pushed and pulled by good-hearted young men.

advisor to the Himalayan Rescue Association, helped to write their manual "Enjoy Your Trek", advised, written and lectured on the subject in Nepal and overseas. Dr. Cecil Pedley over many years did careful study and research in leprosy and had his articles published in medical journals. Mission members have written papers for conferences in Nepal, articles for magazines, given talks and lectures to groups in their areas. Their subjects have been wide and interesting, including Nepali music, gas from manure, aspects of Nepal history, practice of medicine, nutrition, health and postage stamps. One office worker's poems appeared every now and then for several years in the daily English language newspaper. The Mission has its Culture Study Committee and encourages its members to study and share learnings within the Mission family on a variety of subjects that will help people to understand the society better. Among the several hundred people who have participated in the Mission through these years there has seen a sense of warmth, of thrill and of fun in their living and working in this land. They have put in long schedules and hard work and have overflowed into a large variety of enjoyable and enriching 'extra-curricular activities'. Soon forgetting lesser irritations, frustrations and unpleasant incidents there has been for many an inner exquisite joy in this kind of creative living.

The people who looked inside the United Mission when it was seven years old observed one thing about it that needs observing by us again today. They saw 'human frailty' and this raised fears in theirs minds. They saw correctly. Human frailty has been in the Mission body through the years in numerous forms. Here I must write in the first person, to listen to criticisms, to mark our shortcomings and to confess our sins.

There have been criticisms of the Mission from different quarters; from casual visitors, friends, participating mission executives, workers within the Mission and people of the Nepal society. They have dealt with a surprisingly wide variety of aspects of the Mission, especially when noted over the run of the years—items from administrative structure to policies to manner of life. Some have been small and petty while others have been major and important. I think it is true to say that we have taken them up with concern and discussion, trying to understand and weigh them objectively. Some we have dropped, because having considered our position and deciding again to follow what we believe to be our best 'lights', we have proceeded accordingly. We have felt that some criticisms

have been made from limited observation and information, without sufficient understanding and facts. We have tried to inform better the critics and then listen to them again. Some criticisms we have found helpful. They have prodded us to improvement. Here is a collection of criticisms which have come over the years. When we pack many years' worth together in one place they seem devastating. They slay us. But when they come one at a time and we have dealt with them with care and readiness to be corrected, they have been manageable and beneficial.

In the Nepal situation the UMN has an unprecedented opportunity to leave old ways and develop new instruments of mission. It is not doing this sufficiently.

Its planning seems to be a kind of easy-going expansion of its existing projects, rather than dealing with the great potential for new outreach.

The heavy weight of foreign missionary character and UMN personnel in the work is frightening. How has this been allowed to develop in view of the charges of paternalism, colonialism and foreign-ism of the missionary enterprise? You are not using nationals or Asians in work and leadership.

You are pursuing a policy of developing rigid, demanding and expensive institutions that cause the Mission to become pre-determinedly fixed in its use of money and men. This policy in time will stifle the Mission. Keep open and mobile to use your resources in new endeavors.

You have no long-range planning for the future direction of work and use of property.

You are too private and aloof, not cooperatively related enough to Government plans and what is going on with aid agencies in the country.

In internal Mission administration you are too centralized and authoritarian, not democratic enough. New voices, new projects, new methods cannot be heard.

The difference-gulf in living conditions between missionaries and Nepalese is too big. How do you bridge across and get rapport?

Shanta Bhawan Hospital serves too much the rich and too little the poor. So do some other institutions.

Is the heavy volume of foreign aid really helping Nepal in the long run? Shouldn't self-help be more at work?

How do you justify disturbing the heritage and culture of Nepal?

Some say you allow too much breadth theologically; others say you are too narrow.

Even within the scope that you have, you are not sufficiently engaged in Christian witness.

As a whole you are too weak in the use of Nepali. Your effectiveness is considerably weakened because of this.

You need to be more awake to social anthropology and better relate your behaviour accordingly.

The Board is too much a 'rubber stamp' of policies and actions proposed from lower down.

