

# NEPAL

(VOLUME 2)

## The worship

Monuments and Feasts

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### THE MONUMENTS:—

The architecture of India commences with the reign of Emperor Ashoka who erected, according to the Buddhistic legend, 84000 religious edifices. It is in memory of Ashoka that Nepal also connects her most ancient monuments. During his sojourn in the valley, the august pilgrim is supposed to have erected five "chaityas"; one in the heart of Patan, and the others at the four cardinal points around the city. Ashoka was desirous of commemorating, by each one of these four chaityas, the initial date of each of the four ages (yugas) of the world. In spite of the legend being little authentic, it, at least justifies the designation applied to these monuments; they are not stupas, since they do not contain holy relics, but simply chaityas, monuments in the literal meaning of the word, intended to evoke pious thoughts. These chaityas of the four

cardinal points still exist intact in their main constructions and their general aspect does not contradict the tradition; a massive hemisphere of earth, lined by a casing of bricks, bordered by a plinth also of bricks which rests on a circular pavement; Four chape's, built on the four points of space lean up against the spherical calotte and fit in; each one of them contains the image of one of the four Buddhas, "Cardinals". The hemisphere is crowned by a cube of masonry slightly raised which supports a massive pyramid of bricks, tapering into thirteen sections of tiers. A column of stones rises on the summit; A scaffolding of wood fixed on the summit, serves to support, during the rainy weather a dressing of mats employed as a protection against the percolation of the waters. During the dry season this dressing is removed and a parasol of wood and cloth is placed instead for one week. The

chaityas of Ashoka have preserved the shape of the most ancient monuments of Indian Buddhism; they remind one directly of the famous stupa of Sanchi and the "topes" equally famous of the Gandhara. The plinth is the only embellishment, but still rudimentary, which has modified the unfashioned lines of the primitive stupa. But the crowning of masonry and bricks (cudamani) shows an evolution about to be accomplished; the parasol which it supports to-day for so short a period, is, so to say the natural attribute of the stupa, it is the symbol of the sovereignty and Buddha has a right within as (chakravartin) and as "dharmaraja" assumed to the 84000 foundation of Ashoka clearly expresses the union of the sovereignty with the religion. The most ancient representation figuring of the monuments show the stupa covered with the parasol. The emblem was in course of time doubled and trebled to better worship the saint, the number of parasols superimposed rises to thirteen, and whatever might have been the reason for this choice the number thirteen remained consecrated by use; on the large stupa of the Lorient, erected at the pachaver by Kaniska, the Chinese pilgrim Song-Yun, also numbers thirteen discs pierced through by an iron fixture.<sup>1</sup> A reason of stability as well as one of aesthetics compelled the parasols in tiers in decreasing sizes. At the same time in order to fix the pillar or fixture that supported them it was necessary to construct a foundation of masonry at the top. The usual parasols were naturally replaced by discs made of more resisting material/stone or metal; these came closer to one another, got soldered together in a conical trunk. Their original destination

was forgotten, the cone was changed into a pyramid. Such is the stage which is shown under their actual form at least, by the chaityas attributed to Ashoka. The repairs which have been followed one another in the course of time and which have been repeated until a recent date as is shown by modern inscriptions are perhaps responsible for the crowning with masonry and bricks which is the last touch in the construction of the chaityas; they have not altered their simple and robust structure of the original hemisphere.

Compared to these monuments the chaitya of Swayambhu Natha<sup>2</sup> (ordinarily Syambu-Nath) shows the changes which have taken place in the main proportions of the edifice.

The ancient hemisphere narrows from the base, lengthens in height and flattens on the summit. The plinth juts out and forms a kind of circular table around the base, with a width of two feet, built in stone slabs and supported on small stone fixtures. The crowning, independently of the superadded ornaments, has the same height as the chaitya itself, whilst in the chaityas at Patan, it is four times smaller. In the developing, it has assumed an architectural importance; the base of the rise had a projecting cornice; it is adorned with gilded copper plate and has alike all the Lamaical monuments; each one of the four facings, two wide open eyes painted in red, white and black, is the symbol of Adi-Buddha, the primordial Buddha. The thirteen sections

of the rise are formed by thirteen separate parasols, thirteen wooden discs plated over with copper, gilded on the ledge, spread out in tiers at regular intervals round a wooden mast. On the highest discs rests a gilded wooden frame which supports in its turn a metal circle artistically designed; a kind of tripod fixed on this circle finally carries a gilded copper bell-turret, with a bell. The incomparable holiness of the chaitya of Swayambhu compelled it to undergo reparations. Built on the spot on which bloomed at one time the marvellous lotus flower which carried the divinity (1,333), the original chaitya is credited to have been the work of pracanda deva; king of the country of Ganda-(Bengal), he had abdicated in order to take or get into orders; in the name of Cantikara bhiksu which he had henceforth adopted, he came to worship Swayambhu in Nepal. Above the stone which covered the miraculous image he placed an immense jewel and the divine Vajrasattva piercing thirteen tunnel to enable gifts from worshippers to reach the divinity. The royal bhiksu then had recourse to the architect of the gods, Vicvakarman and asked him to edify a chaitya. In those days, the predecessor of Buddha Cakyamuni, the Buddha Kacyapa still existed on the earth. The name of the Bhiksu Cantikara is found again in another account of the Swayambhu-Purana associated to the institution of rites in honour of The Nagas, in the reign of king Gunakama (see sup. 1,322). But I would not wish to press this indication too closely and still less take the liberty of dating the foundation of the chaitya of Swayambhu. There do not exist any inscriptions anterior to the end of

the XVIth century, the first one commemorates a repair executed in 1593, under Siva Simha Malla. For a long time the religious zeal of the Tibetans seems to have taken up the responsibility of caring after the monument. In 1639 a Lama of Lhasa has had the bell-turret with its subbase-ment plated over with gilded copper and has had installed on the summit a gilded parasol in 1751; year 871 of the Nepal Samvat of the name of Prajapati (in the cycle of jupiter) year Keda to the Tibetans, year Simu-u to the Chinese. A Lama named Karmapa "who has a mind as luminous as the sun and the Moon, came from the North to secure the happiness of the king, functionaries and people", and "on a propitious day he began the restoration of the chaitya which the sins of Kali-Yuga had rendered uninhabitable". A long bilingual inscription still erected on the platform of Swayambhu, commemorates the details of that restoration, undertaken with the help of the gods Mahadeva, Ganapati, Kumara, Vishnu and also the Nepalese rajas. The king of Kathmandu, Jaya Prakash had undertaken the cost of the reparations; the Gurkha king, the would be conqueror of Nepal, Prithvi Narayan had promised to haul the principal beam to the very foot of the works. A war interrupted the work which was only completed in 1758. It was necessary to change the strong piece of wood which rose from the base crossed through the whole mass of the Chaitya and protruded above the summit. The cost for this purpose was considerable- 39 kilograms of gold were employed (or a sum of 120000 frs in metallic currency) almost 3500 kilograms of copper. The quantity of musk consumed

during the course of ceremonies was worth 1000 rupees, an enormous sum in a country where the average means of existence runs to about a rupee a week. In 1816, a violent-hurricane completely threw down the whole portion of the crowning of the chaitya and broke the great vertical beam so laboriously placed in position in 1758. The periods of Nepalese Buddhism were no more. It was necessary to wait till 1825 to collect funds essential for the reparation. The greatness of the disaster necessitated a complete restoration; it was essential to open out the hemisphere or dome of the chaitya also to open the central chamber to remove the remnants of the broken axis. The occasion was unique one for the archaeologists, the inspection of the various objects enclosed in the shrine would have determined the original date of construction. Nobody, however, came forward to derive the benefit.

The evolutions of the chaitya of Swayambhu in the course of the last centuries show well the frequent transformations which the monuments of the same kind have had to undergo in Nepal; alone the proportions of the stupa itself and if such should be the case the substructures deserve to be considered as authentic indications of the primitive construction. Judged on these features, the chaitya of Budh-nath (Buddha-Natha) is less ancient than the preceding ones. Popular tradition associates its construction with expiation of parricide; but the names of the personages vary from one tale to another. Now it turns out to be the prince Bhupa-Kesari who is guilty of having killed his father unknowingly.

The fountain of Jalacayana Narayan having suddenly dried up, the old King Vikrama Kesari, anxious, consulted his astrologers; they bade him to sacrifice a human being marked with the thirty two signs (laksana). The king summoned his son; In four days, he said to him, you will find a man lying near the fountain, strike him dead, without looking at him. The prince obeyed and the murder accomplished, he goes to wash his hands in the Iksumati; to his surprise, masses of worms were floating on the surface. Soon he was to know his crime and horror-stricken; he entrusted the royalty to his mother then he went away to pray to Mani-yogini, the goddess of Sankou. She ordered him as a means of expiation, to build on the site where he would notice a crane roosting, a chaitya with a circumference of two yoganas with four circles of gods. Sometimes the prince is named Mana deva and his father Vikmanti; the head of the victim remains attached to the hands of the unwilling parricide and it is again the goddess Mani-Yogini who reveals the means of expiation. The goddess Varahi in person supervises the construction of the chaitya and to thank her Mana-deva erects her statue at the entrance of the temple, whereas he places in the interior all the divinities. The hymn in honour of Buddha, composed by Mana deva on festivities of inauguration, is still popular with the Nepalese Buddhists.<sup>3</sup>

Bhupa-Keshari and Vikrama-Keshari are whimsical personages; but Mana deva is a historical name. The first king of this name opens the series of spigraphical texts in Nepal, his inscriptions separated.

by 386 to 414 of an uncertain era have been found again at Kathmandu and at Changu Narayan; he is anterior to Amcvarman who mentions in an inscription of Harigaon, "the monastery of ori-mana". The legendary founder of the chaitya of Budh Nath is closely associated to the memory of his mother a Blanche of the Castille of Nepalese origin well informed and pious woman, as skilful in handling or governing men as she is in conciliating the gods; "She built a number of monuments and as a last piece of work consecrated an image of Nava Sagara-Bhagavati made by the same artist as the Bhagavati of Palanchauk and the Shobha Bhagavati". The inscription of Changu Narayan shows Mana deva begging of his mother, Rajyavati, to direct the affairs after the death of King Dharma deva; and the inscription of Iajanpat accompanies one of these pious images which the piety of Rajyavati, mother of Mana deva so they say, had increased in number. If the tradition which connects the name of Mana deva to this monument is exact the chaitya of Budh-Nath dates from the VIth century of the Christian era. The chaitya of Budh-Nath is of a remarkable complexity; the history of the parricide owes perhaps its origin to the antiquated (obsolete) proportions of the edifice; so rare a work must have concerned an extraordinary motive. The chaitya consists in three parts poised with a surprising symmetry; the base, the hemisphere, the crowning. The stupa of Swayambhu has already shown us the original crowning transformed by a technical development and treated as one of the essential elements; in the chaitya of Budh-Nath the base has taken a similar

development. The platform, transformed, forms three large terraces in tiers; this base the hemisphere and the crowning have each exactly the same height, of about fifteen metres. The three terraces are neither circular nor square shaped; the arris are rectangular, but on each one of the four faces (sides) the central portion projects out as a salient like a colossal treble shelf encasing itself a staircase with large sections (stepa). The first terrace shows on Northern face two small stupas plastered with stucco. At the base of the edifice, a rectangular wall shelters a long line of small niches wherein are installed on transversal axes prayer boxes. At the base of the spherical calotte, a symmetrical plinth shelters in its niches a legion of Amitabhas. The crowning is in three sections; a cubical platform with two eyes painted on each face, above a four sided pyramid hewn in thirteen shelves and plated over gilded copper on the pinnacle are the parasol and arrow as with Swayambhu.

