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VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPH ON UPPER PEDONG

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VILLAGE SURVEY MONOGRAPH

ON

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FOREWORD

Apart from laying the foundations of demography in this subcontinent, a hundred years of the Indian Census has also produced 'elaborate and scholarly accounts of the variegated phenomena of Indian life—sometimes with no statistics attached, but usually with just enough statistics to give empirical under-pinning to their conclusions'. In a country, largely illiterate, where statistical or numerical comprehension of even such a simple thing as age was liable to be inaccurate, an understanding of the social structure was essential. It was more necessary to attain a broad understanding of what was happening around oneself than to wrap oneself up in 'statistical ingenuity' or 'mathematical manipulation'. This explains why the Indian Census came to be interested in 'many by-paths' and 'nearly every branch of scholarship, from anthropology and sociology to geography and religion'.

In the last few decades the Census has increasingly turned its efforts to the presentations of village statistics. This suits the temper of the times as well as our political and economic structure. For even as we have a great deal of centralization on the one hand and decentralization on the other, my colleagues thought it would be a welcome continuation of the Census tradition to try to invest the dry bones of village statistics with flesh-and-blood accounts of social structure and social change. It was accordingly decided to select a few villages in every State for special study, where personal observation would be brought to bear on the interpretation of statistics to find out how much of a village was static and yet changing and how fast the winds of change were blowing and from where.

Randomness of selection was, therefore, eschewed. There was no intention to build up a picture for the whole State in quantitative terms on the basis of villages selected statistically at random. The selection was avowedly purposive ; the object being as much to find out what was happening and how fast those villages which had fewer reasons to choose change and more to remain lodged in the past as to discover how the more 'normal' types of villages were changing. They were to be primarily type studies which, by virtue of their number and distribution, would also give the reader a 'feel' of what was going on and some kind of a map of the country.

A brief account of the tests of selection will help to explain. A minimum of thirty-five villages was to be chosen with great care to represent adequately geographical, occupational and even ethnic diversity. Of this minimum of thirty-five, the distribution was to be as follows :

(a) At least eight villages were to be so selected that each of them would contain one dominant community with one predominating occupation, *e.g.* fishermen, forest workers, jhum cultivators, potters, weavers, salt-makers, quarry workers etc. A village should have a minimum population of 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(b) At least seven villages were to be of numerically prominent Scheduled Tribes of the State. Each village could represent a particular tribe. The minimum population should be 400, the optimum being between 500 and 700.

(c) The third group of villages should each be of fair size, of an old and settled character and contain variegated occupations and be if possible, multiethnic in composition. By fair size was meant a population of 500-700 persons or more. The village should mainly depend on agriculture and be sufficiently away from the major sources of modern communication such as the district administrative headquarters and business centres. It should be roughly a day's journey from the above places. The villages were to be selected with an eye to variation in terms of size, proximity to city and other means of modern communication, nearness to hills, jungles and major rivers. Thus there was to be a regional distribution throughout the State of this category of villages. If however a particular district contained significant ecological variations within its area, more than one village in the district might be selected to study the special adjustments to them.

It is a unique feature of these village surveys that they rapidly outgrew their original terms of reference, as my colleagues warmed up to their work. This proved for them an absorbing voyage of discovery and their infectious enthusiasm compelled me to enlarge the inquiry's scope again and again. It was just as well cautiously to feel one's way about at first and then venture further afield, and although it accounts to some extent for a certain unevenness in the quality and coverage of the monographs, it served to compensate the purely honorary and extramural rigours of the task. For the Survey, along with its many ancillaries like the survey of fairs and festivals, of small and rural industry and others, was an 'extra', over and above the crushing load of the 1961 Census.

It might be of interest to recount briefly the stages by which the Survey enlarged its scope. At first Census Conference in September 1959 the Survey set itself the task of what might be called a record *in situ* of material traits, like settlement patterns of the village ; house types ; diet ; dress, ornaments and footwear ; furniture and storing vessels ; common means of transport of goods and passengers ; domestication of animals and birds ; markets attended ; worship of deities, festivals and fairs. There were to be recordings, of course, of cultural and social traits and occupational mobility. This was followed up in March 1960 by two specimen schedules, one for each household, the other for the village as a whole, which, apart from spelling out the mode of inquiry suggested in the September 1959 Conference, introduced groups of questions aimed at sensing changes in attitude and behaviour in such fields as marriage, inheritance, moveable and immoveable property, industry, indebtedness, education, community life and collective activity, social disabilities, forums of appeal over disputes, village leadership, and organisation of cultural life. It was now plainly the intention to provide adequate statistical support to empirical 'feel', to approach qualitative change through statistical quantities. It had been difficult to give thought to the importance of 'just enough statistics to give empirical under-pinning to conclusion', at a time when my colleagues were straining themselves to the utmost for the success of the main Census operation, but once the census count itself was left behind in March, 1961, a series of three regional seminars in Trivandrum (May 1961), Darjeeling and Srinagar (June 1961) restored their attention to this field and the importance of tracing social change through a number of well-devised statistical tables was once again recognised. This itself presupposed a fresh survey of villages already done ; but it was worth the trouble in view of the possibilities that a

close analysis of statistics offered, and also because the 'consanguinity' schedule remained to be canvassed. By November 1961, however, more was expected of these surveys than ever before. There was dissatisfaction on the one hand with too many general statements and a growing desire on the other to draw conclusions from statistics, to regard social and economic data as interrelated processes, and finally to examine the social and economic processes set in motion through land reforms and other laws, legislative and administrative measures, technological and cultural change. Finally, a study camp was organised in the last week of December 1961 when the whole field was carefully gone through over again and a programme worked out closely knitting the various aims of the Survey together. The Social Studies Section of the Census Commission rendered assistance to State Superintendents by way of scrutiny and technical comment on the frame of Survey and presentation of results.

This gradual unfolding of the aims of the Survey prevented my colleagues from adopting as many villages as they had originally intended to. But I believe that what may have been lost in quantity has been more than made up for in quality. This is, perhaps, for the first time that such a Survey has been conducted in any country, and that purely as a labour of love. It has succeeded in attaining what it set out to achieve; to construct a map of village India's social structure. One hopes that the volumes of this Survey will help to retain for the Indian Census its title to 'the most fruitful single source of information about the country'. Apart from other features, it will perhaps be conceded that the Survey has set up a new Census standard in pictorial and graphic documentation. The schedules finally adopted for this monograph have been printed in an appendix.

New Delhi

ASOK MITRA
Registrar General, India.

Without A Preface

'Let us rededicate ourselves not only to the service of India and her great people, but beyond to the broader goals of world peace and human welfare so that generations yet unborn can live with dignity and fulfilment, as part of the great world family.'