The programs of the Mission should be more people-oriented, giving more attention to people at the village level, entering in to issues of social justice.

Where is the prophetic voice in the Mission? It should follow this and not just accept without question programs laid down by the Government.

The Mission's Scholarship Program has sometimes given unfair treatment to applicants so that people say, "Even the Mission has corruption."

You are no doubt doing a humanitarian work, satisfying mostly to the workers, but contributing very little to the actual control of leprosy in Nepal.

We are working too long and hard in our jobs so that we don't have time for spiritual or religious interests.

We are creating institutions of high quality and praise but unable to be run in like manner by Nepalese at this stage of development.

The Language and Orientation Program for new people is too shut in among yourselves and not mixed enough among Nepalese.

The decision to rest and worship on Saturday and work on Sunday is wrong and not according to Scripture.

The short term worker should be seen more as a regular 'dam builder' and not just as a 'dyke plugger'.

There are weaknesses needing improvement in the way the Mission briefs workers before arrival, guides them in language study, houses them in the Guest Home, involves its workers in decision making, defines jobs and posts or transfers people.

The universal fact of human frailty is certainly present in us members of the Mission. Not only are parts of us frail so that there are breaks, but there are parts sometimes that are warped or stuck and sometimes even missing so that there are holes. With the people that we are in the Mission, in great variety, we try to do the best we can with what we have. Sometimes that is not enough and we make mistakes or fail. On occasion we have been too professionally and technically advanced beyond the fit of the situation and in the other direction some of us have been too small, stingy and narrow in plans and work. In some situations, especially in relating to people and culture, we have had blind spots, ignorance, unawareness—and acted as bumbling foreigners. In some instances we have dealt unwisely with officials, made wrong deals, wasted money, badly handled land purchases, performed administrative jobs very weakly. We have built things that didn't work. Mission accounts and office business in places have been so badly snarled that they could only be crossed off and a fresh start made. Work has piled up and gone unfinished. We have been robbed and embezzled of mission money and equipment. Sometimes we have not taken care of Mission goods and they have deteriorated and been lost.

The human frailty includes imperfections of disposition and character. There are times when we individuals have been inordinately selfish and possessive, when we ought to have been the opposite. Sometimes we have been unfriendly, closed up, unkind, unthoughtful, and hated ourselves for it afterwards. At times there has risen up in us anger, fighting, envy, immorality. We have not been sufficiently supportive and patient with each others' human frailties and imperfections. Along the way, often, we turn to God and confess our sins in words used by penitent people the world over:

> Holy and righteous God, merciful Father, we confess unto Thee that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against Thee by thought, word and deed. We have not loved Thee above all things, nor our neighbor as ourselves, and are worthy, therefore, to be cast away from Thy presence if Thou shouldst judge us according to our sins. But Thou hast promised, O heavenly Father, to receive with tender mercy all penitent sinners who turn unto Thee and with a living faith seek refuge in Thy Fatherly compassion and in the merits of the Saviour, Jesus Christ. Their transgressions Thou wilt not regard, nor impute unto them their sins. Relying upon Thy promise, we confidently beseech Thee to be merciful and gracious unto us and to forgive us all our sins, to the praise and glory of Thy Holy Name.

May the Almighty, Eternal God, in His infinite mercy and for the sake of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, forgive all our sins, and give us grace to amend our lives, and with Him obtain eternal life. Amen.

We rise up in God's forgiveness, in renewed life in Christ, and go in joy to the life which God has given us to live in this part of the earth, singing the ancient song of praise to God:

All glory be to Thee, Most High,
To Thee all adoration!
In grace and truth Thou drawest nigh
To offer us salvation.
Thou showest Thy good will to men,
And peace shall reign on earth again;
We praise Thy name forever.

CHAPTER 11

NEPAL AND THE GOSPEL OF GOD

The spirit of man in every age and in every place yearns to know God. This search after God is present among the peoples of the Himalayas also in their place and time.

