

# NEPAL

*by Sylvain Levi*

(Continued)

In 1800, king Rana Bahadur Sah retired in Benares; his eccentricities, his violences, his impieties had earned him universal horror and hatred: to escape the vengeance of the gods and men, he was forced to abdicate, under the pretext of madness. But the prestige of his birth, the interests of the tribe, and specially the skilful manoeuvres of the maharani, his wife, still retained on his side in Nepal a strong group of partisans. The leading faction of the power thought it urgent to seek the help or at least the good-will of the English. The Governor-General Lord Wellesley, grasped the opportunity: he proposed to Nepal the renewal of the treaty negotiated by John Duncan, in stipulating that each one of the contracting powers will have a permanent representative near the other power. In consequence, captain Knox, who had figured in Kirkpatrick's mission was selected as British minister to the court of Katmandu, Knox entered Nepal in February 1802: in March 1803 he returned to India with all his personnel. The Ghurkas did not understand it better than on the first occasion how to abide seriously by the treaty they had signed; without compromising themselves officially, they allowed their subordinate agents to increase the vexations of the Company's representatives and favourites. On the 24th January 1804 Lord Wellesley expressly annulled the commercial treaty and alliance with the Durbar, But

the eleven months spent at Katmandu by the British legation were not fruitless. One of Knox's assistant, Francis (Buchanan) Hamilton, one of the glories of the civil Service and "Father of the Indian stastic", had employed himself during the year by a patient and minute research on the kingdom of Nepal and particularly on the regions, still entirely unknown, situated to the east and to the west of the central valley. Hamilton benefited or took advantage, to complete his notes, of a sojourn of two years which he made later on as an official of the Company on the Nepalese frontier and decided only in 1819 to publish the book which he had prepared at the cost of much patience. The map attached to the volume, compared with that of Kirkpatrick's clearly shows the progress due to Hamilton. The itinerary adopted by common consent for the passage of the mission coincides entirely with the route actually in use from Bichake at the entrance of the first heights, It only diverges very little, through the terrai, where it passes by Galpasra, slightly to the west of the actual tracing.

The work of Hamilton had barely made a year's appearance when the British Residence, re-established in Nepal, saw the arrival of an assistant in the shape of a young man of twenty years who was about to associate his name with the name of Nepal in the memory of men

and to win for science a country, a literature and a religion. Since the passage of Knox and Hamilton, circumstances had changed. The growing insolence of the Gurkhas, their continuous encroachments on the British frontier had eventually rendered war inevitable. It was declared in 1714. It lasted two winters heroically waged on both sides; but the strategy of general Ochterlony triumphed over the bravery of the Gurkhas, and the Darbar was compelled to sign the treaty of Segauli on the 4th March 1816, which treaty traced out Nepal's definitive frontiers. Besides the Raja of Nepal bound himself "not to employ or retain in his service any British subject or any subject or a European state or from American without the consent of the British Government" (art. VII): "with the view to assure and consolidate the relations of friendship and peace established between the two states it was arranged that the ministers selected by each of them would reside at the other's Court. "(art. VIII). Edward Gardner was appointed by Lord Hastings as the British Resident at the court of Nepal. Four years later, Brain Houghton Hodgson went to help him as an assistant; but the lazy existence of the Residence and the seclusion in that mountainous corner did not appeal to his juvenile activity or his legitimate ambitions. He managed to obtain a post at Calcutta in 1822 and took leave from Nepal without hope of return; but the constitution of Hodgson— who died a centenarian— could not acclimatize itself to Bengal; the doctors gave him the choice of "a post on higher altitudes or a grave in the plains". He reluctantly decided to return to the mountains. The employment he had vacated at Katmandu was filled up; he contented himself with the nomination of director of the post office, in 1824. A year later he was called for the second time to fill the post of assistant to the residence; in 1833 he was promoted to a Resident and remained as such, till 1843. A sudden and unjust revocation brought to a close at that moment a career already wonder-

fully fruitful in results and which promised still more fruits. But the retirement of Hodgson was none the less laborious than his period of active service; installed at Darjeeling, on the Nepalese frontier, he was consulted as a treasure of knowledge by men of State, he was respected by the erudites as a benefactor and a creator. His work, considerable in quantity, reflects the ease and variety of his intelligence: it comprises and is embodied in not less than 4 volumes. end, 184 articles scattered in learned newspapers: some treat questions on geography and topography, others on ethnography and anthropology, other yet on linguistics and some on Buddhism, still others on institutions, and political economy, and lastly (127) on the natural history of Nepal.<sup>1</sup> It is mainly due to his foresight and his persistent initiative that England owns to-day her Gurkhas contingent, the strongest and surest of the Indian army, it is due to his patient sagacity that the history of religions has discovered the Sanscrit original, and Buddhistic literature; it is due to his liberality that the Asiatic Society of Paris owns that mass of manuscripts which furnished Eugene Burnouf the means and matter of his immortal works. Before Hodgson, nearly everything had to be done; after him, his successors find but to glean.