The multitude of chaityas scattered in the valley of Nepal originate in various combinations from the types that I have just described. The hemispherical calotte, which by itself constitute the whole monument, progressively narrows and diminishes in size whereas the sub-structure grows larger in importance and ends up by absorbing one's whole attention. The dimensions of these chaityas vary 'ad infinitum' between the monumental type and the various kiosks that decorate and often encumber the compounds of the viharas.

Nepal presents still another type of religious edifices that have disappeared from India actually, but scattered all over the Far-East and popular to-day in the West; the pagoda. The pagoda has for essential feature a number of roof that superpose one another from storey to storey all along a rectangular construction most often disposed in a gradual off-set. It is rare to see a pagoda rising directly from the soil; it is generally built on a square terrace, one can reach it by four stair-cases each one guarded by a pair of dragons. The interior hall, the largest is the principal sanctuary; it shelters the statue of god, sometimes offered to the worship of the faithful, sometimes concealed from profane looks. The gate of approach is nearly always worked over with a shield pannel on which are sculptures the attributes of the divinity, the door and the pannel are of wood or metal; but whatever be the materials employed they show by the skill and details of the work the gifts of whims, taste and invention which still render famous the sculptors and gold-smiths of Nepal. Pannels of wood delicately fret-worked allow of the filtration of light in the hall and at the same time give out more details to the mass of the building. The roofs sharply inclined rest on a framework of beams at close pitch decorated at will by the painter and sculptor. The lower roof is usually covered with red tiles, and loftier roofs plated over with gilded copper, glitter in the sun. The corners are turned upwards "Chinese fashion" and all along the edges, hang banderoles and little bells that tinkle merrily with the least breezes. On the summit there rises like on the chaityas a

bell-turret (oudamani) in the shape of an elongated bell, crowned with a lotus, a parasol, a sun or a Moon. The richest of Nepalese pagodas is undoubtedly Changu-Narayan a marvel of carving of sculpture and of colouring.<sup>4</sup> The most monumental is the five storeyed temple (Nyatpol Devai), built in 1703 at Bhatgaon by king Bhatindra Malla;<sup>5</sup> the temple itself rises on a terrace of five storeys disposed in tiers all along the staircase, there rises five pairs of gigantic steps; at the base two giants, Jaya Malla and Phatta athletes in the service of the king and who are credited with having had the strength of ten men, above two elephants ten times stronger again; then, in following this decimal progress of muscular vigour, two lions, two tigers and the two goddesses Singhini and Vyaghrini. Similar gradations are to be found again in the adornment of other temples, either in Nepal or in India proper. The first storey of the construction is surrounded with an elegant colonnade of sculptured wood and worked in at leisure. Lastly, the most popular of this style is the temple of Matsyendra Nath in Patan, dedicated to the patronal divinity of Nepal; it is reproduced on a smaller scale at Kathmandu under the vocable of the "Small Matsyendra Nath".

The pagoda can in no way vie in antiquity with the chaityas; none among them seem to date back later than the XVth century. But their architecture reproduce undoubtedly the styles of immemorial date; perhaps they are directly connected to the primitive wooden architecture which preceded in India and which even inspired the most ancient stone monuments. A construction of the same type

is found shown on the plate of Sohagaura, which dates back to Ashoka's epoch.<sup>6</sup> Among the several objects shown heading the inscription, one can recognize here and there a chaitya, two identical kiosks each with two stories, with two inclined roofs with a progressive set off borne on a belt of pillars.

The kondo and the temple of Hōruiji in Japan, erected in the reign of Shotoku Taishi (593-621), prove that from the end of the XIth century the consecrated type of the wooden pagoda such as there still exists in Nepal, had propagated itself through the intermediary of Chinese Buddhism up to Korea who was the initiator of the Japanese artists. The nine-storeyed tower which provoked the admiration of the Chinese envoys in Nepal towards the middle of the VIIth century. (see sup. I, 159) belonged probably to the same style of construction. Nepal, here again, is the authentic image of lost (vanished) India.

Without losing sight of the forms consecrated by the tradition, Nepal did not neglect to borrow from India the new types she elaborated. Sometimes she (Nepal) attempted a faithful reproduction of a famous model; thus it is that the Mahabuddha-vihara of Patan seems to be a copy of the temple of Mahabodi, erected at Gaya on the holy site above all, where Cakyamuni discovered the illumination. In the reign of Amara Malla at the beginning of the XVIth century the Acarya named Abhaya Raja went on a pilgrimage to

Gaya with his young wife, there a son was born to him whom he named Bandhaju. One day he learnt by a supernatural voice that Mahabuddha was satisfied with his homages and induced him to return into Nepal to reap a just regard. Abhaya Raja took the precaution of carrying away an image of the temple of Gaya; having returned to his native country he had erected on the model, a three storeyed temple which was only completed by his grand-son. This temple still exists in perfect condition, preserved by the belt of houses that press round her and hardly allows of a narrow passage between. It is divided into five stories; in the chapel of the first floor (storey) is found, as at Gaya a large statue of Cakyamuni. Amitabha is the patron of the first storey, then come successively a stone chaitya, a dharma-dhatumandala and a vajradhatu-mandala who are respective patrons of the higher stories. A gilded cudamani in the form of a chaitya, crowns the edifice.<sup>7</sup> In the other cases the Nepalese architects are inspired by the Hindu styles without being enthralled by them; the most fortunate of these adaptations is the pretty temple of Radha-Krisna which rises on the square of the Darbar at Patan.<sup>8</sup> Set up in constructions of purely Nepalese style, it blends most harmoniously its elegant and refined outlines to this whole Fergusson, who is the most competent of judges does not hesitate to recognize, in spite of the original placing of the pavillions "A Bengali influence where no mistake is possible".<sup>9</sup>

Beside the religious monuments in

earth, bricks, plaster, wood, stone, there are still others and none the less reputed, which hardly comprise for construction an enclosure. The image of the divinity is offered thither to the adoration of the faithful in open air and under light shed; such is the sanctuary of Daksinakali at Phirping or of Surya-Vinayaka near Bhadgaon; but whatever be the nature of the construction and its importance, there spreads in more or less abundance or wealth, a little world of chapels annexed or ornaments which justify the name of "town" (purs) sometimes applied in the religious nomenclature to these sacred enclosures. The most compact groups are the two religious hearts of the valley: Swayambhu and Pashupati. The numerous chaityas strewn on the flanks of the hill of Swayambhunath or closely built on the double summit which crowns it, the pavillions which fill up the precincts of Pashupati and which cover the steep banks of the Bagmati do not ask for any description, they reproduce, in the varying scales, the types I have already enumerated.

One of the most widely spread accessories in Nepal which is also common in the temples of Buddhism and in those of Sivaism, is the independent pillar, erected before the "facade", sometimes, rounded, sometimes squared, sometimes with the arris bevelled, sometimes buried in the ground, or circled with a ring at the base or even supported on the back of a turtle and crowned almost always with a full-blown lotus which serves as a crest and at the same time as the base for an image. The

custom is a very ancient one; the first monument dated in Nepal is the pillar erected by Mana deva in front of the temple of Gangu Narayan in 386 Samvat; this pillar, squared at the base, becomes octagonal, then is hewn out into sixteen sides, lastly is rounded off at the higher portion; it was originally crowned with a Garuda under the features of a winged man bending on one knee. The Garuda has fallen down only half a century ago, and its remains are preserved in the court of the temple. A royal doctor has had installed at his own expense, a new crest with a "chakra", the disc of Vishnu. The old pillar (or column) of Harigaon on which is engraved the hymn of Krisna Dvaipayana has preserved original crest; Garuda kneeling on a lotus; in other cases the figure on the summit represents the giver, like on the place of the Darbar in Patan or the vahana of the mouse before the temple of Vinayaka, sometimes even like, to the Matsyandra Natha of Patan, a line of small pillars carry all a gallery of small animals; elephants, horses, lions, griffons etc.

The pillar is often adjacent to a stone portico where hangs a large bell. The visitor priest or layman who wishes to make use of it to drive away the demons, knocks with the hammer, the sides of the bell; the bell itself is fixed and immutable. The dexterous melters of Nepal have excelled for a long time in the manufacture of bells of large dimensions as well as in the little bells in the sacred service of the rattles that joyously



play in the breeze every day from the roofings of the pagodas. It is also to their skill that the temples owe those metal banners that sometimes hang from the arrow to the portal and those metal flags that are gilded and fixed to iron staffs. Against these resisting accessories or perhaps through lack of them, are erected on the consecrated soil high bamboo poles which are garnished with multicoloured cloths in the style of oriflammes (flags). One also often sees on the summit of the chaityas threads on which hang small flags which get entangled on the neighbouring houses; the Tibetans in particular follow this usage in their temples at Buddhanath at Badhmandal; I have already mentioned examples of the same practice borrowed from the history of Nepal. The niche for prayers is reserved to the Tibetan Buddhists. The Nevars who make them do not use them, one finds only at Svayambhu and at Buddhanath those metal cylinders on which are stamped the all powerful letters: "OM MANI PADME HUM" a long paper band made into a roll and pressed into the interior of the cylinder repeats "ad infinitum the same characters traced by the untiring hand of copyists; the faithful who starts moving the mill on its metal axis, also mutters between his lips the same sanctifying formula, the alpha and omega of the Tibetan devotion. Amusing example of the might of the words. By a kind of pun, the faithful can "turn the wheel of the law" as did Buddha at one time when he preached his first sermon in his campaign at Benares.

Among those ordinary emblems of

Buddhism and Nepalese Shivaism there takes first place the "linga" and "yoni", the two sexual symbol which express by their union, the fertilizing power of the inexhaustible nature. In spite of the current prejudices, the forms adopted in usage in the whole of India could hardly offend modesty of the most sensitive; the most complaisant eye only recognizes a cylinder or a cone of stone encased in a stone disc. The most cared for lingas show sculptured the five faces of Shiva, four disposed symmetrically in a ring and the fifth on the summit. The linga of Pashupatit, he holiest of all has a height of about three and a half feet, it is made of hard grit-stone; from the shaft there stands out in relief four faces and four pair of hands; the right hands each carry a rosary of rudraksa, the left hands a pot of water (Kamandalu). Ordinarily the linga is concealed under the mass of gold and silver ornaments, which is removed at the time of religious service. Buddhism has been able to adopt without effort a symbol so popular and so assuaging. It got off, even after inventing a new interpretation; the Buddhistic linga represents the primordial lotus, the yoni shows the source of whence it sprang out. A serpent entwined on the border of the yoni recalls the Naga Karkotoka hidden in the depth of the waters. The higher portion of the linga, worked out in the shape of a cupola on the model of the chaityas interprets with the resources of the matter the immaterial flame wherein was manifested Adi-Buddha. The faces of Shiva and Shivistic emblems are replaced by the faces of Buddhas or Bodhisattvas and

by Buddhistic emblems. Guhyecvari, the goddess of common to the Tantras of Buddhism and Shivaism has an emblem proper; the triangle (trikona) which is frequently met traced on stones consecrated in the neighbourhood of temples.