In his yearning search there has come to man some knowledge about the truths of God. By his 'eye of reason' he discerns God's deity and creating power in the things he has made: the heavens and earth and sea and everything in them. He sees the benevolence of God in the rain from heaven, in the crops in their season with food and good cheer in plenty. He sees God as the universal giver of breath and life and all else, who created every race of men of one stock, to inhabit the whole earth's surface. He sees men as God's offspring, his children, made in his image, bearing his nature. Man's yearning for God includes a desire to please him, to keep his law, while his conscience illumines his thoughts for or against his actions. By this universal light of nature man knows well enough the just judgment of God upon all who walk not in his ways. In

his quiet moments with truth he admits that mankind is broken in nature and fallen in estate. He knows that he himself is guilty of sin before his creator.

Man is made to belong to God. He instinctively feels this. His measure of the 'light of God' is small. He looks into a cloudy and dark sky. The world about him is full of brokenness and discord and is no friend to help him on to God. He is restless, incomplete and unsatisfied. He searches on—like a child looks for its mother, like water flows for the ocean, like a traveller heads for home—in like manner people yearn for the fulness of life with God.

His Majesty, the poet King Mahendra, has expressed his sharing of mankind's deep feelings in these words:

THE QUEST

Thou art the object of my quest,
  None else is there to seek save Thee;
And none is there to hear me cry:
  "I have not yet found Thee out."

Behold, upon my knees I pray,
  "Where should I go to seek?"
The eyes of course cannot see Thy form,
  So tell me how I am to see.

Tell me the place where Thou dost reside—
  In prayer or meditation,
In image or in living form,
  In woman or in man.

If I am not worthy of vision of Thee,
  At least Thou shouldst keep me
In mind as one who helpless lies
  For lack of Thee, the Lord Divine.

—Translated from Nepali by Tirtha Raj Tuladhar,
from *A Choice of Songs*, by M.B.B. Shah

Three thousand years ago singers in another king's court shared the same cry of the inner man in these words:

As a hart longs for flowing streams,
  so longs my soul for Thee, O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and behold Thy face?

By tears have been my food day and night,
while men say to me continually,
"Where is your God?"

—A Psalm of the Sons of Korah Psalm 42

Such is man's predicament. Such it is wherever he lives—on mountains or plains or on the sea. Man's quest and need for God know no political boundaries, no caste, no creed. In this respect all people are of one blood and brotherhood.

Yet God is not far from anyone if he can but 'see' and believe. From ancient times God has spoken to people in fragmentary and varied fashion, through prophets, by mighty deeds and in audible words. He has illumined men's minds to perceive his presence in acts of nature and in the events of their lives. But finally and supremely, in the fulness of time, God acted for all men by becoming a human being and living among them. He did this in Jesus Christ, true God and true man. In him people saw God in truth, grace and glory. In the words and deeds of Jesus Christ, and especially in his death and resurrection, God showed his love for men. He put away guilt and sin and reconciled men to Himself. He gave them his Spirit to teach and sanctify them in order to live in his good ways and deeds. He brought them on the way of wholeness that will be consumated in a new heaven and a new earth.

In this central event of history God acted for all mankind and continues to the present in personal application of his gospel. Because it is true universally it is true in particular. Hence, in those affairs of Nepal of which we have been concerned in this book, we may be assured that God's hand is also present on the 'clay of the potter's wheel', in the making of a new society and nation. For the remaking of man and nation what better 'aid' can be found than that which is in the hand of God, in God's gospel? In their new openness and fraternity with all the world, are the Nepalese also newly open toward God to hear and see what he has done for them in Jesus Christ?

Some people have 'seen and discerned' God's act for them in Jesus Christ. They have believed and found God. They have bent their knee to love and obey him. For them it is the light of truth and they must follow. Some of these people are simple. Some are

educated. Some are youths while some are mature adults. Some are known, others unknown. They are in places near and remote, in mountains and in plains. Many meet each other to worship together, to pray, and to study so as to learn more perfectly about God and the manner of life which he wants them to live in their family, community and nation. They are of the body of Christ in the earth, his church.

