

NEPAL

(Continued)

Two Months in Nepal

January-March 1898

Note book to sojourn

- Sylvain Levi

12th of January, 7.30 p. m., fort of Sisagarhi, Nepal, at an altitude of 1950 metres.

Let us recapitulate. Left Calcutta on Saturday the 8th January at 9.30 p. m., I travelled 685 kilometres interrupted by three changes of vehicles, at 5.30 at 6 and 7.30. On Sunday 9th at 4.30 p. m. (or 19 hours of rail), I jump into a phaeton and roll another five or six kilometers on a very uneven road. Delightful evening with colonel and Madam Wylie on Nepal. I dine with them in ceremony at the neighbouring indigo factory—one of the guests arrives delighted he has just killed his tiger, an unexpected tiger, hidden in jungle near his bungalow. He very soon sent for an elephant and a rifle, and gave the animal his due. Everyone here has a tiger or tigers to his account. Colonel Wylie does not count them anymore. At this very moment he is officially soliciting an authorisation in favour of a gentleman and a lady who are keen on hunting the tiger in the Nepalese Tarai. Very alluring beginning isn't it ?

In the morning the horses and the

phaeton of the rajah of Bettiak takes me back to Segowlie where my escort awaits me: palanquin, 'doly (mountain chair), 16 bearers for me, 8 for my boy, Fransesco, 7 for the baggage, plus the sepoy in charge of these men. The enterprise is not always easy; sometimes the coolies leave their passenger in the heart of a jungle and free themselves (desert) Madam Wylie herself has known this mishap. Fate has been kinder to me. The sepoys of Colonel Wylie, well made Hindu, black bearded have all vied with one another as regards cares, goodwill and precautions; and if I ruin myself in gratifications, at least I am well served. The journey to Nepal is rather ruinous; I reckon that it will cost me at least 400 rupees, 650 franks: as much as from Marseilles to Bombay with a little less comfort. The bearers are marvels of strength and of speed; the palanquin is a real wooden room; with a bedding the provisions, the household goods and the lodger; the burden is well 100 kilograms and four men to carry it, they can easily travel at 8 kilometres an hour (5/7 miles); impossible to walk with them; one must run or jump into the palanquin. (To be Continued).