Three years after the untoward revocation of Hodgson a terrible palace tragedy brought into power a minister twenty four years of age, Jang Bahadur. A new period in the history of Nepal opened out with his career. The hero of an epic or of a romance, but at the same time of sound common sense, Jang clearly understood the rôle that was forced upon Nepal by the new circumstances. The policy of isolation, so severe, was now at an end; it was not right to ignore by foregone conclusions, the powerful nation which was exercising its sovereignty on practically the whole of India and which made feel its highland neighbour, feel the crushing weight of its weapons. An attitude of loyal and

reserved friendship was worth more to re-assure the English and keep them aloof than the mournful and suspicious sulking. Jang remained faithful till death, to the political principle he had adopted on his succession to the power. The mutiny of sepoys in 1857 gave him the opportunity of proving his sincerity whilst India was astir, and the vassal states hesitating, Jang absolutely offered the British the help of his Nepalese troops against the mutineers and Ghurkas came down to the envied plains of India as auxiliaries of the British soldiers. Jang only ventured whole heartedly after finding out personally the valour and the prestige of England. Since 1850, he proceeded on a visit to Europe to the disdain of the very severe rules of his caste and of the explicit prohibitions of the Brahmanic code. Seven Nepalese officers accompanied him. On the request of the court of Kathmandu to Her most Gracious Majesty, captain O. Cavenagh of the native infantry of Bengal was appointed by the Government of India as an attache to the mission. Cavenagh accompanied the mission to London and Paris and followed it on its return to Kathmandu. In the course of long conversations he had en route with the Ghurkas officers, he did not neglect to inform himself about Nepal; as a soldier, he was particularly keen on the army, and sought for instructions, in the event of a war, about the country, its resources its roads, on the tribes and races, etc... His notes, gathered without pretention make an excellent little volume. The relation of Oliphant is connected to the same episode of Nepalese history: "Voyage to Kathmandu." It is a simple collection of anecdotes relating to hunting or sport relative to Jang, narrated by an amusing "reporter". The voyage of Jang who had been the lion of the London season in 1850, had modernized Nepal.

Captain Smith published a work of two volumes on Nepal at the same time as Oliphant did.<sup>3</sup> Captain Smith had sojourned for five years at Kathmandu as an assistant to the Res-

ident, he had previously served two years under Hodgson. Perhaps he was not a stranger to the untoward disgrace of Hodgson under the Government of Lord<sup>3</sup> Ellenborough. Ingenious, active, inquisitive, orator, good narrator, he was only wanting in the sense of honesty. His book is a monument of bragging, of boasting, of ignorance of plagiarism and error.<sup>4</sup>

The very year in which Jang embarked for Europe Dr. Oldfield was nominated as surgeon to the Residence, under the orders of Resident Erskine. He maintained his post for thirteen years (1850-1863). Fond of sketching and water-colouring, he roamed in the valley, and sketched the landscape and the monument up to the day his enfeebled eyes compelled him to take rest. On his return to England in 1866, he spent his time agreeably in drawing up or compiling his reminiscences; but his notes only appeared after his death through the care of his heirs, in 1880. His two volumes of Sketches embody an "Endeavour" lacking in originality on Nepalese Buddhism, several borrowed articles and sometimes, textually, from Hodgson, shooting anecdotes and portion from newspapers, where the bold personality of Jang Bahadur occupies the foremost place but especially a real guide of the valley of the nature one would expect from an amateur of sketches.

Oldfield sees what can be seen and does not go further. He outlined with precision the surface of the country, of the religion and of society; he catalogues the streams the mountains, the festivals, the castes, the temples and the towns. It remains to acknowledge that these indications are exact and truthful; the work as it stands is indispensable for a complete study of Nepal.

After Oldfield, another Surgeon of the Residence, Dr. Wright earned brilliant titles from grateful "Indianists"; He was not a Hodgson.

but he usefully carried on the work of Hodgson. During a ten years' sojourn in Nepal (1866-1876) he had the skill and the patience in gathering the original manuscripts one by one which Hodgson only by the aid of copies (or facsimiles) had been able to show Europe; thanks to his dogged efforts, the library of the University of Cambridge acquired an admirable collection of Buddhistic Sanskrit manuscripts. Furthermore he made use of the indigenous interpreters of the Residence, for the translation of the Chronicle of Nepal, and he added to the translation a substantial introduction on the country and the Nepalese people. Specialists had henceforth an indispensable working medium in their hands and which was denied them owing to the dialect of the original as well as the rarity of the manuscript.

The personnel of the Residence is really a source of pride to the British administration. Without even alluding to the merits of Kirkpatrick and Cavenagh, both engaged on temporary mission, the names of Hamilton, Hodgson, Oldfield, and Wright form a noble chain through the XIXth century. Their work seems still more worthy of esteem and respect if one reflect under which conditions was pursued. Isolated and separated from Katmandu in an enclosure guarded by a Nepalese picket, in which indigenes could only enter under express authorization, spied and watched by the Ghurkas Government, busy with all the usual mass of papers of British offices, imprisoned in a valley enclosed by high mountains and which treaties do not allow to be crossed, hampered in their ramblings by the suspicion of the Darbar, always on the alert, obliged to spend their days in a vexing tete-a-tete the Resident, the Assistant and the Surgeon would have been easily pardoned had they drifted into indolence, into inertia and into indifference. But British energy stands good; the very enclosure of the Residence bears a testimony. When the Darbar had allotted it to the Residence, it was a barren

piece of ground unhealthy and haunted. Today the valley has no better lowered garden and no more fertile kitchen-garden, or shady park.