The "vajra" is a Hindu emblem, but Buddhism has allowed it to the extent of adopting it as pre-eminently its symbol. It is Indra, the sovereign of the Vedic pantheon who at one time possessed and brandished this powerful weapon; but the humiliated god has had to deliver to Buddha the insignia of his power. Like Indra made use of it at one time to crush the demons, his rivals, the Buddhist priest manipulates in his turn the thunder-bolt against the multitude of evil spirits. Reduced to its elementary form, the vajra consists of a stem raised up in the centre, to give better grasp to the hand garnished at both its ends with four or eight iron lances bent with their points bent again towards the extremities of the transversal axe. The finest specimen of vajra which is seen in Nepal is undoubtedly the gilded vajra, five feet long, which king Pratapa Malla had erected in the XVIIth century on the terrace of Sva-Yambhu Natha at the outlet of the long staircase which ascends the hill and leads to the platform. But the Vajra is seen again everywhere in the monuments of Buddhism, beginning from the arrow of the chaityas and ending by the little rattle of the priest. The vajra and the bell form an organic couple like the linga and yoni; the vajra, male, represent the Buddha; the

bell (ghanta) feminine element, represents Sagacity (Prajna).

The divine feet (charana) are again an emblem common to the two great worships. Before the influence of the Greek arts, ancient India seems to have felt a repugnance in representing its gods in the human form, thus it is that the sculptors of Bharhut, to show "Ajatacatrou in adoration before Bhagavat" have represented the king kneeling before a throne which shows the stamp of two feet. The language reflects the same idea, an inferior being speaks humbly of the "feet of the king", of the "feet of the master", as if his prostrated attitude prevented him from recognizing nothing else without being disrespectful. The Nepalesse represent profusely the feet of the Buddha carved on the stone or painted in colours recognizable with the eight good luck carriers (mangala) which adorn them; the crivatsa, the flat lotus (padma) the banner (dhvaja) the ewer (kalaca) the parasol (chattra), the fly-flap (camara) circles feature the cakra, "the disc" which is dya a metaphor the symbol of the universal sovereignty. The same signs are to be found again on the marks of Vishnu worshipped in India, in particular on the miraculous stamp which the pilgrim never cease to worship at Gaya. As if to interpret the close relation of the two divinities it is Vishnu who succeeded to the Buddha on the very scene of the Bodhi.

Besides the feet of Buddha, the

Nepalese Buddhism also worships the stamps of Maujushri; they show an eye traced crosswise on the foot, similar to the one which is painted on the bases of the arrows of the chaityas. The most venerated stamp (or mark) is to be found on the western platform of the syambunath which a slight depression separates from the principal terrace.

The "dhatu-mandalas" exclusively belong to Buddhism. They consist of a stone cylinder or one made of masonry with a cavity reserved in the interior, it corresponds to the chamber of the relics of the stupa, but this cavity must remain empty to shelter the spirit of the divinity. A circular stone covers and closes the cylinder, it is ornamented with diagrams cleverly complicated (mandalas) where are entangles in a fixed order, emblems and figures of every nature. If the dhatu-mandala is consecrated to Maujushri, it is adorned with 222 drawings and receives the name of "dharma-dhatu-mandala", if it is consecrated to Vairocana, the most sublime of the Buddhas, they adorn it with 50 or 60 drawings only, and it is then a "vajra-dhatu-mandala".

The emblem preferred by Vishnu in India, the calagrama is exclusively of Nepalese origin; the cala-grama is an agglomerated concretion around a serpent-stone and gifted with magnetic properties. It is only met with in the bed of the Kali-Gandaki. However in spite of the

neighbourhood of the layer in spite of the high prices which the Vishnuists Hindu attach to these shells, the calagrama has only been introduced in usage in Nepal under the last of the Malla kings of Kathmandu, Jaya-prakasha.

Among the accessories which contribute to the exterior decorations one must mention apart, the inscriptions. The pious vanity of the donators, helped by an instructive taste of art, has multiplied the epigraphical texts of the detriment of archaeology; the old documents have had to cede their places to the new-comers, sometimes even the antique stone laboriously carved, has been itself changed into a palimpsest. The whim of the lapicides in varying the characters have known how to render them elegant and decorative like arabesques, whether be it that they cover high tablets or they adorn the bareness of the sides of a pillar, or again that they run on the very lines of the monument on the square of the Darbar at Kathmandu the steps of the temple erected by Pratapa Malla bear engraved the lucubrations of this too-voluminous poet; the insipid on mani padme hum, only appears in the sanctuaries of the Tibetans stubbornly reproduced with a surprising cleverness the head, the Tibetan calligraphy exercised undoubtedly by a continuous practice, excel in drawing among the most contradictory materials to spread out before the eyes the blessed formula".

I can only mention without stopping

the multitude of sculptures works in relief or statues that abound in the court of the temples. The inexhaustible pantheon of Buddhism or Shivaism spreads out enough to discourage the enumeration; a complete and double again mythology would be needed, to draw up the inventory of this enormous divine "personnel". Even the animals hold a large place, for instance the colossal bull in gilded copper which guards the entrance of Pashupati the face turned towards the door of the sanctuary. I must however mention a local singularity; the sculptured pannels of wood that work up like a frieze around the pagodas, illustrate with a science in which a science in which the whim does not disdain to smile the learned teachings of the kama-castra. Most unexpected sexual combinations are exposed to the indifferent eye of the faithful the intervention of clever animals, like the monkey and the elephant, often complicates the play of the figures. One can also notice particular houses adorned with friezes of this style. The explanation I have gathered is general. These scenes are credited with possessing the virtue (or power) of keeping away the thunderbolt.

Other ornaments not less strange also garnish the 'facade' of the temples. Certain among them receive by virtue of an immemorial usage, the utensils of the kitchen loft to the scrap iron heap the walls then disappear under the odds and ends and scrap-iron hung about aimlessly (such for instance the temple of Cakyssimha in the Chaubahal at Chobbar) often also

the horns of bulls that have been sacrificed remain in possession of the temple, and those trophies of butchery end up by covering the walls. European chromolithographies and Chinese prints, come from which circuit? Complete this aspect of heteroclite bazar. The religious monuments to whatever church they belong have almost always for annexe a "dharmacala" intended to lodge visitors pilgrims and travellers. The dharma-cala of the most elementary type consists of a wooden kiosk on a platform of masonry, four pillars support the tile roofing; being more comfortable, it is closed on three sides with brick walls, the largest have the dimensions of the real house with stories, with a compound in the rear bordered by service buildings; on the frontage, a verandah on the ground floor and a balcony on the first floor, the majority of the dharma-cala reveal superb specimens of sculpture on wood (or carving on wood). An inscription on metal affixed on the interior wall commemorates the name of the founder and the date of the erection.

Another category of pious foundations is not less scattered in Nepal; they are the "dharas" (or "hithis") and the "pranalis". The pranalis are ordinary public fountains; a pipe brings the water from a neighbouring source, the stone orifice generally represents the fantastic mouth of an animal like the gutter-spouts of Gothic Churches. A pranali of Kathmandu still shows a commemorative inscription traced in the reign of Amcuvarman in the first half of the VIIth century. "Vibhuvarman

has had constructed this excellent water-pipe to increase the spiritual merits of his father (insor. Bhagvanlal, No 8. The dhara or hithi is a pit open skywards and dug out in the soil and bordered with a parapet; a ladder helps one to descend into it and sometimes the entire periphery (circumference) is worked out in tiers. Water trickles down at the bottom by several openings. It is in a ruined hithi that I have found my inscription of the Tulacchi-Tol in Bhatgaon, dated in the reign of Shivadeva towards the end of the VIth century. The most magnificent dhara of Kathmandu and of the whole of Nepal as indisputably that which general Bhimsena has had built, towards 1825, in the south-west of Tundi-khel, on the occasion of an astronomical phenomenon (maha-varuni); it vies in splendour and luxury with the monumental pranali with <sup>21</sup>water-pipes erected in Bala-Nilakantha (Balaju) by King Jaya-Prakasha of Kathmandu, towards the middle of the XVIIIth century.

The dhara pertains at the same time to the ghat (ghatta) and to the basin (tataka, talao) common to the whole of India. The ghat is a staircase of baths, built on a consecrated site (tirtha) which descends from the bank right into the river; the ghats are numerous, like the tirthas themselves. At Pashupati the Bagmati flows between two rows of ghats. The basin is in principle a reservoir dug out to remedy the scarcity of the waters of the source or the rain waters; it serves to most varied usages as

cistern watering-place and basin of ablutions at the same time; sometimes again they are erected without any real need, perhaps by a taste for the picturesque as an accessory of the landscape or by a taste of comfort as a corner of freshness; such for instance the basin of Rani-pokhari, in Kathmandu on the outskirts of the field of manoeuvres; a causeway reaches as far as the middle of the tank and terminates in an elegant pavillon whence the eye can encompass the panorama of the Himalayan glaciers; king Pratapa Malla has had dug this basin memory of his son who died a premature death and as an attempt to divert the queen's attention from her inconsolable mourning; being refined in his religious practices as well as in his pedantry, he took care to have the basin filled with the waters gathered from all the tirthas.

After the temples destined as the abode of the gods, come the edifices assigned to the religious communities. Nepalese Buddhism has inherited from the antique vihara, the general house where the monks of old would retire to study and meditate during the rainy season. The town of Patan the old metropolis of faith, prides herself in possessing fifteen great viharas, with about a hundred branches subordinate to the parent establishments; Kathmandu possesses eight great viharas, with eight lesser ones. The essential features are to be found everywhere identical; the vihara (Bihar, bahal, bihi) consists of a square of houses with two stories, built on the edge of an interior courtyard wherein rises a contr

chaitya, often surrounded with smaller monuments. The gate of entry is narrow and low decorated on the exterior by a pair of eyes and ewers; the entrance is guarded on the right by Ganesha and on the left by Mahnakal; one, recognizable by his elephant's head, the other by his three red eyes his protruding teeth and to his festoon or garland or skulls, facing the entrance in the main building opposite there opens a chapel consecrated to Cakyamuni with the statue of Buddha attended by a numerous "personnel of gods geniuses and Bodhisattvas, painted or sculptured. The other three sides of the circuit on the ground floor form an enclosure which serves as a place for walking and at the same time as a lumber-room there, accumulate without honour, the accessories that co-operate in the worship and periodical festivities. The columns, the window, the doors, the pannels attest to the triumphant skill of the Nepalese chisel in the sculpture of wood. Several of the viharas that are in existence to-day pretend to connect their origin to the most distant past of Nepal. The Vihara of Garumati (vulgo, Chabahil), to the North of Deo Patan should owe its name and existence to a daughter of Ashoka; she had accomplished the Emperor on a pilgrimage, having reached Nepal she became a witness to a prodigy which decided her to remain there for good; an iron arrow had suddenly changed into stone; Ashoka marries his daughter to a ksatriya of the country, Deva Pala. The married couple resided at Deo Patan, believed and multiplied, lastly barumati becoming old erected the monastery which hence-