For them it is not always an easy road. It has never been easy for anyone anywhere. Nepal is in the throes of a deep and wide re-creation of its whole society. New ideas and interests pull and push at everyone, not only in surface matters but in the deep things of the soul. Those who seek to follow the light of God's gospel find themselves under pressures of religious faith and tradition in the inexorable whirl of the potter's wheel. A great sorting-out is taking place, a discarding and a saving. A weighing is going on of traditions and values. In the process there is a shaking down and building up. The hope is strong that in these strategic times many will see the light and experience the gospel of God and join to sing the ancient song of praise to God and faith in his ways:

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the lands!
Serve the LORD with gladness!
Come into his presence with singing!

Know that the LORD is God!
It is he that made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!
Give thanks to him, bless his name!

For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures for ever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.

—Psalm 100

APPENDIX I

MEMBER BODIES OF THE UNITED MISSION TO NEPAL (April 1979)

American Lutheran Church
Assemblies of God (USA)
Baptist Missionary Society (UK)
Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship (International)
Christian Church (Disciples) (USA)
Church Missionary Society of Australia
Church Missionary Society of UK
Church of North India
Committee for Service Overseas of the Protestant Churches of Germany
Darjeeling Diocesan Council of CNI and Church of Scotland
Finnish Missionary Society
Free Church of Finland
Gossner Mission (Germany)
Japan Overseas Cooperative Service
Leprosy Mission (Associate Member) (UK)
Lutheran Church of America
Mennonite Board of Missions (USA)
Mennonite Central Committee (USA)
Methodist Church (UK)
Orebro Mission (Sweden)
Presbyterian Church in Canada
Presbyterian Church in Ireland
Regions Beyond Missionary Union (International)
Swedish Free Mission
Swiss Friends for India and Nepal
United Church of Canada
United Methodist Church (USA)
United Presbyterian Church (USA)
Wesleyan Church of America
World Concern (USA)
World Mission Prayer League, Norway
World Mission Prayer League, USA

APPENDIX II

GENERAL AGREEMENT

(between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the United Mission to Nepal)

May 25, 1975

Being desirous of cooperating in undertaking various development projects in Nepal, His Majesty's Government of Nepal (hereinafter referred to as "HMGN") and the United Mission to Nepal (hereinafter referred to as "UMN") have agreed as follows:

1. Definition. The term 'Project' shall mean any Institution, Project, Programme or other activities in which the Mission is engaged under the terms and conditions of a separate Agreement entered into with the concerned Ministries or Departments of HMGN.
2. The UMN agrees to conduct its activities in the fields of Education, Health Services, Agricultural, Technical and Development Services and in other fields subject to separate Agreements concluded with the concerned Ministries and Departments of HMGN.
3. All financial involvement in running the Project shall be the responsibility of the UMN except where a Ministry or Department of HMGN agrees to provide assistance in respect of finance, staff or other facilities for a particular Project under a separate Agreement.
4. Appropriate training shall be given to the Nepalese employees in order to replace their foreign counterparts at all levels as soon as possible.
5. UMN shall submit yearly reports to HMGN of all its activities, and individual Projects shall submit reports as instructed by the concerned Ministry or Department of HMGN. The account of each Project shall be open for inspection by representatives of HMGN at any time.
6. UMN shall in all its activities attempt to work within the framework of HMGN planning, and shall ask for the advice and guidance of concerned Departments of HMGN regarding the execution of the Projects in which they are involved. In any separate Agreement, concerning Project, reference shall be made to that Department of HMGN which will serve as liaison between HMGN and the Project.
7. The UMN and its members shall, during their stay in Nepal, be subject to the laws and regulations of Nepal.
8. The various Institutions run by the UMN shall be subject to the rules framed by the concerned Ministries or Departments of HMGN.
9. The UMN shall not open any new Institutions or expand the existing Institution without obtaining the prior permission of HMGN.
10. The UMN and its members shall confine their activities to the achievement of the objectives of the Projects to which they are assigned and shall not engage in any proselytizing and other activities which are outside the scope of their assigned work.
11. For the purpose of this Agreement the members shall mean all the personnel or officers working under the UMN.