A new period then opens in the history of the knowledge of Nepal. The ground is explored, limits are outlined, invaluable notions to the practice of affairs are acquired. Learned men of different professions undertake to rebuild the work from its foundation, control the results and reach the forgotten past. India who had neglected historical sentiment for a long time had piquant honour to take up the initiative and set the example. The small states of Jounagadh in Kathiawar, which prided itself in the possession of the rock of Girnar whereon three antique dynasties had engraved their souvenirs, entrusted Pandit Bhagvanlal Indrajit with the research of the monuments of Nepalese epigraphy. As a student of Bhan Daji, who had inspired him with his enthusiastic passion for archaeology, Bhagvanlal excelled by virtue of instinct, of criticism and a surety of method which class him outside Hindu Pundits. Jang Bahadur understood the real value of his researches; he welcomed Bhagvanlal, encouraged and helped him; Bhagvanlal was able to gather from among the encumbering mass of Nepalese inscriptions twenty inscriptions which traced the authentic history of Nepal as far back as the IVth century of the Christian era (if at least his chronological theories are admitted). The Pundit published these inscriptions with the collaboration of Buhler and this double patronage created immediately the attention their importance deserved.<sup>5</sup>

In 1875, Mr. Minayeff, professor of Sanscrit to the University of Petersburg (Petrograde), who showed a very keen zeal and a competency without rival in the study of Indian Buddhism, obtained in the course of a voyage to India, the permission to visit Nepal. He acquired a great number of important

manuscripts which he utilized in his subsequent works. The impulsion he had given to Buddhist studies had fortunately not slackened after his death. The Academy of sciences of Petersburg, on the request of Mr. Serge of Oldenbourg student and successor of Minayeff, has created the collection of the "Bibliotheca Buddhica" wherein must be printed all the unpublished texts of Nepalese Buddhism. The notes of the voyage gathered in Nepal by Minayeff have been compiled in an elaborate review on Nepal published at first in the "Vyestnik Evrope" and republished in the "Sketches of Ceylon and India".

The University of Cambridge, which has acquired the collection of Nepalese manuscripts gathered by Wright, trusted a mission to Mr. Cecil Bendall in 1884, with the object of researching those manuscripts and inscriptions which might have escaped the attention of Wright, or Bhagvanlal. Mr. Bendall had already given proofs of his expert qualities in Nepal, Trusted with the classification of Buddhist Sanscrit manuscripts of the University of Cambridge, he published as early as 1883, an excellent catalogue; in a double introduction, historical, paleographical, he had arranged the numerous informations brought in by the manuscripts, and partly filled in the omissions of the chronology drawn up by Bhagvanlal. The new inscriptions discovered by Mr. Bendall during the winter of 1884-1885, seemed to be extremely detrimental to the chronological system of the pundit and led Mr. Fleet to propose a new arrangement of the old dynasties of Nepal.

Mr. Bendall has made a new travel to Nepal during the winter 1893-1899; the fruits, only known to-day by a short report is especially interesting to Palesgraphy, in which Mr. Brndall is a past master and enjoys aonncontested authority.

In 1885, Dr. Le Bon, trusted with a mission

from the Minister of public Instructions with the object of studying the monuments of India, obtained permission to visit Nepal. He remained there a week, busy in the reproduction of the most famous monuments of the valley, skilful operator and well informed amateur, he brought back from Nepal a selection of beautiful photographs, which still form the best collection relating to Nepalese architectuae.<sup>6</sup>

Captain Vansittart visited Katmandu, in 1888, but without sojourning there. He studied Nepal especially from this side of the frontier and nevertheless he can pride himself in knowing the Ghurkas like a Ghurka. Recruiting officer, he had opportunity of examining and interrogating considerably the robust and valliant mountaineers who earn under the British banners, a salary and a pension.

Attached to the Ghurka fusiliers, he saw at work these stubborn and loyal soldiers who are the strength and soul of the indigenous army. The "Notes" of captain Vansittart, to believe the candid avowal of the author, consist in the first half, of extracts borrowed here and there and connected together one after the other, but there remains a large moiety of informations, original and new, on the colonies, tribes and classes of Nepal also on their habits, manners and religions. The exggerated modesty of the author must not in any way change the real worth of the book.

In May 1897 the Pundit (since: Mahamahopadhyaya) Haraprasad Shastri, one of the secretaries of the Asiatic society of Bengal, entrusted up the Government of Bengal with the research of Sanscrit manuscripts on the whole stretch of the Presidency, solicited and obtained permission to extend his studies to Nepal. Pundit Haraprasad orthodox Brahman as well as a savant, had already rendered valuable ser-

vices to the study of Nepalese Buddhism, he had been the principal fellow-contributor of the Catalogue of Buddhistic Sanscrit works of Nepal published 1882 under the direction and name of Rajendra Lala Mitra in which catalogue is found analysed in detail, the truly overwhelming mass of manuscripts discovered by Hodgson and despatched by his cares to the society of Bengal. Haraprasad Shastri returned to Nepal in December 1898; Mr. Bendall accompanied him (who was also proceeding there for the second time). The most interesting manuscripts discovered in the course two voyages are described in a summary, to which must essentially follow a detailed catalogue, disagreeably delayed so far.

I was as a matter of fact chosen myself by the Minister of public Instructions and by the academy of Inscriptions and Polite Literature, to undertake a mission to India and Japan; I was able to remain two months in Nepal in 1898, The high patronage of Sir Alfred Lyall and the active good-will of the Resident, colonel H. Wylie, were the means of procuring me the indispensable passport of admission. Having installed myself at Kathmandu, in the absence of the European "personnel" of the Residence, I was graciously received at the Darbar, and met with a friendly interest and continuous help. I have already had the occasion of expressing publicly my gratefulness and to mention summarily the principal results I had obtained.<sup>7</sup>