Sm. Indira Gandhi

We were plunged into darkness. I could only hear the voice of Alfred Rai but could not see his face. Twilight poured on dewy grass on the hillslopes and quiet-coloured evening was spread out against the sky. Upper Pedong disappeared behind the veil of a melancholic darkness, as the shadow of the hills lengthened over the valleys below, where the long trail of smog, hung low, resembled the *Milky Way*. The smoke belched by ovens burning in the hearths, the pungent odour of unknown wild plants profusely grown all over the hilly foot-tracks, the sonorous soft murmur of the crystal streams of the creeping *Jhoras* now evoke in me a nostalgia for the place and its people about which the present Monograph has been written. It is 'the sundry contemplation of my travels, which, by often rumination' transports my mind to the room of Alfred Rai, ignoring the muffled march of time. A Christian of the Rai community, Alfred was a school teacher attached to the Mission School in the village and an educated young man with an enlightened mind. Since my courtesy visit to his tenement in the afternoon, we had been seriously engaged in an animated discussion about the history of the village, his family

background, the socio-economic condition of the people, the attitude of the villagers to the development work undertaken in the village and outside and a miscellany of topics relevant to the present study. Alfred was a bachelor living with his own sister and his cousin, the two teenaged girls undergoing education in the local school. Alfred's parents lived in a joint family in a village in the neighbourhood. He had to remit money to his parents and was not free from debt. He had a large family to support with the limited income of a Graduate school-teacher and had no other supplementary income. Yet, he had not lost faith in providence nor had he wrecked his hopes about a better future when things would look up to rescue him from the jaws of poverty. He planned a nursing profession for his own sister and a teaching occupation for his cousin. We were so engrossed in talks that we had lost sight of the wintry evening settling down a little earlier. It was late September in 1967. The room was without any light. In the adjacent kitchen a pitcher containing a motley assortment of rice, kitchen vegetables and stale beef steaks was placed on the oven to stew the gravy-like preparation in which the broth and the bran went together as indispensable recipe for the hotch-potch. The red glow of the burning firewood made the environ quite eerie by an interplay of light and darkness. Alfred's sister had gone down to the central market-place to fetch kerosene oil worth 0.12 *paise* for filling in the solitary lamp and illumining the same later. Even the little oil for the lamp was purchased on credit.

One should not presume, however, that I culled the information after a fastidious investigation in the style of Sherlock Holmes. But, I had the assistance and company of the prototype of Watson represented by my wife. I had taken my wife with me during the tour to the village, perhaps to impress upon her the nature of my work. But more ostensibly the visit undertaken by my wife was in delayed compliance with a promise soon after our marriage in December, 1966, to take her to a place on honeymoon. I was remarkably moved when I realised how well she had adapted herself to an Investigator's role on a labour of love. She had scrutinished the demeanour of Alfred's sisters and also their transaction in the village market.

The village school master lived without any light, even though he was dedicated to the task of teaching as a dispenser of education, dispelling ignorance and illiteracy with the torch of knowledge. Earlier, I had observed in the main report of the Monograph that the farmers and

labourers desired a change in their occupations and wanted their means of livelihood in the field of teaching, an occupation appearing more dignified to them. The dignified teacher, however, wanted to step down from the tower of respect and honour and take up a more earthly profession of an agriculturist. The exchange of the pen for the plough did not by itself signify a retrogression to illiteracy. But, the teacher felt, that the pedagogue's profession was too much with him and a hollow status without the weight of money connoted to him an absolute illusion. An agriculturist had a number of sources of income from the so-called lowly jobs but bread itself was not enough to enable him to hold his head high in his society. Hence, he was avid about status, the penumbra of the profession of a white-collar professional.

Alfred's sisters came back from Pedong Bazar with the *Kupi* ; she likened the *Lady with the Lamp.* The lamp was placed in between the two rooms so that it could illuminate both the rooms. We had long been offered austerity tea. My wife with a frownish look gave me to understand that it was time for us to take leave of Alfred.

The village of Upper Pedong differs from any other village of West Bengal in so many respects which might elude a plainsman to wrong conclusions. The warm clothes, the preponderance of students of school-going age attending schools, the colourful synthetic garments, are exceptional features of Upper Pedong. But that does not place Upper Pedong to be on a higher plane of prosperity. The people of the village, though a microspic minority compared to the total population of India, still constitute 52.0 per cent of the rural population below the subsistence level groaning under the weight of stark poverty (vide Dr. Ojha quoted in the Article "How Can We Become Rich" by Dr. F. A. G. Mehta 'Illustrated Weekly' vol. XCII-37, dated September, 10, 1972 in p. 10. In the same article, the figure is a little different from that quoted by Dr. Dandekar and Rath).

* * * *

I have had a bad name for writing longish prefaces. I have neither the talent of George Bernard Shaw to write a prelude to the Monograph in his style. Still I would like to draw the attention of the readers to the 'Final Report on the Survey and Settlement of Kalimpong Government Estate, 1919-21' by H. C. V. Philpot, I.C.S. Calcutta, 1925 and to the book, 'Some Bengal Villagers' by Prof. N. C. Bhattacharya and Prof. L. A.

Natesan, University of Calcutta, 1932 (pp. 152-188), in which invaluable data on the socio-economic structure of the village Pedong are available.

II

The present Monograph is tenth in the series of the Village Survey Monographs as part of Census Programme, the details of which have been enunciated in the preceding Foreword. The details about the number of villages selected for socio-economic survey and the important guidelines for selection of the village have been discussed in the prefatory account included in Village Survey Monograph on Raibaghini published in the series of Village Survey Monographs.

The schedules adopted for the present village are shown in Appendices to Monograph No. 4.

The study was conducted in 1965-66, 1967-68 and 1969-70. The delay in publication of the monograph, if any, owes an apology to the readers. No person or institution is to blame for this.

Apart from a thorough Census of the households, structured questions on households, ethnic groups and the village, group-discussions, interviews and participant observations have yielded much useful data on the village and its people. Some observations based on impressions may be subjective, but most of them have behind tham the support of case-studies. Analysis of statistical tables has led to objective conclusions largely, yet at times subjective approach could not be dispensed with. When figures fail to convey any meaning, eloquence has saved the situation in describing the attitude and behaviour of the rural man who inspite of his simplicity and lack of sophistry has a complex mind.

The manuscript was handed over to the press in 1969-70 after the official sanction was received for printing the Monograph in a private press. Despite best efforts, Press could not expeditiously print the Monograph because of operational problems and also on account of the great political unrest in the metropolitan city.

As the Monograph was prepared and sent to the press before the emergence of the independent sovereign Republic of Bangla Desh, reference was made to East Pakistan.

The opinions, here and hereafter, are exclusively mine, made in the personal capacity of a thinker and writer, not representing the official views of the Government.

III

I do not contend to refute Thomas Carlyle when he remarks, 'Happy the people whose annals are blank in history books.' But, I do not either intend to make the people unhappy in scribbling some vague notes in the annals of their life. Because I do not have the vision or the ambition that the present book will attain the celebrity of a history-book, I do not think that carlyle's dictum will apply rightly to the present case. And, therefore, I do not feel any hesitation to pay my deep respect to the people of Upper Pedong in general and so Late C. H. Wangdi, a celebrated Tibetan scholar and former *Upa-Pradhan* of Pedong *Anchal Panchayat*, Sarvashree S. G. Dorjee (popularly known as *Kaji Sahib*), *Mondal*, Sakyong *Khas Mahal*, Moktan, Secretary, Pedong *Anchal Panchayat*, Father Hofstetter, Secretary & Head Master, St. George's High School, Pedong, L. B. Rai, former *Pradhan*, Pedong *Anchal Panchayat* and Chen Tshering Bhutia, Head Master, Pedong Free Primary School, Pedong, in particular.

Besides, I owe my gratitude to Sri Asok Mitra, I.C.S., former Registrar General, India, and Sri A. Chandra Sekhar, I.A.S., Registrar General, India, Sarvasree K. D. Ballal, I.A.S., Deputy Registrar General, India, Dr. B. K. Roy Burman, Deputy Registrar General, India, and K. K. Chakravorty, Central Tabulation Officer, Office of the Registrar General, India.