12. The UMN shall not dispose of their properties both moveable and immoveable either by sale or gift or any other manner to any juridical or physical person. Whenever such disposal would be necessary the Mission shall notify HMGN in advance and act according to their instruction.
13. HMGN reserves the right to nationalize any one or all of the Projects run by the UMN whenever they desire, the question of paying compensation for such nationalization shall only arise if it takes place within period of five years from the date of signing of this Agreement.
14. The UMN agrees to give preference to the Nepalese Citizens for being employed in the paid posts of teachers, trained nurses, compound dressers and other medical and technical posts etc. in the Projects.
15. In case of violation of this Agreement, HMGN may at any time notify the UMN to wind up its activities.
16. This Agreement shall come into force from the date of its signing and shall remain valid for a period of five years unless terminated by HMGN by giving six months notice in writing to the Mission or for such further period as extended by HMGN upon six months prior request of the UMN in writing before the expiry of such period of five years on the present terms and conditions or on such terms and conditions as may be laid down by HMGN.

APPENDIX III

PROFILE OF UMN PERSONNEL
(August 1978)

These are Board Appointees or Workers, seconded by the Member Bodies to the United Mission.

Number

Single men	10 — 5%
Single women	72 — 34%
Couples (65)	130 — 61%
	212

Working in assigned posts

Under Economic Development Board	37 — 24%
Under Health Services Board	87 — 56%
Under Education Board	18 — 12%
Assigned to posts not under Boards	12 — 8%
	154

Total Personnel working in the UMN

Board Appointees in assigned posts	154 — 65%
Wives not assigned	58 — 24%
Direct Appointees	25 — 11%
	237

Age Range of Personnel

Persons in their 20s	34
" " " 30s	85
" " " 40s	47
" " " 50s	38
" " " 60s	8
	212

Years of Service in the UMN of present personnel

1 to 3 years	99
(61 career workers, and 38 short term, up to 3 years)	
4 to 9 years	59
10 to 14 years	27
15 to 19 years	17
20 to 25 years	10
	212

Nationalities of all personnel

Australian	19
British	62
Canadian	27
Dutch	4
Filipino	2
Finnish	13
German	10
Indian	1
Japanese	1
New Zealand	6
Norwegian	12
Singaporean	1
Swedish	10
Swiss	2
USA	67
	237

From the following member Mission Boards and Societies

Assemblies of God	2
Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship	51

Baptist Missionary Society	12
Church Missionary Society, Australia	4
Church Missionary Society, UK	6
Church of Scotland	2
Committee for Service Overseas	9
Free Church of Finland	7
Finnish Missionary Society	5
Gossner Mission	2
Japan Overseas Cooperative Service	1
Lutheran Church of America	2
Mennonite Board of Missions & Charities	4
Mennonite Central Committee	15
Methodist Church of UK	3
Orebro Mission	8
Presbyterian Church in Canada	5
Regions Beyond Missionary Union	12
Swedish Free Mission	2
Swiss Friends for India and Nepal	1
United Church of Canada	9
United Methodist Church	14
United Presbyterian Church	12
Wesleyan Church of America	1
World Mission Prayer League, Norway	12
World Mission Prayer League, USA	11

APPENDIX IV

PROJECTS OF WORK OF THE UNITED MISSION TO NEPAL (1978)

In the area of Health Services

Shanta Bhawan Hospital (Lalitpur), Kathmandu
Mission Hospital, Amp Pipal, Gorkha District
Mission Hospital, Tansen, Palpa District
Mission Dispensary, Okhaldunga
Patan Hospital Construction Project
Community Health Programs, near the hospitals in
  Lalitpur District
  Okhaldunga District
  Gorkha District
  Palpa District
Community Health Office, Kathmandu
Nurses Training School, Kathmandu
Assistant Nurse-Midwives School, Tansen
Community Medical Assistant School, Tansen