Amongst the visitors of Nepal I must also mention Schsagintweit who (according to Wright, p. 63) came in 1856, and made a certain number of observations. The work of "Sir Richard" Temple: "Journals kept in Hyderabad, Kashmere, Sikkim and Nepal. London, 1887. 2 vol., has no connection with Nepal according to what the title leads us to expect. Mr. Temple has spent a week as a tourist at the Residence of Kathmandu, and the forty pages he wrote on Nepal are divided into an ordinary introduc-

tion of 26 pages (Ool. 11, 221,-247) and remarks "on a tour through Nepal" which comprise 14 pages (247-262)- I only know by the help of bibliography an article of Mrs. Lock-wood De Forest: "a little known country of Asia" "a visit to Gopal", published in the "Century". LXII, 1901, p. 74-82,- I also mention, not to be suspected of ignoring them, the articles of Mr. Saleure in the "Catholic Missions, XX, 1888, p. 550-560, 560-562, 573-574, 583-584, 593-596, 605-608; "A cornea of the Himalayas". The kingdom of Nepal". There is nothing to be derived from this compilation which is without originality and criticism. The work of Mr. Henry Ballantine. "On India's frontier, or Nepal, the Ghurkas mysterious land", New-York, 1895, has nothing in common with science-"Dureh... Studienblather", by Kurt Boeck, Leipzig, 1902, is a review of the voyage of no interest to sciences, but which is worth by its illustrations,

According to an anonymous articles of "the Catholic Missions "XXXIII, 1901, p. 451-455, 464-466, 475, 485, 492:502- 504, 514: on the "Mission of Bettiah and of Nepal, "the sacred congregation of the Propaganda had entrusted on the 20th April 1892, to the Capuchins of the north of Tyrol, the mission of Bettiah, including the districts of Champaran, Saran, Mozaffarpur and Darbhanga and partly those of Bhagalpur and Monghir; on the 19th May 1893, the region and Kingdom of Nepal were added. If one is to believe the author of the article, Nepal is on the very verge of conversion; Recently the king of Nepal has entirely forsaken the false gods. "The assertion is at least unexpected; but the proof follows. "In 1898, his wife whom he tenderly loved was seized with the smallpox. She got cured fortunately but her face bore indelible traces of that awful disease. Vain as she was, the queen could not resign herself to this disfigurement and in a moment of despair killed herself. The king was very

deeply moved; his anger at first swept fiercely over the doctors. This did not satisfy him. In his fury, he ordered the removal of all the idols from the temples into the open and exposed air. Then he brought loaded canons and commanded to open fire on these false gods. The gunners became pale with amazement in hearing this criminal order. They refused to obey. The king then condemned several of them to death and had them executed on the spot. The resistance of the others was broken. A terrible

report was heard. The idols flew to atoms and fell back pulverized to the ground. This event is perhaps the first step in Nepal of her conversion to Christianity." The story is correct, almost to a detail: the sacrilegious act narrated here and which has remained famous in Nepal's traditions does not date from 1898 but from 1798.