forth bore her name, retired from life and died in the monastery. The Cakra-vihara at Patan passes for a creation of king Manadeva the Suryavamci the Maha deva of the pillar of Changu Narayan and of several other inscriptions; it is undoubtedly this convent that an inscription of Amcuvarman designates as the Shri-Mana-vihara, because Cakra-Vihara still bears today in the literary usage the title of Manadeva-samskarita-cakra-maha-vihara other viharas also mentioned in the inscription of Amcuvarman have now disappeared; such for instance the Kharjurika-vihara the Gum-vihara etc. The testimony of the epigraphical texts attests at least to the great number of convents in Nepal as early as the VIIth century; one among them the Gum-vihara is designated by a name drawn from the local dialect instead of the usual Sanscrit names. The case is repeated at an epoch nearly as ancient for the Hlam-vihara as a manuscript of the XIth century, extols as "a foundation of ancient dynasties erected to adorn in a worthy manner the land of Nepal and where shines for ever the wood of the Sugata". The Chinese I-tsing mentions at the close of the VIIth century, the Nepalese convent of the the king of the Gods (T'ien-wang-seu). A son of the wet-nurse who had accompanied the Chinese princess married to Srong-tsan-gam-po, was then residing in that Vihara. "This religious being adds I-tsing, knows the Sanscrit dialect-very well and has compared himself with all the Sanscrit books. Thus the sanscrit culture was then flourishing in the Nepalese monasteries and the people of Tibet who felt the monastic

vocation would cross over into Nepal. The Sanscrit original of the Chinese name mentioned by I-tsang is doubtful; 'T'ien-wang, (king of Gods) is one of the designations of Mahesvara, otherwise said of Siya; it is then permitted to suppose with Mr. Chavannes a form such as Shiva-vihara. But a convent of this name has not yet been discovered in the Nepalese documents, we know on the contrary from a positive source a Shivadeva-vihara. An inscription dated 143 Samvat (Bhagvanlal, No. 13) bears a donation in favour of Shivadeva-vihara, it emanates from king Shivadeva the Thakuri, who reigns half a century after the voyage of I-tsing; but the monastery or a monastery of the same name could have had for founder and eponym another more ancient Shivadeva. The Vamcavali relates precisely that Shivadeva the Suryavanci predecessor of Amcuvarman constructed a vihara wherein to retire after his abdication. This monastery repaired at first by king Rudra deva after his abdication then restored by Apious Never in 1653, still exists in Patan, to the S. E. of the Darbar. It is given the name of Rudravarna-vihara in Sanscrit and of Onkul-bahal in Nevari.

It is also necessary to mention among the ancient convents that exist to-day the Yampi-bihar of Patan in the vicinity of the Chaitya of Ashoka situated to the North of the town. Tradition attributes a Brahman of Kapila-vastu, Sunaya Shri Mitra as its founder who had proceeded to Tibet to receive the teachings of the Iamas in the reign of Rudradeva, the Suryavanci; two of his disciples, Govardhana Mishra

and Kacyapa Mishra came from Kapila-vastu to join him in Nepal and founded one the Dunta-Bihar the other the Lalibana-bihar. At an epoch further back again, a queen of Marvar, Pingala is supposed to have founded a famous convent which sheltered no less than six hundred religious men in the days of Narendradeva, the Thakuri.

The population of the viharas has sadly changed; the ancient community of monks who were bachelors, learned and studious has disappeared. It has been replaced by unworthy heirs, the Banras. If the monasteries have been the abode of relection and paryer, they serve now-a-day as dwellings to a swarming multitude and boisterous crowd of men women children huddled together in defiance of hygiene in narrow and low-roofed rooms wherein are exercised professions altogether wordly, gold-smith's art, sculpture, decorative arts; other among the Banras are employed outside as carpenters as melters, as plasterers? Science is dying out or rather she is dead; a miserable pujari, entrusted by the community with the daily worship comes and mutters every day before the statue of Shakyamuni hymns (stotras) in barbarous sanscrit which he does not understand or recites a section of the Prajna-paramita in Eight Thousand stanzas (Astasahasrika) which he understands still less; it is he who detains the old manuscripts drawn up at one time by pious copyists and who allows with an astounded indifference, time and the insects consume on these relics their work of destruction. The tradition of the old talents disappears;

at the beginning of the XIXth century Hodgson still found real erudites to instruct him; Amritananda the Pundit who served him as initiator and guide handled Sanscrit with ease, his copy books, preserved by his descendants in the convent of Mahabuddha, in Patan show to his honour all that Hodgson owed him. His great grand sons have been compelled in order to live to engage themselves as translators to the British Residence. The old Pundit Kulamana of Patan earns his livelihood by teaching the rudiments of catechism and by copying manuscripts. Behind them one does not even see peep a successor.

These signaler guests of the Buddhist convents these carpenters, blacksmiths, scribes sextons are holden to their priveleges to the Brahmanic spirit, it is in the name of the caste that they claim a lodging in the vihara one part on the revenues of the vihara. The fathers of families chiefs of a numerous progeny, descend by a legitimate connection (filiation) from the revolutionary monks who rejected at one time the vow of chastity and created in their hovel a conjugal home. At what time did the crisis happen? the Buddhistic tradition of Nepal imputes this fall to the legendary champion of modern Brahmanism, Shankara Acharya; this formidable controvertisis who still leaves after twelve centuries his trace on the Hindu mind had in the course of his triumphant tours, visited the Nepalese valley. Several of the kings of Nepal have borne precisely the name of Shankara (deva), the

legend has profited thereby to introduce more easily the acharya in the chronology of Nepal, it makes him appear under the father of Shankara deva, the Suryavamei; and a few centuries later, it brings him back without serupule in Nepal, under the father of Shankara deva the Thakhuri. The system of transmigrations helps the chronology so easily from a confused state on his first passage, the Bhiksus and the Cravakas established in the monasteries do not even attempt to hold up against him; house chieftains (grhasthas) braver, summon to their aid Saraswati, the goddess of eloquence, but Shankara diverts her from them by the superiority of his magical means. Some flee; others are massacred, still others admit themselves vanquished and get converted; he imposes on them the practice of bloody sacrificer which the Buddha had forbidden, he comples the nuns (bhiksunis) to marry he comples the chiefs of the house to shave their heads entirely like the hermit without leaving a tuft of hair on their skull (cudra) like the Brahmanic style he removes the Buddhism string; he destroys the 84000 canecical works of Buddhism and introduces the religion of Shiva in place of the vanquished religion. Yet he was obliged to leave the Buddhists in possession of a few temples through the want of back towards the sea, without attempting to conquer the Northern regions of the world.

When Shankara re-appeared in the period of king Vara deva, under a new incarnation he was contented with verifying in Nepal the maintainance of the



observances he had introduced, then he continued his course towards the North and entered into Tibet; but it was his doom; the lama of Tibet whom he accused of uncleanness opened his stomach with a knife to spread to the light of day the purity of his heart, Shankara frightened wished to escape, but the lama pierced his shadow with an iron lance and Shankara fell dead<sup>9</sup>.

The name of Shankara Acharya is in these accounts only a symbol; it represents the fortunates struggle undertaken by Brahmanism against its rival who was weakened. In fact, the fall of Buddhism was less the consequence than the cause itself of Brahmanism. The ancient discipline had really relaxed. The sympathy of the Chinese pilgrim may have been instrumental in concealing the evil; but the impartial testimony of the Kashmerian chronicle shows that about the XVth century a portion of the clergy in Cashmere was married. One of the wives of king Megha Vahana constructed in fact a great vihara, one half was reserved to the Bhiksus whose conduct was in accordance with the holy precepts (ciksacara), the other half, to those who had wives, children, cattle, property and who deserved blame for having adopted the domestic life (garhasthya - garhya). Numerous influences had combined to bring about this relaxation, among others the propagation of methods of simplified salutations, reduced to the recitation of a formula or name. Thus it is that in

Japan the sects Shin-shou founded on the continuous adoration of Amitabha, has eventually ended up by suppressing the singleness of the priests and the prescriptions of abstinence. The transformation is accomplished by degrees, slowly and gradually winning one and all. In the XVIIth century the kingdom of Patan, more faithful to Buddhism than the kingdoms of Kathmandu and Bhatgoan still numbered twenty five viharas "nirvanikas" where the monks would observe the vow of celibacy. The political power could not assist with indifference to a reform which fatally diminished the strength of the clergy; deprived of the prestige of chastity embodied in the sections of social life, the monks ceased from forming an invincible organism they were fatally divided into associations of unstable concerns, which the royalty could cultivate or stifle by opposing them.

In spite of so profound a revolution, the forms have partly survived to the spirit of the past. As a married man father of family, craftsman, the Banra is not less for these an ordained monk, he does not receive the less the protections which orthodox Vinaya prescribes. An ingenious solution has enabled the conciliation of the respect for the tradition and the exigencies of modern times. The candidate applies to his spiritual director (guru), he expresses to him the wish of entering the order, or becoming "Bandya" (Banra). With the generous help of magical diagrams and consecrated utensils the Guru at first obtains for his disciple the three protections from the thunderbolt (Vajraraksa) by

means of a tun (cask) which he wields about; from iron (loharaksa) by means of a bell he brandishes; from fire (agniraksa) by means of a cup of alcohol; then he baptises him with holy water (kakaca adgiseka). Two days later, the Guru assisted by the superior (nayaka) of the vihara and the superiors of the four neighbouring viharas, confers the ordination, it is the vow or ordination which definitively separates the novice from the worked (pravrajyavrata). The novice receives at first the five prohibitions (vairamani); no attempt on life; no illegal appropriation on incontinency; no falsehood; no alcohol. His hair is shaved off, he is sprinkled over with holy water, they give him the name of a religion; then he receives the ten precepts (ciksapada) which forbid murder, theft, allurements of the passions, falsehood, liquor dance, gold and silver. He is then given a complete religious equipment under linen and those worn on top (civara and nivassa) the wooden bowl for alms (pinda-patra), the rod for the journey (kbikhari), a pair of wooden sandals, an ewer and a parasol; The orthodox rite or ordination is completed; but the intrusion of the Trantric doctrines has overburdened this ritual with supplementary ceremonies in honour of those divinities foreign to Buddhism; Bhairava, Mahakala, Vasundhara, etc. For four days running, the novice is made to play his role seriously; then after the lapse of this time he returns to his Guru and tells him, "My master, I cannot remain an ascetic, take from me the costume and the other appendages

of the monk; remove me from the practice of the Cravakas and teach me the practice of Great Vehicle" The Guru replies: "In truth in these days of degeneration it is difficult to practise the observance of the pravrajya, adopt then the one of the Great Vehicle, But if you renounce the pravrajya, you can not be relieved of the five prohibitions; no attempt on life; no theft; no adultery; no slander; no alcohol. "The trick is completed; the ascetic of yesterday returns to his home.

The Banaras are not all indistinctly qualified to the sacerdotal service; the functions of the priests are exclusively reserved to two of the groups of the community; the Gubharjus and the Bhiksus; and even then it is with different titles. The Gubharjus alone can claim to the dignity of "Bajracharya" lord of the thunderbolt. The Gubharju must to maintain himself in the rank where his birth has placed him, submit before becoming a father of family to an initiation which proves his capacities as a ritualist; he must be able to officiate at the daily ceremony of the home where the flame received to carry it to the gods an offering of melted butter and grains. If he neglects to procure or qualify himself in time for this diploma, he descends to the rank of Bhiksus and he drags in his fall all the descendants yet unborn. If he displays greater knowledge than that he learnt in the ritual of the homa, the Gubharju then takes the title of "Bajracharya" or more pompously "Bajracharya-Arhatbhiksu-Buddha" He is

the only priest authorized to celebrate the ceremonies of the religion be they private or public and to confer the regular sacraments of marriage, birth and death. While in sacerdotal garb, he wears on the head a mitre of gilded copper richly sculptured, adorned with a double row of shields on which are enchased the faces of the Buddhas and Taras, crowned with a transversal tun with an escutcheon above it; he holds in the hand the fund and the bell; from around his neck hangs to his waist a rosary of 108 beads with a tun and a bell run trough here and there and the end of the sotary there hangs again another vajra. He wears a costume of a dark red colour (kasaya) which consists of a tightfitting tunic (civara) and a skirt gathered up in folds at the waist (nivasa). He has a Levite to assist him; the Bhiksu. The Bhiksu wears the same costume but with different appendages; he wears one his head a coloured bonnet, of cloth with a filed button or a vajra as a set-off; the rosary that hangs from his neck has no ornaments, lastly he holds in his hand the religious man's rod (khukuri) and the wooden bowl for alms (pinda-patra).