In the area of Education

Assistance in Mahendra Bhawan Girls' High School, Kathmandu
Assistance in NAMV, Boys' Boarding School, Pokhara
Seconded teachers in Day Schools of Gorkha District
Seconded teachers in Institute of Tribhuvan University
Rural Youth Training Program
Scholarship and In-Service Training Program
Student Financial Assistance Program
Educational Materials Development Program

In the area of Economic Development

Butwal Technical Institute
Development and Consulting Services
Hydro Power Plants
Turbine operated Mills and Rural Electrification
Gobar Gas Research and Development
Consultants in several Specialized Areas
Economic Development Board Service Office, Kathmandu
Involvement in these share Companies:
  Butwal Power Company
  Butwal Plywood Factory
  Himal Hydro Construction Company
  Gobar Gas and Agricultural Equipment Company

In the area of Headquarters Administration

Administrative Offices
Treasurer's Office
Central Services Department
Language and Orientation Center
Guest Houses in Kathmandu and in Projects

New Projects under study

Dhankuta Technical Center
Small Community Development Program in Buling-Arakhala, Nawal Parasi District
Jumla Project, including a High School, Trade School, teachers seconded to day schools, community development and medical workers in district hospital.

SOURCE MATERIALS

In preparing each chapter, the sources listed below have been used. Sources listed earlier may also have been used but not repeated. Some of these materials are also mentioned to suggest wider areas of study for the interested reader.

Chapter 1

The information about the Capuchin missionaries in this chapter is taken mainly from two books by Fr. Fulgentius Vannini, *Christian Settlements in Nepal During the Eighteenth Century* and *The Bell of Lhasa*, New Delhi, 1977.

Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, *An Introduction To Hanuman Dhoka*. Nepal, 1975.

KIRKPATRICK, COLONEL, *An Account of the Kingdom of Nepaul*, A Mission to that Country in 1793. London, 1811.

OLDFIELD, H. AMBROSE, *Sketches From Nepal*. UK, 1855.

OSTA, A.J., *The Tibet-Hindustan Mission*. Patna, 1959.

PLATTNER, R.A., *Jesuits Go East*. USA, 1959.

REGMI, D.R., *Modern Nepal*. India, 1961.

WRIGHT, DANIEL, *History of Nepal*. UK, 1877.

Chapter 2

AYTON, J.A., *A Nepali Grammar*, 1820.

Church of Scotland Eastern-Himalayan Mission, *Mission Local Supplement* and *Mission News* (Magazines).

GLOVER, ROBERT H., *The Progress of Worldwide Missions*. Revised, New York, 1960.

HEWITT, *Vision and Achievement*. Church of Scotland.

HOOPER, J.S.M., *Bible Translations in India, Pakistan and Ceylon*. Second Revised Edition by W.J.Culshaw. London, 1963.

LANDON, PERCEVAL, *Nepal*, Vol. I and II. London, 1928.

NEILL, STEPHEN, *Colonialism and Christian Missions*. USA, 1966.

NEILL, STEPHEN, *A History of Christian Missions*. UK, 1966.

REGMI, D.R., *Modern Nepal*. India, 1961.

Serampore Missionaries, *New Testament in Nepali*, India, 1821.

Serampore Missionaries, *New Testament in Palpa*, India, 1827.

SHAHA, RISHIKESH, *An Introduction To Nepal*. Kathmandu, 1975.

SHAHA, RISHIKESH, *Heroes and Builders of Nepal*. India, 1970.

STILLER, LUDWIG, *The Rise of The House of Gorkha*. New Delhi, 1973.

STILLER, LUDWIG, *Prithivinarayan Shah In The Light of Dibya Upadesh*. India, 1968.

SYRDAL, ROLF, *To the End of The Earth*. USA, 1967.

Typed Copy, author unknown: *Preface and Introductory Remarks*, (about Sikkim). Calcutta, 1875.

WOODRUFF, PHILLIP, *The Men Who Ruled India, The Founders*. London, 1953.
World Dominion Press, *The Border Lands of Central Asia*, UK.