To be Continued

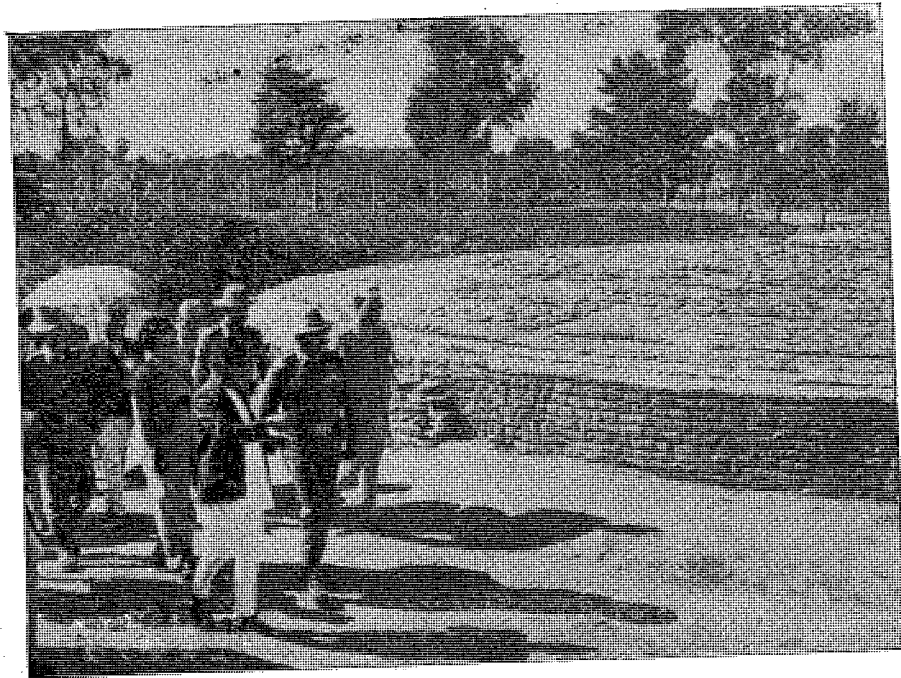
## FOOT NOTE

1. One will find the complete list of these works, as well as the catalogue of the manuscripts distributed by Hodgson to learned societies, in the excellent book of Sir William Hunter. *Life of Brain Houghton Hodgson, British Resident at the court of Nepal, Member of the Institute of France, fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society etc.* London 1896.
2. Narrative of a five years Residence at Nepal by Captain Thomas Smith, assistant, political-resident at Nepal from 1241 to 1845 London 1852. Calburn and Cy. Two volumes—The French translation which the editors reserved themselves the right to publish has never appeared.
3. Hodgson whose health forbade the crossing of the Terai except during the cold season, was compelled to send Smith to explain his conduct to Lord Ellenborough.
4. The exemplary of the India Office that I had leisure to consult, thanks to the obligingness of Mr. Tawney, is filled with marginal notes undoubtedly credited to Hodgson who criticises and annihilates the book piecemeal; an indication at the head of the second volume informs us that Smith “after having gravely induced Lord Ellenborough and Major (Sir H.) Laurence into error was eventually discovered by the latter who compelled him to leave Nepal and had him court-martialled. “The man was worth the book.
5. “Except” one portion of this review is still to be found in “Nepal ego..., etc.
6. “Voyage to Nepal” by Dr. Gustave Le Bon “Tour du Monde” (Round the world) 1836, 1st. six months.— Mr. Le Bon was not as he imagines the first Frenchman which Nepal had seen, Without going back to the XVIII<sup>th</sup>. century and to Father Francois de Tours, Capuchin, the military music of Nepal was organised towards 1850 by a Frenchman. Ventuon, whom the Darbar had engaged (Oldfield, l. 219) besides, according to Cavenagh. “All that is actually known in connection with the manufacture of artillery, was communicated to them in all probability by French Officers; two in particular were engaged by Nepal subsequently to the ratification of the actual treaty with the English I am led to believe this. “It must have undoubtedly concerned some of the self-made officers who spread throughout the world after the fall of Napoleon, several of whom (court. Allard, Ventura) have left a durable remembrance in the records of India.
7. “Report of Mr. Sylvain Levi on his mission to India and Japan, in the “Reviews drawn up by the Academy of Inscriptions and Polite Literature. 1899”.

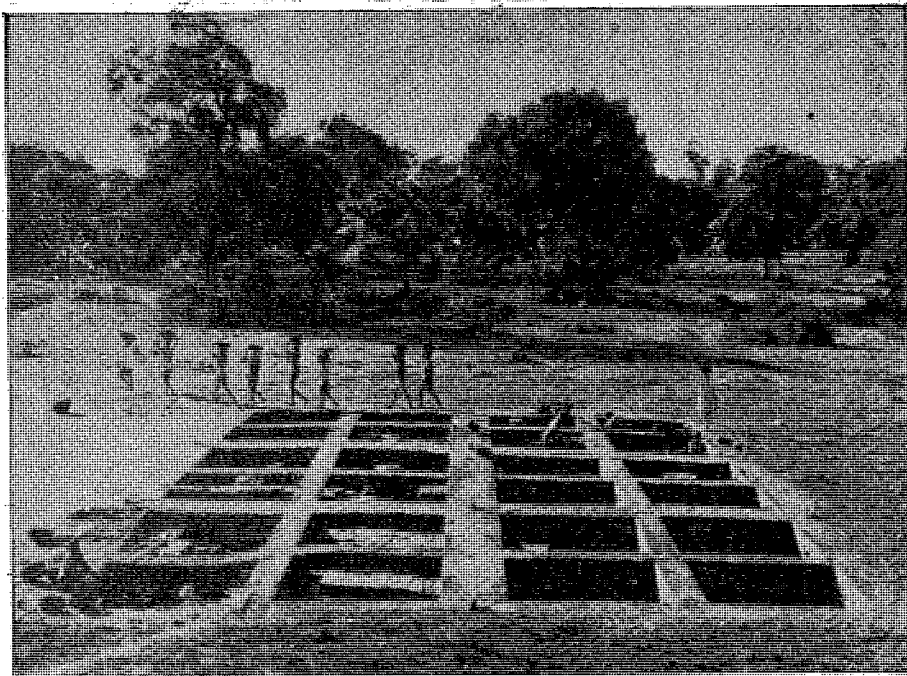




A. Their Majesties the King and Queen inspecting excavated finds at Tilaurakot.



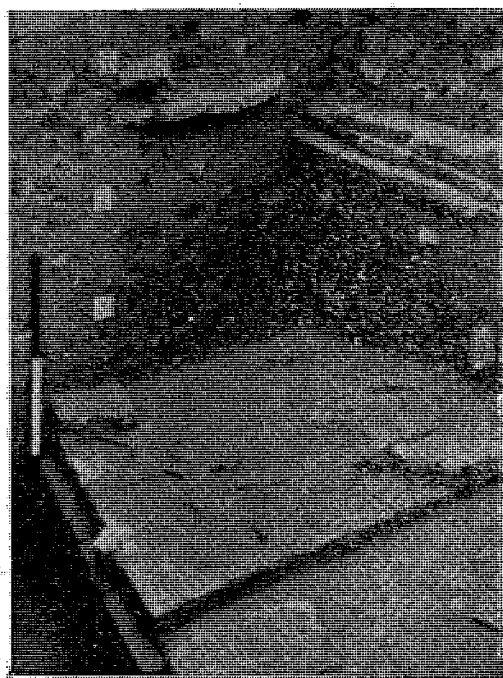
B. Their Majesties the King and Queen being shown round an excavated Stupa at Tilaurakot.



A. Excavation in progress on Mound V, Tilaurakot.



B. Exposed floors. Kushana Period.



A. Sequence of Kushana and Sunga structures.



B. Brick well and floor of the Sunga period.

Terracotta human figurines.