Under the old "regime" the convents possessed considerable properties, kings and individuals vied with one another in matters of chrities and munificences. Several of the most ancient inscriptions commemorate donations in favour of the convents; I have already mentioned so above. Beginning from Vrsadeva, the Suryavamci, the Chronicle registers, nearly under every reign, new foundations. The Brahmanic propaganda and the conquest of

Nepal by Hindu dycasties carried a fatal blow to the prosperity of the Viharas. The struggle began, masked and underhanded. The reign of Siddhi Narasimha marks one of the most precise moments of the crisis (about 1620 to 1667). Siddhi Narasimha belonged to the dynasty of Harisimha which boasted of Brahmanic origin; he had vowed to the god Krisanha a glorified devotion, like this sensual and tender god can only inspire he practised incessant susterities fasted according to the severe methods of the candrayana which regulates the rations on the phases of the moon, spent the day in prayer, slept on a stone bed and disappeared one day in the garb of a fakeer. Patan his capital was the fortress of Buddhism with its fifteen great convents always ready to associate in organizations of resistance against the royal power. Without violence, without further weapons than legal measures, Sidi Narasimha undertook to subdue to the civil authority the religious communities. He began by destroying the semblance of anarchy which safeguarded their independece; he made them conjointly answerable to the crown, with regular representatives which answered for each group. The convents of Patan, Kirtipur and Chobahal, received a hierarchical classification which was partly based on the rights of ancientness (seniority), party on considerations at random as if to better-point out the royal indifference. The most important had each for representative their superior (nayaka), officially designated under the title of Tathagatha, the secondary houses had only a delegate to represent them, chosen among their superiors to the benefit of

age. A regulation regulated the cattle of the elections. Thus invested with an administrative function, the superiors lost their posts of the religion, which was transferred to other religious men. Up to then the ten most ancient men of each convent, received on days of festival the worship of the faithful, who venerated them as the incarnation of the ten cardinal perfections (paramitas), would wash their feet and offer them rice-milk. In order to husband the resources of the people, Siddhi Narasimha reduced the number of those privileged to two; only those doyens of the convents situated on the two ends of the roads which was followed by the charriot of Matsyendra Natha were entitled to this homage. Having become fathers of families, the priests were made to submit to the rules of purity prescribed by Hinduism, to celebrated for example, a homa (sacrific offered as a libation) in case of death in the family, under the penalty of legal uncleanness. A ceremony of purification was imposed on Buddhist Nevars who had travelled or resided in Tibet, the ceremony was entrusted to five superiors of the convent, but the retribution extorted was appropriated by the king. The convents where celibacy, was still observed, attempted to evade the regulations, summoned to hear the royal regulation, ten out of twenty five did not send delegates. Siddhi Narasimha designated from his office, administrators, to replace the mandatories which they refused to elect, and submitted the refractory houses to special regulations.

A century after Siddhi Narasimha,

the Gurkha conquest precipitated the "denouement". The deliberate evil disposition extended even to hostility, the confiscation of goods of the communities, the stubborn refusal to the least subsidy have reduced the viharas to decrepitude and misery.

**THE FESTIVALS;**- The religious pass away, the festivals remain. The Nepal of old still survives in the yatras. The "yatra" is strictly a procession a solemn pomp, with a display of dance and music and under the aspect of a sacrifice a liturgic feasting. The taste of the Nevars was found to agree with their superstition to multiply the feast-days; the royal power has partly created and partly adopted them and has sanctioned them as state institutions. Distinct regulations issued from the sovereign authority, divide the organization of the yatras into fixed groups and stipulates the portion of contribution which is incumbent on each one respectively. In return for these pecuniary charges, the ancient regime granted privileges, indemnities and donations. The Gurkha government has suppressed the subsidies, direct or indirect and by its confiscations it has drained one of the sources which fed the budget of the yatras. Nevertheless, the yatras exist now, by custom and by the law; Whoever attempts to evade one of the hereditary obligations is punished with a fine and degraded. Willy nilly some have to manufacture the charikot for the procession, others turn out masks, others again have to paint dance and officiate. It is a state service and it benefits thereby, because the solemnity

constitutes a magical rite, laboriously combined with its origin, in view of a precise aim. The procession of Matsyendra Natha, which passes to be the most ancient brings the spring-rain, without its efficacious action, the heavens would refuse water to culture. The yatra of Devi, at Nayokot has for aim to drive away the "aoulo" the malaria in the low lands, faraway from Nepal. King Shankaradeva of the Vaicya dynasty instituted an annual yatra in honour of Nava-Sagara-Bhagavati to appase this frightful goddess the form of the yatra is not immutable, but it must only be touched with care. In the XVIth century Amara Malla of Kathmandu re-established the dance of Harasiddhi, introduced at one time by Vikramaditya of Ujjayini, renewed the Vara deva, the Thakhuri and fallen afterwards in disuse; but one of the personages of the dance, the elephant, risked by its magical virtue causing a dearth of grains, in order to remedy this regrettable influence, Amara Malla adopted the dance of Maha Laksmi of Khokhna. The dance of Kankeshwari has disappeared by a measure of similar prudence; one day one of the dancers disguised as an animal was eaten up by Kankeshwari; to comply to the taste this shown by the goddess, it would have been necessary henceforth to regularly offer a human victim, it was thought wiser to suspend "sine die" the practice of the rite.

The idea of a human sacrifice had nothing about it to surprise or be repugnant to Nepal; those strange disciples of

the kindest of masters have never felt any repugnance in spilling blood, even human blood. As early as the epoch of the Suryavancis, before Amouvarman (VIIth century), the pious king Shivadeva institutes as a annual rite a human sacrifice in honour of Vatsala Devi on the date of the 12 chaitra badi. His great-nephew, Vishwadeva wishing to suppress this barbarous custom, the goddess came to claim in person her due. Gunakama deva the Thakuri, founder of Kathmandu, institutes the Sitikhasti, a battle with stones which ends up by a sacrifice to Kankeshwari of the prisoners retained in each camp. Towards 1750, the king of Kathmandu, Jaya-prakasa prohibits this strange rite, a supernatural voice heard in the night, induces the king to respect the tradition. In 1660, the king of Bhatgaon, Jagat-prakasa Malla in a struggle with his neighbours of Kathmandu and Patan overtakes by surprise and captures an enemy post, brings back twenty one prisoners and sacrifices them to the gods. They say that Prithivi Narayan, lord of Kathmandu, offered human sacrifices in the royal temple of Taleju (Tulasi); but the goddess appeared to him in a dream to show her disapproval. Father Marco della Tomba mentions as an assured fact that "the people of the mountains have no horror to sacrifice to their idols, human victims and particularly the war prisoners, when in a pressing need they ask the help of their gods, thus it is, when preparing their cannons for war they colour them with the blood of a little girl killed on the cannons themselves. "Hamilton in the beginning of the XIXth century, mentions

that the Ghurkha king offers every twelve years, a solemn sacrifice where are slayed among other victims, two men of a rank worthy to carry the sacred string. "They are maddrunk, they are carried to the sanctuary, their necks are sliced and the spray of blood is directed on the idols, then with their skulls, cups are made to be used in these horrible rites."

Man is only a victim of exception, the ordinary victims are the buffalo, the ram, the cock and the duck. In India, converted to the respect of life (ahimsa) by the heretics, Buddhists and Jainas, a chapel stained with blood is a rare sight, which is shown to the curiosity of tourists, in Nepal the temple is a kind of shambles. Horns, bulls heads hung on the walls, blood stains on the soil and on the idols, small of the slanter-house which one, breathes are enough to indicate the sanguinary prodigality of the faithful. The sacrifice of the buffalo in particular is an unforgettable nightmare; the vigorous animal is firmly bound by the four feet, the head thrown back to clear and stretch the neck, in this priest deals two symmetrical incisions on the right and left of the neck, without haste or emotion he presses his fingers in the gaping wounds, widens and searches in the flesh for the jugular veins, he separates them from the enveloping tissues by dexterous jerks and brings them out slowly to the edge of the wound, in taking care not to cut them the half-choked animal, contracts and exerts itself to no purpose, around it the assistants discuss in a peaceful way the

manoeuvres of the priest. At last the critical moment has come; an incision dealt simultaneously in the two veins allows the escape of a flood of blood which spurts out towards the idol. Is it covered with blood, and the rice deposited as an offering in front of it? The divinity has approved the homage. Otherwise when the awkwardness of the operators has wrongly calculated the distances, the angles, the openings of the incisions, every thing has to be re-done. The sacrifice consumed the head is detached, placed before the divinity and the flesh roughly cut up, shared between the priest and sacrificer, serves to plentiful agapes (love-feasts).

The method of the Gurkha is less barbarous and quicker, the Khukhuri, handled with dexterity slices with one stroke alone, rarely with two the powerful neck of the beast. On certain occasions the sacrifice becomes an orgy of blood; fifty years ago to the testimony of Jang Bahadur the total number of buffaloes slayed rose to nine thousand for the ten days of the Durgapuja.

Besides the sacrifices, the drive of the chariot (rathayatra) is a regular feature of the programme of the feasts. The chariot intended to carry the god and his associate or his human representatives in an massive construction in wood. A combination of strong beams, of between thirty and forty feet long, is set like a platform on wheels made of thick and

broad wood. The platform supports a scaffolding of between ten and fifteen metres. The whole has a fair resemblance to our chariots during Mid-Lent. The structure is dragged by the hands without any team of animals; on the long course it goes over, it must resist the most severe chocks, the alluvial soil of the valley is furrowed with streams and ditches which are not crossed over by any bridge, and in the ascent as well as in the descent, the steep banks give away or sink under the weight of the chariot. The least hitch threatens to delay the procession by one day, because the the chariot and the divinity must necessarily pass a night at fixed stages; should the sun sink in the West without the preposterous halt having been reached, the morrows course will not go beyond the stage that was missed, however close it might be. The crowd watches with anxiety the incidents of the trip, ready to interpret them as omens. After two and a half centuries, one still relates the adventures of the procession of the chariot in the year 1654, in the reign of the mysterious Siddhi Narasimha, at Patan, Having commenced moving under unfortunate suspices, the chariot of Matsyendra Natha advanced on the first day as far as the flight of an arrow, on the morrow, the journey was as slow. On the eight, a sudden jerk (or jolt) broke the front portion. Five weeks later, the chariot still persude the stages of its arduous itinerary, when the right wheel was engulfed in the clay; a day later, the other wheel broke. A whole day was spent in repairing it, the journey was

hardly resumed, when the two wheels cracked at the same time, a new delay was caused. The chariot was repaired and crossed the stream of Nikku, the right wheel remains fixed in the sand; then the pole (of the chariot) broke. It was sorrowfully decided to remove the divine image from the chariot and to carry it on a stretcher back to its lodgings. The anxiety increased when the face of one of the Ganeshas was noticed to be perspiring. A special sacrifice was then offered with the view of keeping away the threatening dangers.