Chapter 3

APPASAMY, A.J., *Sundar Singh, A Biography*. India, 1966.
Eastern Himalayan Mission of the Church of Scotland, (in Nepali) *Git Sangrah*. Kalimpong, India, 1932.
Eastern Himalayan Mission of the Church of Scotland, (in Nepali) *The School Catechism*. Darjeeling, 1908.
MARKS, J.M., *Ayo Gurkha*! London, 1974.
MASTERS, JOHN, *Bugles and a Tiger*. Great Britain, 1956.
Ministry of Defence, *Nepal and the Gurkhas*. London, 1965.
NORTHEY AND MORRIS, *The Gurkhas*. UK, 1927.
PARKER, REBECCA J., *How They Found Christ*. London, 1940. Chapter 13, Chandra Leela, Priestess.
PARKHURST, C.A., *The Kingdom of Nepal*. Calcutta.
RANA, PRAMODE S., *Rana Nepal, An Insider's View*. Kathmandu, 1978.
TUKER, FRANCIS, *Gorkha The Story of the Gurkhas of Nepal*. London, 1957.

Chapter 4

ANDREWS, CF., *North India*. Mowbray, London, 1908.
BADLEY, BRENTON T., *Visions and Victories in Hindustan*. Mission stations of the Methodist Episcopal Church, USA, 1931.
BECKDAHL, AGNES, *A Witness of God's Faithfulness*. Published by the author, 1929.
BOOTH, MARY WARBURTON, *Take This Child*. Marshall Bros., London, 1926. Also *My testimony*, 1949. Also *These Things Have I Seen*, 1939.
CRANE, ELAINE AND ALLINGER, Beth, *Mountain Daybreak*, CLC London, 1959.
EDWARDS, MICHAEL, *A History of India*. Thames and Hudson, UK, 1961.
GODDARD, BURTON L., Ed., *Encyclopedia of Modern Missions*.
GRUBB, NORMAN P., *After C. T. Studd*. Butterworth, London, 1939.
HOKE, DONALD, Ed., *The Church in Asia*. Moody, Chicago, 1975.
HOLMES, KENNETH, *The Cloud Moves*, A Short Account of the RBMU London, 1963.
ISLAM, MARY, *Valorous Ventures*. Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, USA, 1936.
MOYER, SAMUEL, *They Heard The Cell*. General Conference Mennonite Church, USA, 1970.
OLIVER, EARNEST, *In Nepal*. RBMU, London, 1951.
PREISSEL, MICHEL, *Mustang, The Forbidden Kingdom*. Dutton, New York, 1967.
POLLOCK, J.C., *Shadows Fall Away*. Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1959. (The Story of the ZBMM)

PRITCHARD, ELIZABETH, *For Such A Time As This.* (The story of the RBMU). London, 1973.
SPENCE, INEZ, *On The Borders Of Nepal.* AGM, Springfield, Mo.
STRONG, TREVOR AND PATRICIA, *Building at Raxaul* and *Rewards at Raxaul.* RBMU, London.
WALLBANK, T. WALTER, *A Short History of India and Pakistan.* A Mentor Book, NY, 1958.
Documents with the Author: Minutes of the Nepal Border Fellowship, printed pamphlets, reports, correspondence, other materials, related to missions in north India.

Chapter 5

Church of Christ In Nepal, *We Confess Jesus Christ Is Lord.* Darjeeling, 1962.
HASRAT, B.J. (Editor), *History of Nepal.* As told by its own and Contemporary Chroniclers. India, 1971.
International Nepal Fellowship, *While Daylight Lasts*, UK, 1971.
KHATRI-CHHETRI, KAISER BAHADUR, *Nepal After the Revolution of 1950.*
MYRDAL, GUNNAR, *Asian Drama*, Vol. I. A Pelican Book, UK, 1968.
St. Xavier's School, Kathmandu, Nepal, *Teacher's Manual.*
Reports, leaflets, articles, letters with the author.
Conversations by the author with concerned persons.

Chapter 6

FLETCHER, GRACE NIES, *The Fabulous Flemings of Kathmandu.* USA, 1964.
Minutes of the UMN Board and Executive Committee meetings.
Files of correspondence, reports and articles in the office of the UMN.
Correspondence between the author and concerned persons.
Minutes of the meetings of the Nepal Border Fellowship.