A. Sunga Period.



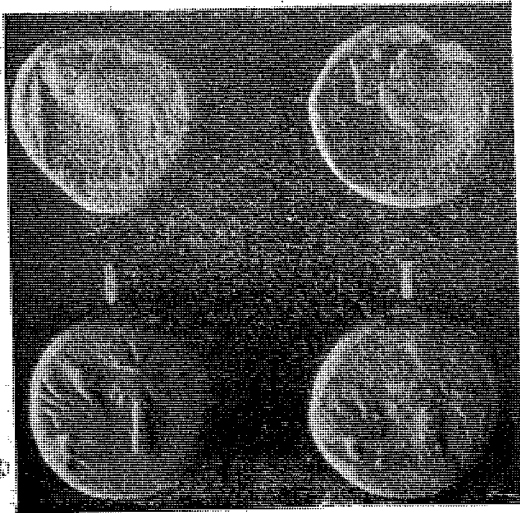
B. Kushana period.



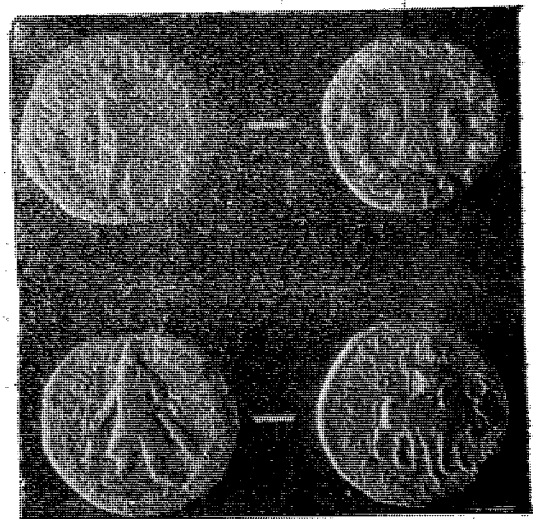
Goddess Padma-Sri



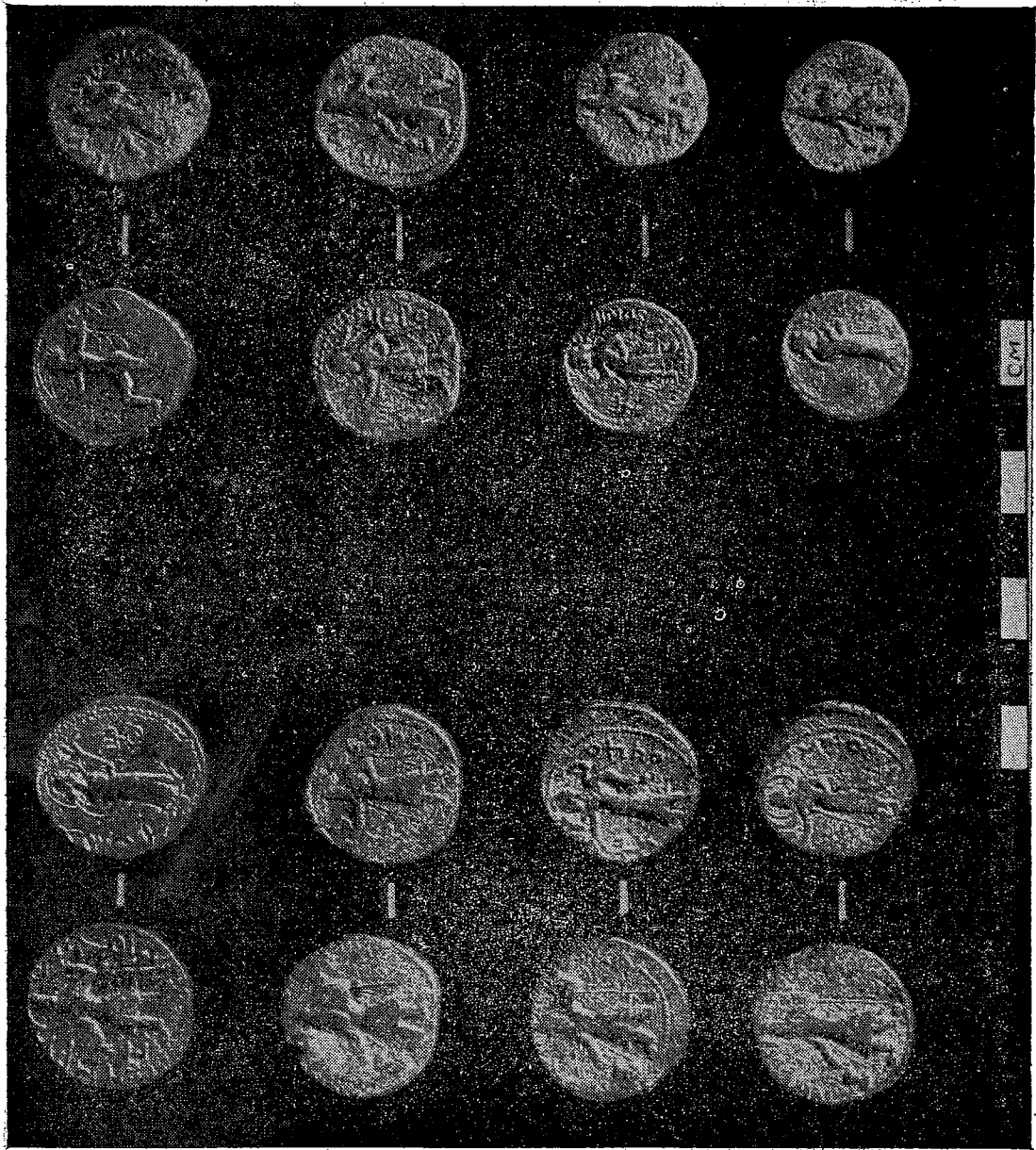
A Lady with parrot, terracotta.