I recall in silent reverence the great help and encouragement received from Sri. J. C. Sen Gupta, formerly Superintendent of Census Operations, West Bengal & Sikkim, Sri Bhaskar Ghose, I.A.S., Director of Census Operations, West Bengal, Sri B. Ray, W.B.C.S., Dy. Director of Census Operations, West Bengal, Sri A. Sen Gupta, Mechanical Tabulation Officer, Sri Sunil Kanti Majumdar, Office Superintendent, Sri Gour Chandra Bagchi, M.A. (Econ., *et.* Pol. Sc. *et* History), Tabulation Officer, Sri Arunabha Dutta, Senior Technical Assistant, Sri Jaladhi Bhusan Das Gupta, Draughtman, Sri Apurba Sen Gupta, Computor, Sri Himangshu Saha Chowdhury, Proof Reader, Sm. Jayati Sinha and Chandrani Sinha. I pay my obeisance to all.

Lastly, I owe immense help to my father Sri Shyama Pada Sinha whose debt cannot be repaid in this life or beyond.

Sukumar Sinha

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Calcutta
The 16th September, 1972

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THE VILLAGE

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THE VILLAGE

Introduction

Against the august Himalayan background and at a lofty height in the district of Darjeeling stands Upper Pedong, a village inhabited by people with physical features, material ways of life, houses and surroundings, religion and culture, manners and customs quite different from those of the people of other villages in the plains of West Bengal. Yet, the people of Upper Pedong have a sense of belonging to the country outside, though history and tradition tended to foster them in a different way. Situated at an altitude of 4,000 feet or more, the village is no "steep ascent of heaven's". On such a mountain-top a man not only considers himself to be an interloper in life's stage and a very temporary improvisation to suit an obscure purpose but also faintly comprehends an entity whose span is limitless, whose scope is magnificent beyond conception, whose birth and death are incidental milestones on a splendid road without beginning and without end.

The people living high up in the valleys and villages of the mystic Himalayas offers a fascinating challenge to any enquirer attempting at a socio-economic probe, specially when the investigation is oriented to the study of several communities of the village in general, and of the Bhutias, in particular, the latter community having a sizable population in this part of the district of Darjeeling.

Location

The hilly tracts of Kalimpong subdivision are divided into *Khas Mahals*, where the people live as tenants on the land, vested in the Government. Pedong, one of the 51 *Khas Mahals* of Kalimpong subdivision, has an area of 1408.03 acres. The composition of Pedong *Khas Mahal* is shown below.

TABLE 1

CONSTITUENTS OF THE *MAUZA*

Constituents	Direction	Boundary
Upper Pedong	North	Kashone *Khas Mahal*
	South	Upper Sakiyong
	East	Rishi Road
	West	Damsong Forest
Merong Gaon	North	Dhobi Jhora
	South	Lower Sakiyong
	East	Merong river
	West	Rishi Road
Niong Gaon	North	Mission Jhora
	South	Dhobi Jhora
	East	Merong river
	West	Dajeeling Improvement Fund Area

Constituents	Direction	Boundary
Dalep	North	Kashone *Khas Mahal* and Sikkim
	South	Mission Jhora
	East	Merong river
	West	Kashone Road
Pedong D. I. F. Area	North	Entire Darjeeling Improvement Fund Area
	South	
	East	
	West	

For the purpose of the present study, Upper Pedong, the first segment of Pedong *Khas Mahal*, has been selected. But even then, the segment of Upper Pedong, referred to hereinafter, is mentioned as the village Upper Pedong for the sake of convenience. The higher elevation of Pedong *Khas Mahal* is called Upper Pedong with the lower boundary marked by the Kalimpong-Rishi Road at an altitude of approximately 5,000 feet.

From a place near the market the ridge rises to a point closed in by Damsong Forest and attains an altitude of 6,300 feet, the maximum on this side of the hill. Human habitations are found upto an altitude of nearly 6,000 feet. From any point of this high altitude one can have a far view of all the snow-covered mountain-ranges of Sikkim and Bhutan in all seasons and in fair weather, even those of Tibet. Pedong hill stretches here from the north-east to the south-west, the highest peak of the hill facing the east being situated in Upper Pedong.

Upper Pedong, a constituent of Pedong *Khas Mahal*, has an area of approximately 600 acres with varying altitudes at its two farthest points—an altitude of 6,300 feet at one extreme and in the other nearly 5,000 feet, the lowest for the village.

Immediate neighbourhood

From the top of the hill with the *Mauza* touching a fringe of the Damsong Forest to down below, where it touches the Merong river, Pedong *Khas Mahal* covers a wide area of 1,408.03 acres. There is no other village just on top of the hill or a little down below. Two adjacent *Khas Mahals* constitute the neighbourhood of Pedong *Khas Mahal*. To the south lies Sakiyong *Khas Mahal*, while to the north is Kashone *Khas Mahal*. Below Kashone *Khas Mahal*, the river Rishi marking the boundary of Sikkim gently flows down to meet the river Rongpo at a place, also called Rongpo. Both the *Khas Mahals*, divided into a number of constituent segments, are inhabited by the Bhutias, the Lepchas and other Nepalese communities. Upper Pedong has frequent intercourse with the people of these two adjacent *Khas Mahals*. To the west of the village is Munsong Kaman, famous for the Government Cinchona Plantation. A little above is Damsong Gheri, a place replete with some historical relics of the past and association of *Gebey Achho*, the mystic chieftain of the Lepchas, who had built a fort there for waging a battle against the Bhutanese King. Even today, relics of the *Zung* (Fort) are to be found there, the remains of the *Zung* at Damsong being scattered over an area of about eight square kilometres on top of the hill. Dispersed ruins are also visible in some places at a lower altitude and near the *Kholas* (Brooks). Broken walls are found to encircle the *Zung* and some walls, made of slabs of stone, are 12 to 15 cubits in height. Trenches, some paved with inlay of stones, now point to the wartime preparations during the reign of *Gebey Achho*. Most of the stories and beliefs of the local people dwell on *Gebey Achho* and his fort.

Again, eight kilometres to the south-west of Upper Pedong is Algarah Bazar, a semi-urban area with a market and improved water-supply within the control of Darjeeling Improvement Fund administration. The principal mart for cardamoms in the region, it stands half-way on the road leading to Kalimpong.

To the east and south-east of Upper Pedong lies Kagay *Khas Mahal* (J. L. No. 7) and Darjeeling Improvement Fund Area, situated

on the opposite hill. And beyond Kagay, two other *Khas Mahals,* namely Maria (J. L. No. 8) and Ladam (J. L. No. 9), are situated, both the *Mauzas* being afforested under Kalimpong Forest Division. Again, to the south-west of Pedong *Khas Mahal* stands Paiengaon *Khas Mahal* (J. L. No. 22).

To the north-east of Pedong stands another hill in Sikkim with an altitude of 8,000 feet. Between this and the Pedong hill meander the rivers Rishi and Merong. On the bank of the Merong stands Rhenok Bazar, the most busy commercial centre of this region quite frequently visited by the villagers of Pedong. The boundary of Pedong extends to the river Rishi, marking the border of India and Sikkim.

Situated thus on the frontier of West Bengal in general and of North Bengal in particular, Upper Pedong and the villages in its neighbourhood are more contiguous to Sikkim than to other areas. The locational characteristics of the village are as unique as the peoples of different areas, speaking different languages and professing different religions here in the village. The Bhutias, the Lepchas, the Nepalese and the Tibetans settled in the village long ago, as if to speak "through myriad mothers their varied voices merging in symphony and concord". It would be important to examine incidentally if any unity has been manifested by the diversity of racial and linguistic elements as it would be interesting to see if there has been any fusion of all diverse elements into a balanced cosmopolitan culture.