Chapter 7

CLARKSON, E.P., *Medics In The Mountains*, The Story of Edgar and Elizabeth Miller. New York, 1968.
COBB, ALICE, *Come To Shanta Bhawan.* New York, 1963.
Department of Tourism, HMGN *Nepal.* India, 1974. Colored photos.
FOYLE, MARJORY, *Nepal: The Early Years.* BMMF, UK, 1959.
HOSKEN, FRAN P., *The Kathmandu Valley Towns*, A Record of Life and Change in Nepal. New York, 1974.
Life Magazine Editors, *The Epic of Man.* New York, 1961.
MACK, BAJRACHARYA, RUOHONIEMI, *The UMN Shanta Bhawan Hospital In Kathmandu.* 24 pp., Kathmandu, 1972.
NEPALI, GOPAL SINGH, *The Newars.* India, 1965.
RIEFFEL, ROBERT, *Nepal, Namaste.* 2nd Edition. Kathmandu, 1978.

United Mission To Nepal, *Serving, Teaching, Training: The Palpa Project Meets the Challenge*, a 12-page illustrated pamphlet. Kathmandu, 1978.
United Mission To Nepal, reports, files.

Chapter 8

LINDELL, JONATHAN, *Nation Building-Fundamental Education.* An article in Lutheran World. 1959, pp. 450–455.
UNESCO, of United Nations Organization:
Fundamental Education, Common Ground for All Peoples. 325 pp. New York, 1947.
Fundamental Education, Description and Programme, a monograph. Paris, 1949.
United Mission to Nepal, *Nepal On The Potter's Wheel*, UK, 1970.
United Mission to Nepal, Minutes, Reports, Letters, Files.

Chapter 9

Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Pocket Book, Nepal, 1974*, Kathmandu, Nepal.
HOFTUN, ODD, *A Leader In Nepal's Industry*, Butwal Technical Institute, Report for 1968 (After 5 years), a leaflet. Kathmandu, 1969.
MALLA, K.P., (Editor), *Nepal: A Conspectus.* Kathmandu, 1977.
Ministry of Education, HMG Nepal, *The National Education System Plan for 1971–76.* Kathmandu, 1971.
Ministry of Education of India, *Report of the Secondary Education Commission of 1952–53.* New Delhi, 1965.
MOHSIN, MOHAMMAD AND PREM KASAJU, Editors, *Education and Development.* National Education Committee. Kathmandu, 1975.
National Planning Commission. HMG, *Nepal, The Fifth Plan, 1975–80.* in brief (English). Kathmandu, 1975.
Nepal National Education Planning Commission, *Education In Nepal.* Kathmandu, 1956.
New ERA, *Evaluation Report, Butwal Technical Institute.* Kathmandu, 1977.
New ERA, *Evaluation Report, Nepali Aadarsha Madhyamik Vidhayalaya.* Kathmandu, 1978.
SCHUTZKA, MONIKA, *Reflections From Sanagaon.* Kathmandu, 1975.
Shaha, Rishikesha, *Nepali Politics, Retrospect and Prospect*, Second Edition, Delhi, 1978.
United Mission To Nepal, DCS, *Economics of Gobar Gas*, and *Operation and Maintenance of Gobar Gas Plants.* Nepal, 1978.
United Mission To Nepal, *Making Boys Into Men*, Pokhara Boys' Boarding School. Kathmandu, 1977.
United Mission To Nepal, Minutes, Reports, Files.

FLEMING, ROBERT L., ROBERT L. FLEMING, JR., LAIN SINGH BANGDEL, *Birds of Nepal*. India, 1976.

United Mission To Nepal, *Greetings From Nepal*. 44 pp. information Booklet about the UMN, 1972.

—*Use It in Service*. 32 pp. Illustrated information booklet about the UMN, 1961.

—*Constitution*, Kathmandu, 1976.

—*Five Year Plan 1977–1982*. Kathmandu, 1977.