B. Ayodhya Type coins of Ayumitra and Satyamitra.

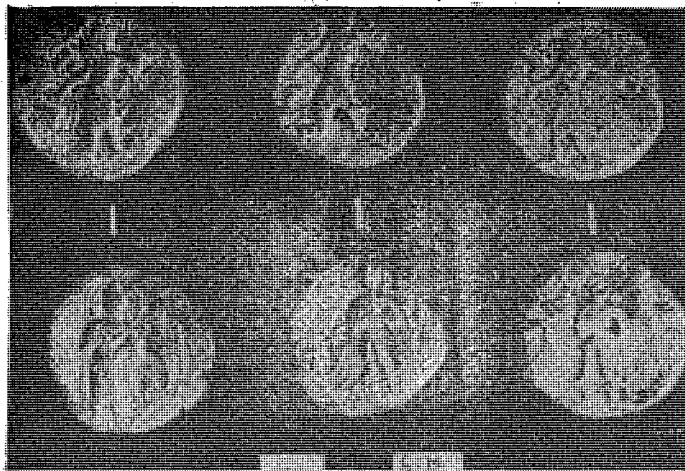


C. Copper coins of Apollodotos and Wima Kadphises

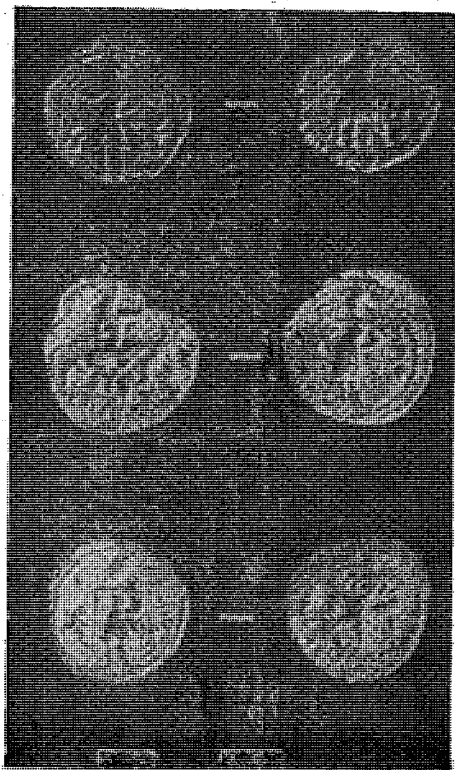


Copper coins of Kanishka

18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



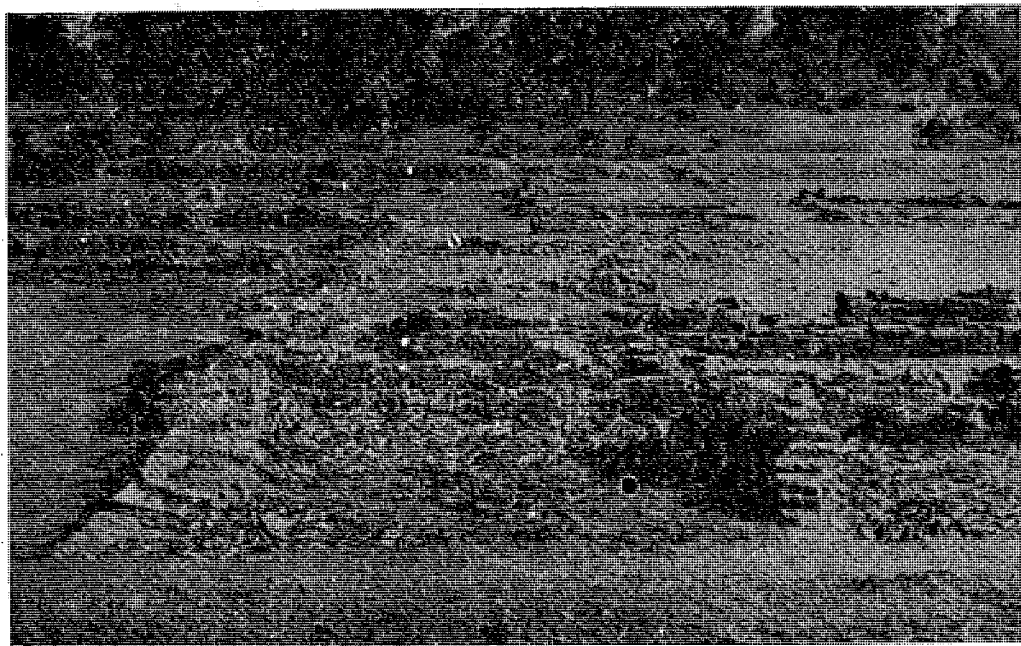
A, Buddha Type copper coins of Kanishka,