Physical aspects

The steepled tops of the surrounding hills, the natural vegetation and the picturesque landscape lend a touch of majestic beauty to Upper Pedong. The luxuriant forests sprawl out in the village at a higher altitude, while the meandering brook Rishi bubbles by below. The innumerable flora and the varied fauna of the Himalayan species are apt to excite the interest of a botanist and a zoologist alike. While the layman would look entranced at the green foliage of bounteous nature here, the sweet aroma of the incense trees, the intoxicating flavour of the tea plantation and the exuberant growth of the plants and hedges, some known and many more unknown, would also enamour equally a chance visitor to the place.

But a far more pleasant feast for the eyes is provided by the magnificent panorama of the snow-clad massif of the surrounding peaks. A clear, sunny weather enables one to have a full view of the snow-clad peak of the Kanchunjengha (28,146 feet), as it unveils itself into full sight in the mellow glow of sunrise or in the glimmer of moonlight. The expanse of the snowy peaks appearing in the northern and the north-eastern horizons from atop the Pedong hill is as impressive a sight as the dim and distant view of the town of Gangtok peeping out of a valley. It looks rather like a dreamland when the electrified town sends streaks of light in the evening. Throughout the greater part of the year a misty veil hangs over this area and blots the landscape out of sight most of the time. It is in this mysterious land of fleeting light and shade that the Nepalese and the Tibetans, the Bhutias and the Sherpas, the Lepchas and the plainsmen live together.

Climate

The climate of Upper Pedong is cool, pleasant and bracing and specially so in summer. But the winter is bitterly cold and unpleasant to bear. In summer Upper Pedong is more pleasant than Kalimpong because of the former's higher elevation. In winter the temperature is lower than that of Kalimpong, though rarely does it drop below freezing point. Rainy season in this area starts right from May to last till September-October, the monsoon being characterised by incessant, if not heavy, downpour. Sky remains overcast with dark rumbling clouds and the weather is cheerless with constant appearance and disappearance of mists. Visibility is often bad,

making it sometimes difficult even to see things, a few cubits deep, not to speak of recognising them. Days in the rains with a promise against a clear and sunny sky at times. Such a weather, however, is unpredictably short-lived. The mist and fog of a lower altitude, much downhill, rise up and up and set in a whirling motion, till the whole air is engulfed. Slowly but perceptibly, the distant mountain-ranges, the nearby hills and the immediate neighbourhood recede to the background, enveloped by a thick fog-screen, patches of white cloud, sticking to a part of the valley below. July, the hottest month of the year, marks the onset of summer, when the local schools declare the vacational holidays. Summer here being very short-lived, its passage is felt only by the local people. To the visitors from the plains summer makes no difference from any other season of the hills, except the winter which makes its presence felt only by its biting cold. April-May and October-November are the best seasons here, the air remaining free from mist and fog, temperature being cool and moderate and visibility being very good. The winter, lasting from November to March and sometimes to April even, is infamous for its extreme cold.

Rainfall

The data on rainfall from 1957 to June 1965, collected from a rain-gauge register, maintained by St. George's High School at Upper Pedong, are presented in the table below.

The average monthly rainfall of this area is 207.6 mm. It appears that the rainfall in five months from May to September is higher than the monthly average for the year. Again, the average annual rainfall in the period 1957-64 is recorded at 2,490.3 mm.

It thus appears that the quantum of rainfall over the last 70 years has been more or less constant, though there is a downward trend in the volume of the rainfall. The trend is explained by the general deforestation of the surrounding region of Upper Pedong by the local people, despite the general afforestation programme in the district by the Forest Department, Government of West Bengal.

TABLE 2

ANNUAL RAINFALL (MILLIMETRE)

Months	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	Average
January	47.3	30.2	47.0	Nil	2.7	65.7	10·2	Nil	Traces	25.0
February	25.4	40.1	27.7	81.6	49.9	27.0	Traces	7.0	14.4	32.5
March	45.5	8.4	87.9	119.1	6.2	55.2	53.4	62.6	37.2	54.8
April	42.4	224.3	79.2	63.6	101.8	97.7	111.2	208.4	110.6	116.1
May	125.7	112.5	318.8	311.5	208·2	206.0	283.6	144.2	231.7	213.8
June	433.0	312.9	337.3	339.6	362.4	570.3	407.8	494.4	601.8	407.2
July	820.9	590.3	428.0	661.2	738.4	689.2	711.1	780.2	..	671.2
August	504.9	506.5	416.8	465.1	585.7	650.3	618.1	545.2	..	536.6
September	270.8	319.0	294.2	523.0	398.4	216.0	402.0	341.2	..	345.6
October	20.3	112.8	122.6	83.7	111.9	44.4	73.0	21.4	..	73.8
November	20.0	16.0	Nil	Nil	19.0	Traces	25.8	2.4	..	10.4
December	3.6	1.3	Traces	0.2	6.0	1.8	16.6	2.4	..	4.0
Total	2359.8	2274 3	2159.5	2648.6	2590.6	2621.6	2712.8	2559.4	..	207.6

TABLE 3

AVERAGE RAINFALL (MILLIMETRE)

Period	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
1894-1905	18.03	23.37	48.26	135.38	213.11	452.88	607.82	560.58	402.34	104.90	11.68	14.48	1592.83
1911	27.43	10.92	73.66	183.64	375.41	591.82	681.48	603.50	351.79	159.77	12.59	Nil	3038.89
1921	29.97	9.14	74.17	164.59	233.68	469.90	614.68	609.60	277.37	133.10	22.86	25.91	2964.97
1931	22.35	18.54	22.36	75.69	264.67	336.55	781.30	613.16	598.93	57.66	9.14	3.57	2803.91
1957-1964	25.6	32.5	54.8	116.1	213.3	407.2	671.2	536.6	345.6	73.8	10.4	4.0	2491.6

Humidity

In Darjeeling [1](Altitude 7,432 feet) humidity is the highest from April to September, when the variation ranges from 93 per cent to 96 per cent, the lowest morning values being recorded in December and March. At Kalimpong (Altitude 3,965 feet), percentages vary from 65 to 94 in the morning and from 59 to 93 in the evening. At Pedong (Altitude 4,760 feet) percentages are lowest in March (68) and highest from June to September (88-91).

Flora, fauna and forests

Within the jurisdiction of the Forest Department, Government of West Bengal the nearest Block of forest adjoining Pedong Bazar, known as Damsong Block, is situated in an area, originally belonging to the Maharaja of Bhutan and annexed to the-then British India in 1865.

Flora abounding in the region include, in the lower *Khas Mahal* forests of Sakiyong *Bustee* (Altitude 2,500 feet to 4,000 feet) *Auley Chilaune (Schima wallichhii)*, *Dalne Katus (Castonopsis indica)* and *Musre Katus (Castonopsis tribuloides)*. Flora in Damsong Block within the Reserved Forest and at a higher altitude, include *Birch*, *Maple*, *Castonopsis* species, *Bucklandia Populnea (Pipli)* and even *Cupressus Cashmeriana*. The Forest Department has paid special attention to the afforestation within the Damsong Forest Block under the Third Five Year Plan. Afforestation has since been successfully carried out till 1965 over an area of 54 acres with species like *Alnus nepaulensis (Utis)*, *Betula cylindrostachya (Sour)*, *Cryptomeria japonica (Dhupi)* and *Cupressus casheriana (Cypress)*.

Sufficient quantity of seedlings of *Ficus nemoralis (Dudhile)*, *Ficus glomarata (Nevaro)*, *Saurauia sp. (Gegun)*, *Eriobotrya sp. (Maya)*, *Saur* and *Utis* is annually distributed to the villagers through the staff of the local Block Development Office during the *Vanamahotsava*.