The yatra which commemorates an episode of the religious or legendary history and which professes to evoke the same in the mind of the faithful, would carry a dwarf of dramatic art whom the beliefs of Tantrism have vided. The Tantras, wherein Buddhism and Shivaism communicate, prescribe ceremonies brutally realistic where the faithful assembled worship one of the divine couples under the feature of a small boy and small girl, consecrated by preliminary operations. The sexual mysticism which presides over these doubtful rites loves to express itself in the disturbing visions of the delicat-flash. Under this inspiration, the yatras have integrated in Bengal a renewal of the Indian theatre. In Nepal also, they seem to have transformed themselves at an early period into living pictures (tableaux vivants) "The Lakhya-yatra instituted by Gunakama deva the Thakuri to commemorate the victory of Buddha

over the tempter Mara, represented the gods in adoration before Shakyamuni triumphant. Even to-day on the scaffolding of the chariot of the Magha Purnima, truculent personages figure (or represent) the adventures of the demon Hiranya Kashipu and of his son Prahalada the enemy the other the devotee of Vishnu. From an early date also, the Kumaris the Virgins who incarnated the energies (Shakti) of Tantrism have been shown by little girls, carefully chosen for this glorious role. To watch them sitting on their thrones hierarchy and grave with fixed looks features faked laden with jewels and and sumptuous garbs, the nostrils swollen with superhuman pride, beautiful as idols children by their frail grace women by their fascinating charm one does not feel surprised that a whole nation worships them, The expense is not without profit. The Kumari who figures in the procession of the Indra-yatra is lodged several years in a special house and receives an important donation. But what a test also she has to undergo. In a dimly lighted hall the heads of bulls tinged with blood are at the close of the Dacakra. It is there that the little competitors are introduced and closed in, all aged between six and seven years and recruited in a small group of Banras families. From outside their behaviour is keenly watched. The least expression of fear eliminates the child; the true Kumari, who rides across a tiger and visits cemeteries has no fear of blood or of the Charnel-house. The little girl who holds good, really deserves the homage of the king as the goddess in

person and to be escorted by the sabre of the State. When the occasion arises the Kumari makes use of her figurants to manifest her wishes; when Prithivi Narayan young men then lived as a guest at the court of Bhatgaon with king Ranajit Malla, the two princes sat side by side to watch the procession of the Vijaya-dashami, go past The Kumari who had to give a flower to the king handed it over instead to Prithivi Narayan, the Bhairava who assisted her did likewise. The divine approbation designated the Gurkhas for the Empire.

The dances and the procession of masks complete ordinarily the march-past; the odd and rather frightful whim of the disguiser recalls very vividly the diabolical dances of the lamaical chamanism and Buddhism. The actors, head dressed with heads of tigers, bears, lions with profuse manes, stamp their feet, jump and shout. Permanent platforms built of masonry and bricks on the great squares serve as stages to these entertainments. A witness who knew these scenes in the days of their splendour, under the last of the Mallas, has left a detailed description of them.<sup>10</sup> "The people of the country have the habit, during their feasts, of representing a story drawn from their sacred books or a satirical comedy in which they turn to ridicule the certain ways of a particular person. These scenes are represented on one of the public squares, to this effect they have erected on them square platforms of about twenty



each side and about three feet high. The spectators sit down on mats spread on the bare ground of the squares or roads. They have no theatre or getting up (of a dramatic piece); but the piece has to take place near a river, they spread a cloth on which is painted a river on the scene (or stage) on which the actors are playing, if it takes place in the interior of a (barcareccia), some of the actors then hold in their hands four or six branches of some tree or other; it takes place in a temple the actors place an idol in the middle, and so forth for the change of scene. The actors of these comedies have very little recitative work but on the contrary a great deal of motion, to such an extent, that the principal actor does not recite eight or ten phrases in various scenes in a comedy lasting two or three hours but the choruses do all the singing like in the Greek comedies the Nepalese have at least two choruses in each piece, and the third chorus is formed by the entire choir, that is to say by the two choruses together. The actor expresses for example in two or three verses that he recites the extreme pain (or sorrow) which he is suffering; the choruses, sing alternately, the sorrowful tune of the bitterness of grief, the various emotion which stand out by such a grief in the heart of the being, like hope, despair, fear etc., and thus with all other passions; and while the chorus sings the actor, by the help of his face, feet and hands also by constant dancing harmonizes his gestures to the meaning of the works which are sung. The orchestra of

these comedies consists of a few small drums, trumpets and of an instrument consisting of two small metal vases, which are knocked one against the other, according to the note they give out, and in each comedy these are at least eight pairs of these instruments which when played expertly combine in a harmonious chime (or jingle) four trumpets and three drums complete the orchestra. The drum directs the symphony and it is beaten with the hands.

So many divinities and so many sanctuaries only encumber the life of the faithful. The Nepalese calendar seems to consist of a series of general holidays. Pilgrimages, processions, abstinences, alternate with a monotonous regularity, trimmed with forced rests, which are imposed by the ceremonies of the domestic life and the accidental decrees prescribed by the astrologers. Astrology, which plays so considerable a part in the Hindu life is sovereign mistress in Nepal; the Chinese visitors of the VIIth century were already struck with it. The paths of planets the eclipses the conjunctions regulate the home life as well as royal politics. The astrologer who works out the horoscope of those newly-born, calculates the date propitious to marriages, treaties in declaring war interprets the signs and the prodigies and denounces the nefarious hours which delay the departure, interrupt the traffic, suspend enterprises. I shall not attempt to analyse here day

by day the religious calendar, true to the scheme that I have worked out, I shall confine myself to mentioning the characteristics festivals of Nepal. In the Gurkha calendar,<sup>11</sup> the year—whether it be reckoned in the Shakya era (78 A. C.) or in the Samvat era (57 B. C.) commences on the first of Vaisakha (April) badi, fifteen days later than in India where the 1st of Chaitra sudi is the New Year's day. The year of the Nevar computation (880 A.C.) began in Kartika. The procession of Matsyendra Natha (Matsyendra Natha Yatra or Bunga yatra) solemnly opens religious year. It commemorates the introduction of the new god under Narendra deva, the Thakhuri. The Nevars of the two avowals celebrate the procession with equal zest; the Gurkhas without acknowledging it as a religious festival attend to it nevertheless as they would a national festival. Matsyendra Natha is too big a personage that the people should risk provoking his rancours. A company under the orders of a sardar, forms an escort to the god during the whole of his trip, and also curb the suspicious enthusiasm of the crowd. The first day of Vaisakha badi, the Nikhus of Patan go and remove from the temple, red idol three feet high, consecrated by the veneration of centuries and carry it to the south of the town, under the very tree where Narendra deva and his associates stopped on their way back from mount Kapotala; the stone terrace sheltered under the tree is credited with dating back to Narendra deva.

The Nikhus deposit the statue there; they undress it, wash it (excepting the

head which they are not allowed to touch), it is the bath of Matsyendra (snana). The king's sabre, the equivalent of the sceptre in Nepal, is then presented to divinity. After this Matsyendra is brought back to his temple; he is painted, he is clothed and on the 6th he is exposed to the sun. The Nikhus who are Sivaites henceforth hand over the affairs to the Banras. The 12 and the 13, the Banras celebrate the ten ceremonies (dasha-karma) which, beginning from the conception, introduce as a child to be yet born in the regular sections of the society. The 1st of vaisakha sudi, the procession of the chariot begins. Previous to this two chariots have been manufactured; one the largest in the Western borough of Patan near the chaitya of Ashoka; the other at Patan itself in the court-yard of Matsyendra Nath's temple. The greater chariot carries on a vast wooden platform, a square chapel adorned with gildings, around it, a passage allows one to move about, the roof of the chapel supports a pyramid of boughs poles and interlaced strings with yards of ribbons, on the summit at a height of between twenty and twenty five metres is hoisted a gilded image (or statue) of Vajrasatamva which is again crowned with bouquet of leaves. The four wheels of the chariot have the eyes of Bhairava as ornament these eyes are placed on the axle-tree a long pole thin and bent in the fore part carries at its extremity a head of Bhairava. The other chariot is only a reduction of the first one but the doll of twentyfive centuries which it carries is the authentic image of the god. A crowd of faithful constantly renewed

yoke themselves to the chariots and drag them. The course to be travelled over is divided exclusive of accidental delays, in three very short stages, between half a kilometre and one kilometre each one has its regular programme of sacrifice and offerings. The most important stage is last one from the Suvarna-dhara (Golden fountain) to the tree of Narendra. The whole Nevar population of Patan takes part in the festival and the king accompanied by the Prime Minister and the other eminent men all mounted on elephants of ceremonies come and assist in person to the march-past (or go-past). The chariots trace a curve on the right of the tree (pradaksina), then they remain stationary there for two nights then they go to a short distance to wait, ten to twenty days a propitious date for the Gudri-Yatra. When the astrologers have recognized the favourable day the procession starts moving again and the chariots are dragged on the manoeuvring fields, to the south-west of the town; they remain there for three nights, Lastly the grand day arrives, saluted (hailed) by a whole nation eager to assist to the disrobing of the god. The Banras in full dress, garbed with a red robe, the head freshly shaven prop up the small chariot against the larger one, they bring out the sacred image from its niche, and they remove piece-meal its spangled fineries. But it is the chemise (or shirt) that is looked forward to, that is keenly awaited; it appears the priests exhibit it solemnly to the crowd which prostrates itself and worship it. Matsyendra can from this moment depart from Patan,

he carries away nothing that would be prejudicial to his faithful his poverty suffices to his happiness. The small statue once undressed is transferred under a shower of flowers and offerings into a kind of holy arch which the Banras saddle on their shoulders; a cortege of flowers and illuminations accompanies it to Bungamati, five kilometres to the south of Patan;<sup>12</sup> there is the ancient Amarapara which the miraculous barking of a dog designated as the site of the bitch of Matsyendra Natha.

Matsyendra Natha must reside thither, six months in his temple in the centre of the village; when the year is half spent, he will go back to Patan. But once every twelve year, Matsyendra is not content with the tabernacle to travel the route from Bungamati to Patan and from Patan to Bungamati; it is then necessary to construct at Bungamati herself, a solid chariot which will bring the god and take him back across a country furrowed with capricious streams deeply dug by the waters and without roads.

The procession of Matsyendra Natha is believed to infallibly bring with it, rain the population of Nepal lives almost solely on cultivation, awaits from the efficacious intervention of the gods the the beneficial showers, essential to the gohya (rice of the highlands) and the maize. Beaming spring then spreads out in all its gracious splendour; the orange tree,

lemon-tree (or citron-tree), the lilac, the rose—tree, full blown thickets perfume the air with their fragrance.