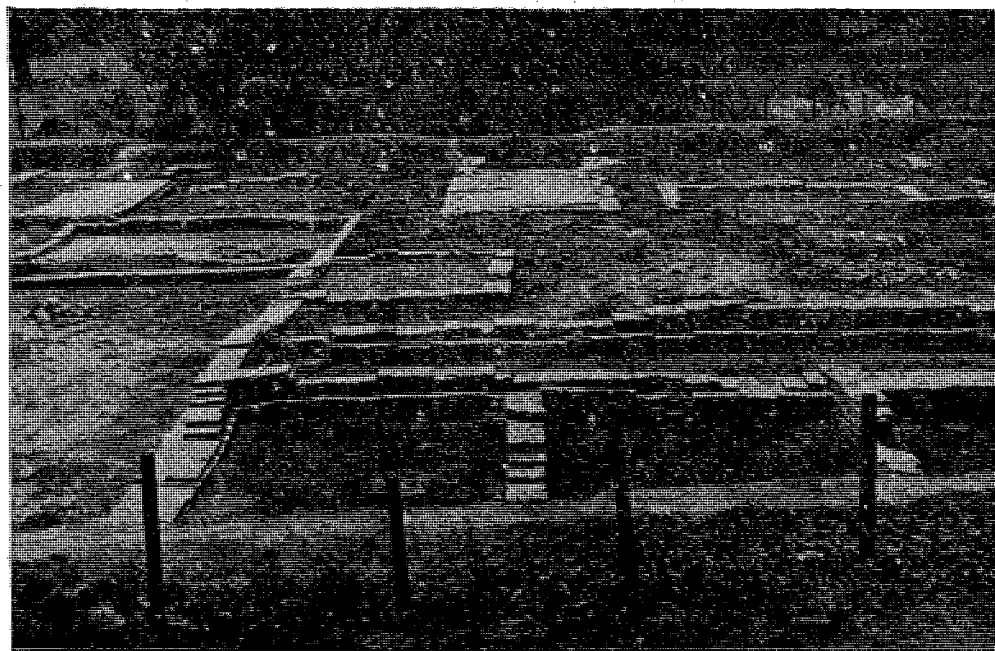
B, Copper coins Huvishka.



Excavated structures on Mound VII at Tiburakot.



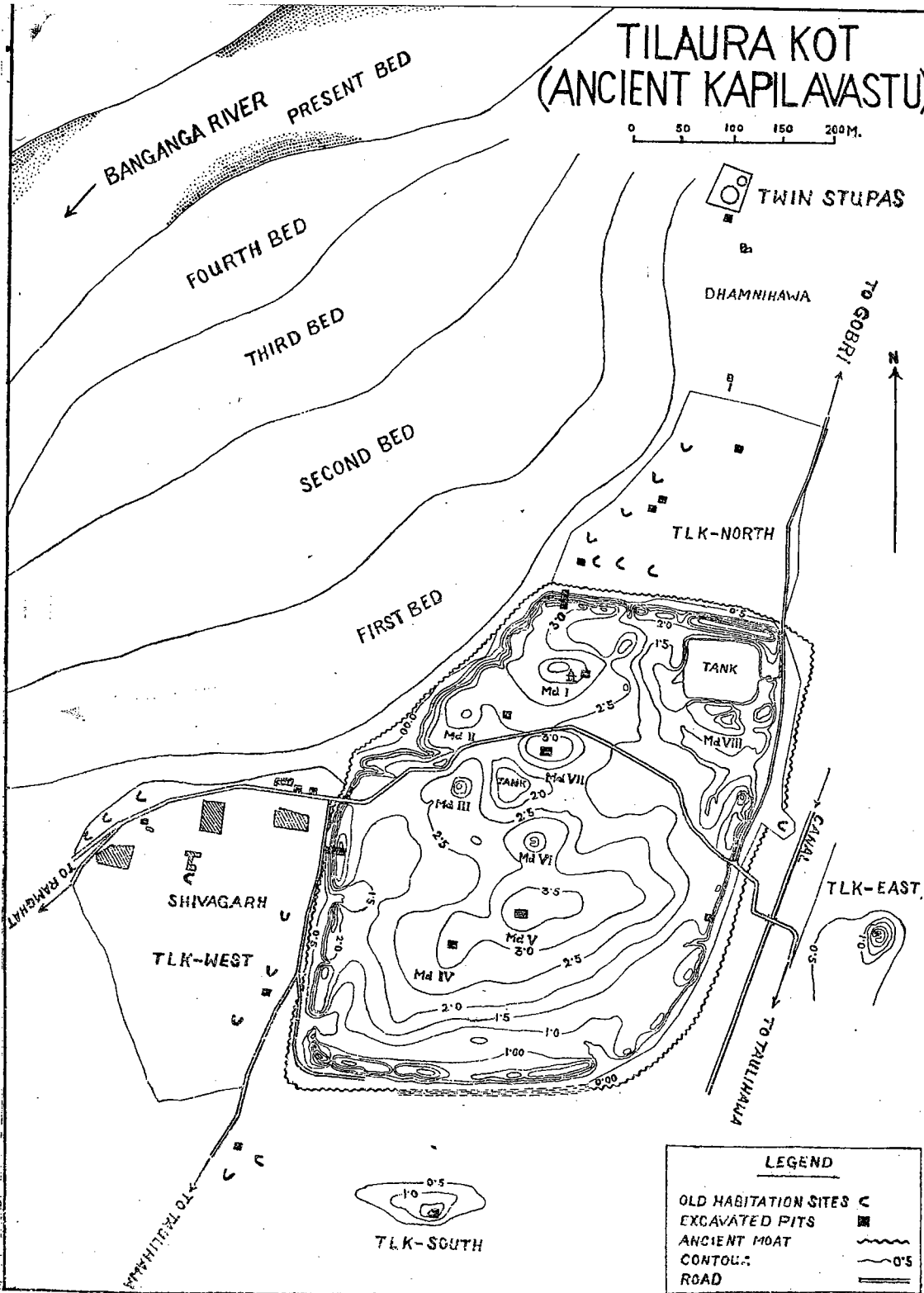
A. Before Conservation.



B. After Conservation.

# TILaura Kot (ANCIENT KAPILAVASTU)

0 50 100 150 200 M.



**LEGEND**

- OLD HABITATION SITES ○
- EXCAVATED PITS ■
- ANCIENT MOAT ~~~~~
- CONTOUR: ——— 0.5
- ROAD ———