Fauna include wild hares, a few barking deer and wild bears, jungle fowls, woodpeckers, owls and a few pheasants also.

There is one Government Charcoal Fair Price Shop at Pedong Bazar selling charcoal to the local inhabitants at a fair rate of Rs. 11.00 *paise* per quintal (*i.e.*, 0.11 *paise* per k.g.).

The villagers are extended facilities for collection of dry sticks and fodder on monthly permit basis by the Forest Beat Officer, stationed very near to the village proper. The monthly rates inclusive of taxes for dry stick and fodder permits are Rs. 2.10 *paise* and Rs. 1.58 *paise* respectively per head. The villagers are also allowed to graze their cattle in the high forest against quarterly grazing permits.

Inspite of regular patrolling by the Forest Department's staff posted at Damsong, the local people habitually commit offences in the Reserved Forest frequently. As far as possible, legal steps are taken by the Government to

1 Bengal District Gazetteers, Darjeeling, by A. L. Dash, 1947, pp. 16.

protect the Reserved Forest of the locality by way of assessing proper compensations and royalty of the stolen produce and realising them from the accused.

Institutions of importance for the village

The Kalimpong-Rishi Road divides Pedong *Khas Mahal* into two segments, one of which at a higher altitude above the Road is Upper Pedong, the village of the present study. The segment at a lower altitude below the Road is Lower Pedong, divided into three more constituencies. Strips of land in the centre of Pedong *Khas Mahal* and located just near the Kalimpong-Rishi Road, after being taken over under the authorities of Darjeeling Improvement Fund, came to be known as Pedong Bazar with a semi-urban look. The improvement of this area is the exclusive responsibility of the administrative body for the Darjeeling Improvement Fund, the origin of which dates back to 1838 and the function of which is not limited only to the supply of an income to the District Board of Darjeeling, but extends also to the maintenance of most of the important *Hats* of the district, several dispensaries and a number of rest houses. At Pedong Bazar, a busy commercial centre of the region in importance only next to Kalimpong, most of the houses are of the type of residence-*cum*-shops. A very important cosmopolitan business-centre too, where people from Bihar and Punjab, Rajasthan and Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet have immigrated and settled for purposes of trade and commerce, Pedong Bazar, though demarcated as such under the Darjeeling Improvement Fund Area, is inextricably associated with Pedong *Khas Mahal* and its surroundings.

Darjeeling, the headquarter of the district, is quite far from Upper Pedong (about 72 kilometres), but the nearness of Kalimpong, the subdivisional town (21 kilometres), more than offsets this detachment and distance. The Office of the Kalimpong National Extension Service Block II with jurisdiction over Upper Pedong, has its headquarter at Algarah. The Police Station of Kalimpong, with Upper Pedong in its jurisdiction has its headquarter at the subdivisional town. But, a Police Outpost at Pedong Bazar staffed by one Sub-Inspector of Police, one *Havildar* and ten Constables is directly entrusted with the maintenance of law and order in the locality. The functionaries of the Outpost are also required to enforce the rules of immigration and emigration of foreigners and also to superintend the Tibetan refugees settled in Pedong Bazar and in the areas around under asylum granted to them by the Government of India. Required to keep a strict vigil on the movement of traffic, the Outpost has to maintain a Register of Births and Deaths of the area in addition. Within the jurisdiction of the Outpost are situated Lingsay *Khas Mahal,* Lingsaykha *Khas Mahal,* Ladam *Khas Mahal,* Kagay *Khas Mahal,* Mara Bustee *Khas Mahal,* Kashone *Khas Mahal,* Duka Bustee, Tandaraybong Bustee, Kasyong Bustee, Pedong Bustee, Sakiyong Bustee, Duntam Bustee, Damsong Bustee and Kolbong Bustee.

Through Pedong Post Office situated at Pedong Bazar, both money orders and telegrams are despatched and received. A Primary Health Centre at Upper Pedong, housed in a *Pucca* one-storied building and equipped with necessary medical stores and provisions, has both indoor and outdoor facilities of treatment. In the indoor Ward there are ten beds each for the male and the female patients.

Just on the main road and at a little higher altitude there is a Veterinary Aid Centre in Upper Pedong, being in charge of a Veterinary Field Assistant. The Veterinary Surgeon, attached to Kalimpong N. E. S. Block II Office and temporarily residing at Kalimpong to look after the areas within Kalimpong N. E. S. Block I, visits the Aid Centre at Upper Pedong and advises the Field Assistant.

Pedong Bazar also locates the Office of the Assistant Livestock Officer, Government

of West Bengal, in charge of a Sheep-Breeding Station. At the time of field survey, several structures were being constructed in the village for the Sheep-Breeding Station in Upper Pedong, just above the main Road. The new Sheep-Breeding Station after construction is proposed to be one of the biggest of its kind in the region around. A reference may also be made here to the Office of the Customs Inspector of the Government of India at Pedong Bazar, staffed by one Inspector and one *Sepoy* and mainly entrusted with the task of keeping vigilance on the movement of merchandise to and from Sikkim by land. Also situated at Pedong Bazar is the Office of the Central Co-Operative Bank to which a number of Co-Operative Societies of the locality and its neighbourhood are affiliated. The Offices of the Co-Operative Inspector and the Auditor of Co-Operative Societies, both under the Government of West Bengal, are also situated in Upper Pedong beside the Veterinary Hospital. Pedong *Anchal Panchayat* has its Office at Pedong Bazar. In Upper Pedong proper there is a *Dak Bungalow* of the Central Public Works Department, Government of India. A Forest Beat Office, though situated in Upper Pedong, is actually located at an altitude higher than that of Pedong Bazar. The Forest Beat Officer is entrusted with the avowed task of protection of the Reserved Forests from the axe of the poachers. The Office of the Forest Range Officer is situated at Algarah.

St. George's High School, the only educational institution of the locality for higher education, is situated in Upper Pedong, just above Rishi Road near Pedong Bazar. A co-educational institution of the Secondary Standard, the School also runs a Primary Section, simultaneously. Near Pedong Bazar there is another Primary School which, though known as Pedong Primary School, is physically situated in the adjoining *Mauza* of Sakiyong.

Darjeeling, the *Queen of the Himalayas*, and also the headquarter of the district of Darjeeling, lies at a distance of 72 kilometres to the west of the village of Upper Pedong. Twenty one kilometres to the south-west of Upper Pedong lies Kalimpong, another famous hill station of the Himalayas and the subdivisional headquarter of the present village. Gangtok, the capital of Sikkim and one of the most beautiful valleys of the world, is about 150 kilometres to the north. All the roads of the hills being serpentine with Z-like turns, the actual distance, as the crow flies, is much less than the one conveyed by the road distance given. Siliguri, another subdivision of the district of Darjeeling and one of the most important commercial centres of North Bengal, is situated at a distance of 90 kilometres from the village. Siliguri and Kalimpong are the two most important marts for the area. From time immemorial, Kalimpong has been the traditional trading centre of the region and as such, the proximity of Upper Pedong to Kalimpong suggests the working of many forces to make an impact on the life of the village. In the chapters to follow, an attempt is made to delineate the forces, to dissect the village in as many aspects as possible and to see how far and in what ways the forces from outside have influenced the village.