Whilst Matsyendra Natha is honoured at Patan the town of Bhatgaon celebrates with less pomp the procession of Bhairava, her patron. It is Jayay-jyotir Malla who is credited with having introduced in the XVIth century, the custom of taking out for a drive, the chariot of Adi-Bhairava, on the day of the Mesasamkranti (entry of the sun into Aries). Actually the Yatra is celebrated on the 1st day of the vaisakha badi; it lasts two days. Two chariots which carry one of them Bhairava and the other Bhairavi, are dragged through the town; in front of the temple of Bhairava, a mast is erected (linga) and thither the chariots are taken to the people proceed with the worship then the sacrifices and the feast completed the mast is knocked down and the chariots are removed to their destination. In the same period also, Devi is honoured with two great festivals; one of them purely local, at Kathmandu, it is the 'Neta-Devi-Yatra'; the other outside Nepal proper at Nayokot but common to the whole of Nepal; the "Devi-Yatra". The procession which proceeds from Nayakot of Devi-ghat has more faithfully preserved than the others its original character of fierceness and sorcery. The centre of the rites of the Yatras is an ordinary heap of unhewn stones at the junction of the Tricula-Ganga and the Suryavati (vulg. Tadi), both deriving their sources from the Gosainthan. The

current, when the snows melt, is so impetuous that it carries away all the constructions erected on the banks; therefore in spite of the holiness of the site, in spite of the vows and zeal of numerous kings, it has been found necessary to do away with a temple. The divine idol remains at Nayokot the whole year round sheltered in a sanctuary, at the beginning of the month of vaisakha, it is solemnly carried to the heap of stones at Devi-Ghat; the place is then surrounded with a wooden fence and the rites begin. The Banras carry out the ceremonies; they recite the formulæ, they chant the hymns, adorn the statue; but the operations of the sacrifice do not devolve upon them. Professional butchers are essential (kasains) to slaughter the numberless buffaloes which for five days running make bloody this barbarous chapel. The peasant class also plays its role, two jyapus (cultivators) disguised one as Bhairava, the other as a Bhairavi, receive the unanimous homage of the assiduous Ghurkhas and Nevars and drink the warm blood itself which trickles down the quivering cups. One can see them, led by their devoted gluttony, or by their exuberance filling themselves expanding swelling finally bursting into hiccoughs and rejecting a reddish vomiting which the faithful fight over with avidity as the remains of the meals of the gods. After five days of killing an orgy, the statue returns to its sanctuary at Nayokot and the spirit of the goddess is unchained unrelenting against the infidels who have refused her offerings. They will succumb to the "aoul" the fatal fever which starts-

haunting the low and sunken grounds from the very hour when the rites of Devi-Ghat are completed.

The 'Neta Devi-Yatra' of Kathmandu, repeats but on a smaller scale the same scenes of horror and disgust. It is celebrated at night, in front of the temple of Neta-Devi, on the 14th of Vaisaka sudi. The jyapus alone carry out the functions of priests and sacrificers; twelve among them disguised as divinities are entrusted with drinking the blood. Every twelve years the festival is celebrated by exception during the day.

Lastly the town of Sankho honours on the 3rd of Vaisakha badi, another form of Devi, common to the Buddhists, and the Sivaites, Vajrayogini, who has her temple on mount Manichur. The statue of the goddess is taken out in procession in a tabernacle (khat).

The great festival in the month of Jyaistha (May-June), the Sithi-Yatra "The festival of the stone-throwing" is in course of disappearing. It dates back like so many institutions, to Guna Kama deva the Thakuri. Skanda, the son of Shiva appeared to him one night and asked him to gather all the boys of Kathmandu, the new capital near a spot consecrated to Kali Kankeshwari, on the banks of the Bisnumati, between the town of Swayambunath; he would thus avoid all threats of revolt

and further, he would make sure of the defeat of his enemies. The young god added that his august parents had taught him since childhood to throw stones during the six first days of Jyaistha. Guna Kama understood the advice. He regularly summoned his subjects on the 6th of Jyaistha sudi, on the banks of the river, at the prescribed spot. The people would divide in two camps and would fight with stones the prisoners of the two sides were offered in sacrifice. They were only allowed to redeem themselves at a late period. Lastly, half a century ago the English Resident M. Colvin who assisted to this spectacle was struck and wounded with a stone; Jang Bahadur grasped the opportunity to abolish what remained of the feast. The little children only continued to bombard themselves with pebbles on the day of the Sithi-Yatra.

In Shrawana (July-August) when the torrential rains drive the snakes out of their holes and make them more than ever dreadful, Nepal, like India celebrates the festival of the snakes (Nagapanchami) on the 5th badi. The local exegesis seems to connect this feast to the memory of a great struggle between Garuda and the Nagas; the statue of Garuda at Changu-Narayan still perspires regularly on the anniversary of so severe a struggle. The priests wipe off this perspiration with a handkerchief which is sent to the king. A thread of this cloth, soaked in water, suffices to change it into an infallible remedy against the bites of reptiles. The rite properly (strictly).

speaking is celebrated on a confluent; it is a Nevar who officiates. After a morning ablution surrounded with ceremonies he deposits on a plate of rice some vermilion, milk, water flour of rice soaked in water, flowers, melted butter (ghee), spice, sandal wood incense kindles the incense and chants a benediction to the Naga-rajās to request them to bless the crops.

The 14th badi, the Nevār children take out for a ride through the streets, a good natured looking man in straw, baptized Ghanta Karna, in memory of a Raczeshas who was expelled from Nepal, after having beaten the dummy each one in turn, they burn it in the evening.

The month of Bhādrapada (August-September) opens with the feast of the Cows (Gai-Jatras). The 1st badi, a procession of masks wearing all a cow's head with wreaths of grass around it, go past in the streets, singing and dancing; each Nevar family who has suffered a death in the course of the year is supposed to represent itself by a mask; behind these odd looking figurants is dragged an uncouth looking picture (or image) of a cow and a kumari closes the procession. On the following day the same procession begins again, but the tiger replaces the cow; it is the "Vijāghra-Yatra".

From the 6th Bhādrapada badi to the 10th Sudi, the Buddhists of Patan

visit successively all the monasteries of the town and bring their varied offerings to all the chapels. Every day, there forms a procession of banras carrying small trees made of wax with flowers of white paper; on the occasion of these visits the viharas exhibit their paintings, images of gods, of saints of Buddhas of Bodhisattvas religious or legendary scenes and also curiosities held to be sacred; such as the frying-pan where Vikramajit had himself cooked; such as again the rice grains "pre-historical" preserved at the Pinta-vihara and which are as large as nutmegs.

On the 8th badi the Hindus celebrate the birth of Krishna (krishna-janmastami). It is one of the two feasts (with the Dasain) where the game is officially authorized; and even this permission is very limited. The amateur of games can only indulge in their passions on a determined spot at the ghat of the Bagmati, in front of Thapathali, near the bridge which connects Kathmandu and Patan.

The procession of the Banras (Banra-Yatra) is not strictly speaking a religious feast since it does not entail special ceremonies in honour of a divinity, but it is a pious institution which must be repeated at least twice a year, in Shrawana, on the 8th badi and in Bhādrapada, on the 13th badi, but it can be renewed at all times if funds permit to meet expenses. The feast consists essentially in a distribution of money and food to the Banras and recalls the time when the residents

of the Viharas, in real Bhikhsus would live from alms. If it is a private individual who offers the Yatra, he summons by individual invitations the Banras of the town or even of the whole valley to a "Samyaksam-bhojana" (food for the body) the expense may be very heavy, because the number of assistants often number about ten thousand. Besides, the feast entails amusements, illuminations; the king must assist to it or have himself represented and this is again an honour which costs, because a silver throne must be offered him, a parasol and set of kitchen utensils. Facing the house of the donor is erected a wooden platform with an enclosure open on the road, the whole is adorned with tapestry and profusely illuminated. The mitre of Amitabha is brought from Swayambunath which the Vajracharyas come and honour. Then the procession begins; previously to this a covered path is prepared all along the houses which the cortege of the Banras has to follow, this covered path is separated from the pavement by a wooden fence and which becomes a foot bridge at each crossing of roads. The women of the Buddhists who wish to associate themselves to the feast come beforehand in full-dress, with flowers pinned to their hair, and take up their position on the road through which the procession passes, with baskets filled with victuals, each Banra of the procession receives on his passage, fruits, grains or money. The baskets when once empty it devolves on the donor to re-fill them again. Here and there, groups aged men or young men respectfully pour water on the feet of the Banras.

The walls are adorned with paintings, a committee of Banras first of all inspects the decency of the arrangements. At night the illuminations light up the whole path. Lastly on the following day the mitre escorted by choirs of young girls, solemnly returns to Swayambunath.

The month of Bhadrapada ends up in the orgies of the 'Indra-Jatra'. It is at Kathmandu that it is most brilliantly held. Indra is the patron of the town and the Gurkhas love to recall the memories which feast awaken. It is again Guna Kama the founder of Kathmandu who is recognized as the creator of the Indra-Jatra. The feast lasts eight days from the 11th Bhadrapada sudi to the 4th Ashwina badi. The day spent in visiting temples and in feasting; in the evening the houses are illuminated; the dancers of the caste gather before the palace disguised as women demons animals and dance to a late hour; the crowd flock together to assist to this spectacle mixed with comedies and buffooneries. The dancers receive from the Government an indemnity rather derisory. All over the town the images of Indra are seen, with outstretched arms, marked on the forehead, hands and feet with religious signs (tilakas); the Capuchins of the XVIIIth century thought they could recognize in them a disguise (naturally Manichean) of Christ on the cross. These images erected on trestles or under provisional shelters are consecrated to the memory of defunct ancestors and they are invoked on this title; strictly speaking the procession starts from the temple of Indra, on the

Indra-Than, at western extremity of the valley and it proceeds to the temple of Bala-Kumari, in the town of Thimi (between Kathmandu and Bhatgaon) visiting a great number of sanctuaries on its journey.

Another procession attached to the feast of Indra in the XVIIIth century has eventually become one with it. Towards 1750, a young girl of a Banra family declared in a fit of possession that she was kumari, in person. King Jaya Prakasha Malla who was informed would not be convinced; he banished the child and its family for imposture. On the evening of the condemnation, the queen is in the throes of the same fit as the child, she begins shouting that the spirit of kumari is possessing her. Jaya Prakasha, terrified hastens to recall the little exile, solicits her forgiveness. In order to wash his guilt he instituted a procession; a chariot in the shape of a pagoda was constructed with three stories and in the lower niche, the kumari would receive the homage of her worshippers, near her, on the platform of the chariot, priests and a general who held the royal sabre would stand. The king in person sitting on his throne would wait for her at the gate of the palace to wish her and to offer her his offering. The ceremony was renewed the following years. In 1768, the day on which the procession was to go past in front of the palace (the fourteenth day sudi, which is the Ananta-chaturdaci) the king of the Gurkhas Prithivi

Narayan, took advantage of the confusion to penetrate into the town by night, helped by the betrayal of the Brahmans, the people and the soldiers all dulled by drunkenness did not even attempt to resist. Jaya Prakasha had hardly time to escape and fly towards Bhatgaon.

Prithivi Narayan sat on the throne erected at the entrance of the Durbar, wished the Kumari, received her homage (prasada) and gave orders for the feast to resume. Even to-day on the evening of the Ananta-chaturdaci a great mast is erected on the square of the Durbar on which (mast) is suspended an oilflame decorated with religious emblems; an artillery salute pays respect to the flag, which is hoisted and commemorates the precise hour of the Ghurkhas occupation of Kathmandu.