Transport and communication

Preceding an account of the means of transport today, an idea of the system of transport of the olden days is needed to comprehend the changes and improvements during the intervening period. Even upto the fifties of the present century, trade between Tibet and India was very important to the economy of the district. Wool and woolen garments were the principal items of goods imported from Tibet, while consumer goods constituted the exported merchandise. There were two ancient routes from Tibet to Kalimpong. The first route from Phari Dzong in Tibet entered India through Jalap La and Sikkim through Upper Pedong and passed to Kalimpong, the distance so covered being 145 to 155 kilometres. The

second route connecting Tibet and Kalimpong through Nathu La Pass and Gangtok in Sikkim covered a distance of 196 kilometers from Tibet to Kalimpong. Of these two routes, both equally popular, the second was used more by the people for the improved Gangtok-Nathu La Bridle Road for its shorter distance of more than twenty kilometres. It is locally believed that the Tibetans preferred the first route *via* Upper Pedong, as it passed all the way along higher altitude, while that along Nathu La Pass detoured for a longer distance from Gangtok at a lower altitude along the bank of the Tista river. The Tibetans could not withstand the higher temperature at such lower altitude. This mule-track, a rough, narrow and gravelly pathway about two to three metres wide, and the too steep path exhausted the travelling traders and their pack transport. Pedong Bazar served as a wayside halting station. When the route was in use at the height of Indo-Tibetan trade, prior to the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1951, about two to three hundred mules and ponies daily used to come and go *via* Pedong. Pedong Bazar owes much of its present development to the flourishing trade in the pre-1951 period.

But, the bridle-path of the past, road-worthy then for mules and ponies only, was the precursory main road of the present, along which motor vehicles, both light and heavy, now ply up and down. To trace the history of the present road connecting Pedong with Kalimpong and Siliguri, it is necessary to know the total road-length and the two terminal points. The road connecting Siliguri to the Tista Bridge, 50 kilometres in length has two names. The Siliguri-Sevok Road connects Siliguri with Sevok (20 kilometres) and the Tista Valley Road (30 kilometres) connects Sevok with the Tista Bridge.

Beyond the Tista Bridge, the Road bifurcates, one route leading to Gangtok, and the other to the Rishi Bridge at Indo-Sikkim border *via* Kalimpong, Algarah Bazar and Pedong Bazar. This Road from the Tista Bridge to the Rishi Bridge, 42 kilometres in length, is known as the Rishi Road. Upper Pedong is thus accessible from outside along the Rishi Road. From the Tista Bridge point Kalimpong is situated on the 11th mile, Algarah Bazar on the 17th mile and Pedong Bazar on the 22nd mile on the Rishi Road. A peculiar feature about the places that merit mention is that the villages on or near the Rishi Road, instead of being identified by their respective place-names, are described by the distance from the Rishi Bridge. If the identity of the places is not established or expressed popularly by names but by numericals, it is because the large-sized *Khas Mahals*, comparable only to big Estates, cannot give the exact location of the places concerned. Hence, to an outsider it may appear though as a cipher, a speaker is correct when he says, 'I am going to the 15th mile' or 'I am coming from the 7th mile'. Beyond the Rishi Bridge, the Road enters into Sikkim, the most important place on this Road being Rhenok Bazar in Sikkim with which Upper Pedong has economic relations.

With the improvement of the Kalimpong Rishi Road, the importance of Upper Pedong as a busy centre of trade and administration has greatly increased. But, this pre-eminent position was not attained even as late as 1940, when the Rishi Road beyond Kalimpong was not fit for the wheeled traffic, the villagers having had to negotiate the way to Kalimpong on foot, a distance of 18 kilometres, to meet there for the first time the vehicular traffic of the modern world. Along the same Road walked the pedestrain traffic as also well-off persons on ponies and mules. In 1940-41, the Rishi Road was improved and extended beyond Kalimpong upto Algarah and was made road-worthy for the wheeled traffic. The hardship of the villagers thereafter was reduced but not altogether eliminated, the people having had still to walk a little less than ten kilometres. In 1950-'51 the Central Public Works Department of the Government of India improved the Road

beyond Algarah upto Pedong Bazar and since 1957 the hill people of this locality have been enjoying the facilities of direct vehicular transport to take them to any place outside. But even then, the Road to Sikkim beyond Pedong Bazar not open to any vehicle was made fit for the use of the vehicular transport in 1962 and extended beyond the Rishi Bridge to Rora Than, Rangpo, Gangtok, Fathom Chain, Pirkin Bazar etc. in Sikkim. The rapport of the hills of Darjeeling district and Sikkim with the plains has thus been established with the help of roads very recently.

The maintenance of the roads passing through many picturesque areas in different altitudes with varying gradients, sharp curves and arches involve high expenses and hazardous supervision. In the rainy season landslips are fairly frequent and not infrequently the vehicular traffic come to a standstill for two or three days or even more at times. When the Siliguri-Tista Bridge Road is closed, the villagers of Upper Pedong go to Siliguri *via* Peshok Road and the Darjeeling-Siliguri Hill Cart Road. Alternatively, during a landslip on the Rishi Road with consequential suspension of the flow of traffic, people and cargo, the track taking off from the Rishi Road and passing through Upper Pedong to the Munsong Cinchona Plantation is generally utilised as an emergency route.

Journey to Pedong

At Calcutta, one bound for Upper Pedong avails oneself of Darjeeling Mail from Sealdah Railway Station on the Eastern Railway at noon. After changing the train twice, once at Farakka-Khejuria Ghat (Steamer Ferry Station) and once more at New Jalpaiguri Station on the North East Frontier Railway, one has to detrain next morning at 6.30 A. M. at Siliguri Junction Station (586 kilometres), where one finds private jeeps and land-rovers as well as motor-buses run by the Siliguri-Kalimpong Bus Service between Siliguri and Kalimpong (69 kilometres) ready for carriage. One reaches Kalimpong at 10 A. M. or 11 A. M. by bus, the fare being Rs.8.00 *paise* for one front seat beside the driver, Rs. 6.00 *paise* for a seat in the middle row and Rs. 4.50 *paise* per passenger in the rear portion of the bus. The private motor-jeeps usually charge Rs.5.50 *paise* as fare per passenger for a seat in the back row and Rs. 7.00 *paise* for a front seat. Buses and jeeps ply along the Siliguri-Sevok-Tista Valley Road and later along the Rishi Road. From Kalimpong, three small sized buses and several motor-jeeps, plying along the Kalimpong-Rishi Road, operate between Kalimpong and Upper Pedong (21 kilometres), the journey taking one hour to one hour and a half. Fare in both jeeps and buses is uniformly levied at a flat rate of Rs.2.00 *paise* for the distance. Thus, starting from Calcutta at 12.20 P.M., one reaches Upper Pedong travelling a distance of 676 kilometres at 1 P.M. the next day. Though normally buses and private jeeps terminate their journey at Pedong Bazar everyday, some jeeps ply on Fridays between Pedong Bazar and Rhenok Bazar to take passengers to the *Hat* held there every Friday.

Algarah, locating the Block Development Office for the present village, is directly connected with Upper Pedong by jeeps and buses running along the Kalimpong-Rishi Road, the fare being 0.50 *paise*. The low fare enables the villagers to visit Algarah without much financial strain, whenever any need is felt. Kalimpong, connected by a direct bus-service, is, however, less frequently visited.

Communication with places of importance

In order to come to Darjeeling, the *Queen of the Himalayas*, and the headquarter of the district, a villager of Upper Pedong has to come first to Kalimpong, where land-rovers available in plenty for shuttle-service to Darjeeling (67 kilometres) take two hours. The fare in land-rovers for two front seats is fixed at Rs.7.00 *paise* and Rs.8.00 *paise*, Rs.5.00 *paise* being fare

for the rear seat. Gangtok is reached by bus or land-rover from Kalimpong in three hours or a little more against the same fare as that for a journey to Darjeeling from Kalimpong.

Important shopping centre for the village

Pedong Bazar, in the heart of Pedong *Khas Mahal* and under the control of Darjeeling Improvement Fund Area administration is the hub of the commercial activities of the region, parallel only to Kalimpong. The gradual evolution of Pedong Bazar into a notable mart of the present dimension is partly ascribed to its peculiar position, in which it had served as a way-side inn to the erstwhile journeying traders on the Indo-Tibetan Trade-route *via* Jalap La. Attracted by the prospect of an expanding volume of trade and commerce *via* this place, businessmen from far-off places in Bihar and Rajasthan had migrated to Pedong Bazar in the nineties of the last century *via* Darjeeling, Siliguri and Kalimpong. Some immigrants were engaged in importing wool and fur from Tibet, while some others supplied consumer goods to distant places in Sikkim. The Nepali residents of the place later joined them in the profitable commercial activities. After His Holiness the Dalai Lama's asylum in India, many Tibetan refugees crossed over to India *via* Jalap La. Some seven or eight of these Tibetan refugee families settled in Pedong Bazar and opened shops of liquor, tea and other Chinese delicacies. Pedong Bazar at present supplies merchandise to the neighbouring villages both in wholesale and in retail forms. There are now about 15 Marwari, 20 Bihari, 20 Nepali and seven to eight Tibetan traders in Pedong Bazar. The Marwari businessmen run mostly groceries, transacting business in both wholesale and retail forms. Some of these Marwari traders also deal in cloths, books, umbrellas and other stationery articles which give the groceries a look of small departmental stores. The Bihari traders also follow suits of the Marwaris in running the groceries, with the difference that their business is mostly in retail. Grocery-*cum*-stationery shops, owned by some Biharis, are a deviation from the beaten track of the Marwaris. One Bihari merchant owns a stationery shop-*cum*-medical pharmacy, while three other Bihari traders run sweetmeat shops.

A workshop owned by a Bihari trader manufacturing, repairing and selling shoes and a shop owned by another Bihari selling betels add variety to the nature of business.

The Nepali traders too are found to deal in items of grocery on a very small scale. Some five or six Nepalis run shops to sell rolled betels, especially prepared with lime, areca-nut and other spicy ingredients. There are five or six tailoring shops mostly owned by Nepalis belonging to the Damai community. Culinary preparations are the items of trade by the Tibetans, most of whom are engaged in the sale of indigenous alcoholic spirits and beers from rice, (*Bhati jhanr*), maize, millet or barley (*Thumba*) and from oats (*Champa*). A Punjabi owns a multi-purpose shop, selling stationeries, books and ready-to-wear garments.

A paddy-husking-*cum* wheat-grinding mill, owned and run by one Tibetan, a laundry-shop owned and managed by a Dhobi washerman from Bihar and two hair-cutting saloons owned and run by two Biharis (*Thakur*) have brisk business owing mostly to absence of competition from any rival establishment.

All the administrative, welfare and service institutions like the Health Centre, Post and Telegraph Office, Police and Customs Outpost, a High School, two Primary Schools, a Roman Catholic Church, fields for games and sports, a Dak Bungalow, a Veterinary Hospital, a Co-Operative Bank and some other Government Offices being in or very near Pedong Bazar or for that matter in Pedong *Khas Mahal* itself from the point of physical configuration locating the functional institutions of Pedong as a whole, Pedong Bazar with a separate entity, even without having grown as a residential village, has now been completely divested

of the identity associated with Pedong *Khas Mahal*. Instead, Pedong Bazar has developed within its area some very important institutions which have conferred on it the status of being the functional wing of the main village. A trading and commercial centre apart, it is also the terminal point for the bus-routes and other public vehicles operating between Pedong Bazar and Kalimpong. Provided with tap-water and a solitary telephone receiver at the Police Outpost, on which the local people depend in times of emergency, the commercial centre of Pedong Bazar is vested with all possible amenities available in an urban area. From the humble start of an wayside hamlet to provide shelter during a night's stop-over to the weary, itinerant tradesmen to and form Tibet, Pedong Bazar has in course of time grown into a composite and self-sufficient trading centre for an extensive area. Though, despite its weighty position in the region, Pedong Bazar has served and will continue to serve Pedong *Khas Mahal* as the latter's functional adjunct, the unique extra-territorial position of Pedong Bazar has to a large extent brought about Pedong *Khas Mahal's* dependence on the village-mart of Pedong Bazar. To highlight one or two features worthy of mention, the land-tenure of the traders here should be stated first. In the market-place and around, the merchants and the shop-keepers occupy land on lease from the authorities managing the Darjeeling Improvement Fund Area. Absence of direct ownership has not curtailed or interfered with the rights of the landlords to let their houses out on rent to others. In fact, quite a few shop-keepers have their shops in rented rooms. Secondly, most of the houses, whether hired or owned, are of the type of residence-*cum*-shop, where the trader lives in some other adjoining room with the members of his family. Income from trade being the major source of earnings to many, female members of the families, belonging to the Nepali and some of the Bihari shop-owners, voluntarily assist the owners as saleswomen.

To round off the discussion, it may be mentioned that the wholesale traders purchase the items of their trade directly from Calcutta and Siliguri, whereas the small tradesmen buy their goods from the wholesalers of the place or of Kalimpong.

Hats or Bazars

Pedong Bazar

A big bi-weekly *Hat* (Open-air market with no fixed stalls), sitting every Monday and Thursday, is held at Pedong Bazar covering about one acre of open land between the fixed shops near the market-site. The Monday sitting is practically unimportant from the points of the volume of business as also of attendance. Commodities are sold here in the open by the primary producers, mostly from the neighbouring villages within a radius of four kilometres or so, bringing potato, ginger, cardamom etc. grown in their kitchen gardens. Some four or five vendors come from Kalimpong to sell mostly the vegetables of the plains, largely purchased at far-away places like Siliguri etc. About seven cloth-dealers, three or four of them dealing in cotton textiles, tailored ready-to-wear garments for men, women and children and the rest trading only in ready-made clothes, come with the wares from Kalimpong every *Hat*-day. Woolen dresses and shoes are brought to the *Hat* by one or two traders from Kalimpong. About six pedlars of the neighbourhood visit the *Hat* to peddle biscuits, lozenges, breads, or sweet-meats, while a few roving salesmen bring popular ornaments of zinc, brass, glass or any other cheap synthetic material of the latest fashion, in demand by the local womenfolk. Varieties of baskets, different tools and implements of iron, domestic utensils of aluminium and stainless steel and various other necessities are sold, though irregularly, by some rural retailers here. Dried fish, a popular item for the palate of the local people, is sometimes sold by one or two people. Raw

meat of either pork or mutton is also a marketed provision on the *Hat*-day. There is a slaughter-house, where oxen are slaughtered every Tuesday and Friday for the sale of beef by a Bhutia from Algarah. Spices, oil, tea, sugar, pulses etc. are sold through small shops, open only on the *Hat*-days in tents pitched up at the site of the *Hat*. A vendor occupying any land at the site of the *Hat* has to pay daily a rent of 0.12 *paise* to 0.25 *paise* to the Rent Collectors (*Tehsildars*) of the Darjeeling Improvement Fund, and residing at Algarah. It is interesting to note that females predominate in number, whether among the buyers or among the sellers. It is an equally pleasant experience to come across female customers and tradesmen attired in their best. Sale or purchase apart, a weekly reunion of friends and acquaintances appears from the close scrutiny of the behaviour-pattern of the women visiting the *Hat* to be an attraction. Bargaining or higgling over prices does not appear to be the only *leit-motiv* of the *Hat*. Instead, the purchasers and sellers crack one or two jokes and exchange a gentle smile during the purchase.