The "Dasain" is not less popular in Nepal than it is in Bengal, where it carries the name of Durga Puja; it is also called "Dasharha" the Ten-days or Navaratri, the Nine Nights. It lasts, in fact, from the 1st to the 10th Aswhina (September-October), sudi. It takes place at the time when they begin to reap the transplanted rice in Nepal and thus takes the character of an agrarian feast. On the first day the Brahmans sow barley on a clean pot and water it with consecrated water; on the tenth day uproot the young shoot and put them together in bouquets which the faithful pay for in various



gifts. It is then only that they crop all over the valley. The 'Dasain' however celebrates in principle a warlike exploit of the victory of Durga over the formidable foe, the demon Mahaisa (Asura). So then it is at the same time a military feast; on the seventh day the king escorted by the prime minister and high officials, assist to a grand parade of the garrison on the Tundikhel, the cannonade and volley of musketry, alternate uninterruptedly. The 9th, each regiment offers sacrifices to its flag adorned on the occasion with flowers and banderoles (streamers); Bulls with their horns daubed and with garlands around their necks, are brought before the flag and decapitated with a stroke of the Khukuri. The children of the troop in order to exercise themselves attempt the same thing on he-goats. Each officer is vain enough to offer at least one bull, without prejudice to the victims he sacrifices in his home. In the barracks of kot in the neighbourhood of the palace the king and the generals usually gather to relish the carnage, to the sound of shots and music; one after another, one hundred to one hundred and fifty bulls are slayed, without time being allowed for the removal of the corpses. The "Dasain" is further the beginning of the administrative and domestic year. The yearly distribution of employments is definitely stopped on the first day of their gratifications. At the end of the tenth holiday, the king gives a great reception (darbar) and the officials maintained in their employments or the new ones proceed to pay their homages together with their offerings to

their respective chiefs. The tribunals are empty during the whole of the Dasain; and the prisoners are transferred outside the premises.

The "Swayambhu-mela" is exclusively a Buddhistic festival which celebrates at the full Moon of Ashwina; it marks the close of the rainy season; the matings which shelter the bell turrets of the chaityas are removed and parasols erected on the ancient monuments of Ashoka in Patan.

The Diwali, (Dipawali) is an official festival and at the same time a period of popular rejoicings. It lasts five days in the month of Kartika (October-November) sudi. It recalls the victory of Vishnu on the demon Naraka and his victorious entry in the conquered town. The houses are adorned with flags and beautifully illuminated; the spouse of Vishnu Laksmi goddess of fortune, precedes over his rejoicings. The first day garlands of flowers are hung round the necks of dogs and a worship is given them. The pariahs of Nepal by a humiliating relaxation benefit by this exceptional good-will and spend this day without suffering affronts. On the second day (vrisabha-puja), it is the turn of the bulls and the cows which receive the same honour. On the third day, each one makes an inventory of his cash-account and worships Laksmi. On the fourth day each chief of house-

hold worships as divinities the persons of his family and house and offers them a feast. On the fifth day is the 'feast of brothers' (bhai-puja), the sister pays a visit to the brother, places a sign of respect (tika) on his forehead, a garland round his neck, washes his feet and offers him kindnesses; in return she receives a small present. But it is sport especially which makes the Diwali popular in Nepal; the Government fixes a variable period, usually of one week, during which time sport ceases to be a prohibition; every one is free to play, whenever and wherever he chooses, in his own house as well as in the road. The game played without security is disallowed; the players are compelled to deposit their share the game is played. This precaution has been deemed necessary to impose a restraint to the allurings of an irresistible passion; it is rumoured on this subject strange stories such for instance that of the player who from loss ends up cutting off his left hand enveloping it in a cloth summoning his adversary to hold the stake or return the money won.

During the whole of the duration of the month of Kartika, the most zealous devotees take up their abode in the temple of Pashupati and take only, so they say, for nourishment, the water poured in lustration over the linga. On the evening of the full moon at the close of the month the temple is illuminated; a great feast is held within its premises and on the morrow a joyous procession brings away to their homes, the heroines of this long abstinence.

On the 4th of the month of Magha (January-February) badi, the day is consecrated to Ganesha; the day of abstinence is naturally followed by a night of feasting.

The 5th sudi bears the name of Basanta-panchami, in memory of the time it showed the beginning of spring; it is more commonly called the Sri-panchami, in spite of the fact that the day is consecrated to Saraswati. On the morrow the people gather on a plank with the books, copy-books, inkstands and kalams of the house they are sprinkled over with flowers all white and the people address a worship to Saraswati (puja). The inkstand is not used the whole day, in cases of urgent necessity the people write with chalk or charcoal.

The month of Magha closes up with a great procession in honour of the brave bathers who continued in spite of the cold to dip in the morning holy waters of the Bagmati. A procession goes and takes them from the ghat, they are carried on stretchers to the temples with lamps on their chests, arms and knees, their eyes covers with spectacles to protect them from the sparks other bathers follow who carry on their heads earthen pots filled with water and perforated with tiny punctures, the spectators gather the drops that ooze out and wet their foreheads with them.

The Shiva-Ratri which is celebrated on the night of the new Moon of Falguna (February-March) is considered by the followers of Shiva as the most impor-

tant of all the feasts of Shiva. The devotees of Shiva visit the most reputed lingas on this occasion; the notoriety of Pashupati, draws in Nepal far-distant worshippers, some of them even come from the most southern regions of India, the admittance into the country by the route of Shiva-garhi is then allowed without formalities or duties. The road is covered with exalted yogis, quackish fakeers and naive devotees attached to their sides the eternal procession of cheats and dupes. The Nevars, for their part, prepare themselves for the feast by a circular visit around the valley, in sixty four stages; the 'catuh-sasti yatra'. During the whole day of the Shiva-ratri, Pashupati is surrounded with a swarming multitude, keen on worshipping the four-faced linga, on spreading on it the refreshing leaves of the bilva to calm the the painful erection of the generating god and on bathing in the Bagmati. The king himself does not fail to visit the place. In the afternoon, surrounded by the high 'personnel' of the state, he holds a review of the manoeuvring grounds of Kathmandu.

The 'holi' (full moon of Falguna) is the real feast of spring the Brahmans by a whimsical invention, have connected it with the worship of Krishna but the people are content in celebrating the carnival; each one pretends to joyfully bury the dying year, the symbolic corpse of which hangs on the gate of the palace; at evening

time the many-coloured tatters which represented by gone days are thrown to the ground and heaped up in a large brazier (furnace). Even the confetti are not wanting to the festival; each one lays hold of a sack (or bag) of red powder, and it is a mettle of him who can bombard best the passer by either by handfulls of the stuff or by means of a long tube.

The religious year which opens with the yatra of the small 'Matsyendra Natha' of Patan closes with the yatra of the 'small', very much different to the larger one, it is not red but white; it is not from of Padmapani, but of Somantabhadra. Its origin dates back to the period of Yakche Malla (towards the middle of the XVth century). Potters who were in search of clay brought to light a statue which dated from the reign of Guna Kama deva and which was none other than Sanu Matsyendra Nath. The king had repaired and erected a temple to it. In the XVIIth century, Pratapa Malla established in his honour a 'rathayatra' which has lasted. It lasts excluding incidents for four days, from the 8th to the 11th Chaitra, Sudi. The Nevars alone celebrate it; but the 9th is day of universal, because the Gurkhas celebrate on that date the Hindu festival in honour of Rama (Rama-navami).

(Contd.)

## FOOT NOTES

1. This is at least the figure procured from several recensions. Others give fifteen or even twenty-five, key, Chawannes, Bull Ec. Franc. Extr. Or., 1903-420 sqq.

2. See the photograph, 1, 173

3. The Tibetans, who frequent particularly the chaitya of Buddhanath and who consider it as their national temple in Nepal, relate with another tale, the origin of the monument. A tear of pity came out from the eye of Avolokitecvara, and gave birth in heaven to a divine virgin. But the young girl allowed herself to be tempted by stealing the flowers in paradise; punished with forfeiture, she went and took birth on earth, in Nepal, in a family of swineherds. Having grown big, she was married; she began to rear geese, became rich at this trade and decided to consecrate her fortune in building

a chaitya. She went to interview the king and asked him as much land as a skin (hide) would cover (Taurino-quantum posset circumdare tergo, "Eneide", I, 368). The king agreed. She then took a hide, sliced it in thin strips and made use of them to encircle a considerable surface. The anxious ministers pressed on the king to intervene; but respectful of his given word, he allowed things to proceed. The foundress died before the completion of her work; but her sons were able to terminate the construction; they deposited in the interior of the stupa a bushel of relics of Buddha kacyapa. As a recompense, they were born later in Tibet, one of them was Thon-mi Sambhota, who composed the Tibetan alphabet another was Cantaraksita, the first abbot of Tibet. The elephant who had carried the materials, furious that no reward had been requested for him was determined on revenging himself; he became king Gnan darma, the fanatical adversary of Buddhism. But the last of

- the three sons obtained on the other hand the pleasure of becoming the murderer of Glan darma (Waddell, *Proceed, As. Soc. Bengal*, 1892, p. 186-189). All this account is based on a series of popular etymologies. Another Tibetan legend current in Nepal considers king Mana deva as the incarnation of a Tibetan Lama named Khasa; hence the origin of the name Khasachaitya often applied to the temple of Buddhath.
4. See the photograph 1, 231.
  5. See the photograph 1, 373.
  6. See buhler, "Wien Zeits Kunde des Morg", X, 138 sqq. Edifices of a similar style are also represented on the ancient coins of the Moumbaras, but they have only one roof. However, Mr. Vincient Smith has been in the hands of M. Rodgers a bronze coin of the Udumbaras which showed a two storied construction (*J. As. Soc. Beng.*, 1897, p. 9).
  7. See the photographs, 1, 195 and 287. It is particularly interesting to compare these photographs with the temple of Mahabodhi, unfortunately altered by a mass of so called restorations. Key, Cunnigham, "Mahabodhi", London 1892, specially the plate XVI.
  8. Father Ginsepe had already been struck by it: "I think that if the Europeans ever went to Nepal they could take example on these little temples, principally on two that are in the great court of Lalit Patan, facing the king's palace" *Rech Asiat*, II 352.
  9. Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern architecture*, London, 1876, p. 305.
  9. On this "diabolical operation" still in usage among the modern lamas, See Huc, "Souvenirs of a voyage in Tartary, Tibet and China". Paris, 1850, I, p. 30759.
  10. "Relazione" of Father Cassien in the "Rivista Geographica Italiana", 1901, p. 641. The description which is given by Father Cassien does not only interest Nepal and her religious feasts, it mentions or rather brings a precious document to the history of the Indian theatre, it particularly illustrates the still doubtful question of the scenery.
  11. Without entering in the complications of the Hindu calendar, it is essential to point out here, that the year in it, is divided into twelve months and each month into two fortnights corresponding respectively to the waxing phase of the Moon, "badi", from the full moon to the new moon. The month begins, according to the diversity or

the local usages either at the full moon or at the new moon in Nepal; it actually begins at the full moon.

12. It is undoubtedly the temple of Bungamati which is described in this passage of the "Notice" of father Ginseppe. "One finds to the west of Lalit Patan at a distance of three miles, a castle named "Banga" which confines a magnificent temple. No missionary has ever entered this castle. Those who are entrusted to look after it have such a scrupulous veneration for the temple that it is forbidden for any one to enter thither with his shoes on his feet; and the missionaries did not wish to extend this mark of respect to the false divinities which are worshipped in the temple. But during my sojourn in Nepal, this castle being in the

possession of the inhabitants of Gurkha the commander of the castle and the two forts which border the path, friend of the missionaries, requested me to call over to his place as he was in need of some medicine...the guards dared not compel me to remove my shoes.... he called me in the veranda situated in the interior of the great compound which faces the temple, thither they had gathered the riches the temple. It was due to this incident that I gained the opportunity of seeing the temple; I then crossed the great court which was in front it is entirely paved with almost blue marble but intermingled with large flowers of bronze artistically set. The splendour of this pavement surprised me and I do not believe that it has its equal in Europe. "Rech Asiat., 11, 353 sq.