One addresses the other as *Daju* (Brother) and *Bahni* (Sister), *Baje* (Grand old man) or *Boju* (Grand old woman). Young boys are found to lounge in scattered groups, chatting with each other, eating sweetmeats and chewing betels, in sharp contrast to bevies of young maidens, attentively engrossed in the purchase of either ornaments or some domestic goods. Metric system of weight being in full currency, some women still get confused to make calculations in *paise*. The session of the *Hat* starts at 8 A.M., gains on a crescendo of transactions in heightened spirits at about 11 A.M. or 12 noon the business being wound up at about 3 P.M. According to an estimate made by the *Tehsildar*, about two thousand persons on an average congregate at the *Hat* during its sitting. The *Hat* at Pedong Bazar has in its command area, the villages within a radius of about five to six kilometers, though visitors from Kagay, Ladam, Ligsay and sometimes from Rhenock Bazar in Sikkim, obviously in small numbers, are fairly a common sight. The price of some of the essential commodities and articles, as they prevail during a *Hat*-day in June, 1965, are given below.

TABLE 4

MERCHANDISE OF THE *HAT* AT A GLANCE

Items	Local name	Units of weight	Price Rs.	Price *Paise*
Rice (Fine)	*Ramro Chamal*	Per kilogram	1	25
Rice (Coarse)	*Kharso Chamal*	Ditto	1	12
Pulses	*Dal*	Ditto	1 1	30 to 50
Mustard oil	*Toriko tel*	Ditto	4	00
Kerosene oil		Per litre	0	62
Kerosene oil		Per tin	12	50
Potato	*Alu*	Per kilogram	0	62
Brinjal	*Baigun*	Ditto	0	75
Bean	*Simi*	Ditto	0	37
Sweetpeas	*Matar*	Ditto	1	00
Turmeric	*Hardi*		2	50
Mustard oil seeds	*Tori*	Per kilogram	2	50
Egg (Hen)	*Kukhura koa anda*	Per pair	0 0	56 to 62
Meat	*Masu*			
Mutton	*Khasi ko masu*	Per kilogram	3	50
Pork	*Sangur ko masu*	Ditto	2	50
Beef	*Goru ko masu*	Ditto	1	50
Local fishes		Ditto	3	50

Algarah

Next to Pedong Bazar, Algarah is the venue of another *Hat* with weekly sittings every Sunday. Algarah being only eight kilometres away from Upper Pedong, the villagers sometimes visit this *Hat* too. The number of trips of the buses and jeeps plying between

Kalimpong and Algarah and between Upper Pedong and Algarah is almost doubled.

As it stands today, the *Hat* at Algarah has now come out to be the biggest of the locality, in importance comparable only to that of Kalimpong. The *Hat* at Algarah draws about five thousand people of all the neighbouring *Khas Mahals* within a radius of twelve or thirteen kilometres. At least 14 traders from Pedong attend this *Hat* and instal temporary stalls there. The villagers of Pedong *Khas Mahal* including those of Upper Pedong throng the *Hat* for both buying and selling articles. Majority of the buyers and sellers in Algarah belong to the Lepcha and the Bhutia communities. In comparison to the traders of the *Hat* at Pedong Bazar, the number of sellers selling varieties of ornaments, or baskets of oranges at Algarah is assuredly greater. The speciality of Algarah as distinct from Pedong Bazar is that a greater number of sellers come here for the purpose of selling fowls, pigs and goats. The stalls for vegetables and clothes are also large, other items of sale being ginger, potato, maize, millet etc. But, cardamom is the most important item of commerce in this subdivision. Women constitute the bulk of the visitors.

Rhenok Hat

Next to the *Hats* at Pedong and Algarah, another *Hat*, located at Rhenok in Sikkim, sits every Friday, when jeeps ply between Pedong Bazar and Rhenok, the fare being Rs.2.00 *paise* per trip per head. Most of the local people visit Rhenok Bazar on foot. Along the newly constructed road with many curves and gradients, Rhenok is about 20 kilometres from Upper Pedong. But, along the *Chor-Bato* (Foot-tracks of shorter stretch), preferred to by the villagers, one has to walk hardly nine kilometers to reach Rhenok from Upper Pedong. At Rhenok too, majority of the buyers and the sellers are the Lepchas and the Bhutias. Many inhabitants from Pedong *Khas Mahal* and Upper Pedong visit the *Hat* at Rhenok, some for buying the urgent necessities, some for selling a few vegetables grown at home and a few others for selling a fowl or a young pig. As is the usual practice in the hill areas of the region, pleasantries are exchanged on meeting friends and relatives. Of the two more *Hats* with which the villagers have lesser intercourse, the one is located at Kagay with weekly sitting on Wednesday, where cardamom, butter, maize, millet, potato and vegetables are sold in retail and another at Rangelly in Sikkim about 25 kilometers from Upper Pedong, sits every Sunday.

Sources of water

Acute scarcity of water is the greatest local problem of the people, so much that they look at the sky in eager expectation of the rains despite the fact that rainy season in the hills brings in its train manifold calamities including alarming land-slips. Even then the rains temporarily solve problems of water for four or five months in a year by an easy supply of natural water. For the major part of the year supply of water poses an insuperable problem to the villagers.

About 25 years back, dysentery used to break out in epidemic form almost periodically in almost all the villages within Kalimpong subdivision, contamination of the local springs, the main sources of water in the hill areas, being the preponderant cause. Hence, the authorities were alive to the serious problem of the people for supply of pure and disinfected water. Accordingly, many schemes of water-supply through pipe-lines were introduced in Kalimpong and its neighbourhood within the pale of Darjeeling Improvement Fund Area. Pedong Bazar too has been enjoying the facility of tap-water for quite a long time. Three or four public taps in the Bazar area and some private connections in the houses cater to the present needs. But, till very recent times, the inhabitants outside Darjeeling Imrovement Fund

Area were denied the facility of tap-water. It was only after repeated appeal from the public that the Subdivisional Officer, in administrative charge of Darjeeling Improvement Fund Areas, extended the facility of water-supply to the villages around the Bazar area, but on a very restricted scale. The villagers of Upper Pedong have since been enjoying the facility of tap-water. During the field-survey five public taps were observed to have been functioning in Upper Pedong with a population of 440. The real problem is not posed by the existing number of taps but by the volume and flow of water. In the rainy season though supply of water through the taps is abundant, the supply of water through pipe-lines at other times of the year remains uncertain. The natural springs do not supply sufficient water. Under pressure of inadequacy and uncertainty of water-supply, the villagers depend on the few *Jhoras* (Gutters draining off rain-water) for a major part of the year. People with 15 or 20 empty containers of tins stand in queue near the *Jhoras*. The mode of carriage of water in the hills being different from that in the plains, no hillman generally carries water in the empty oil-cans of the capacity of 16 kilogrammes on his back. Buckets or pitchers, filled with water, are difficult for carriage to higher elevations and *vice-versa* along the steep hilly alleys, whereas the prevalent method is claimed to be an easy one. Much to the relief of the villagers, rainy season provides bountiful supply of natural water. For collection of rain-water, the roofs of the houses are specially built in order that water trickles down into a big vessel, suitably placed to receive it. Water, so collected, is used even for drinking purposes. A scarce commodity in times of acute crisis, a bucketful of water is sold a 0.25 *paise*.

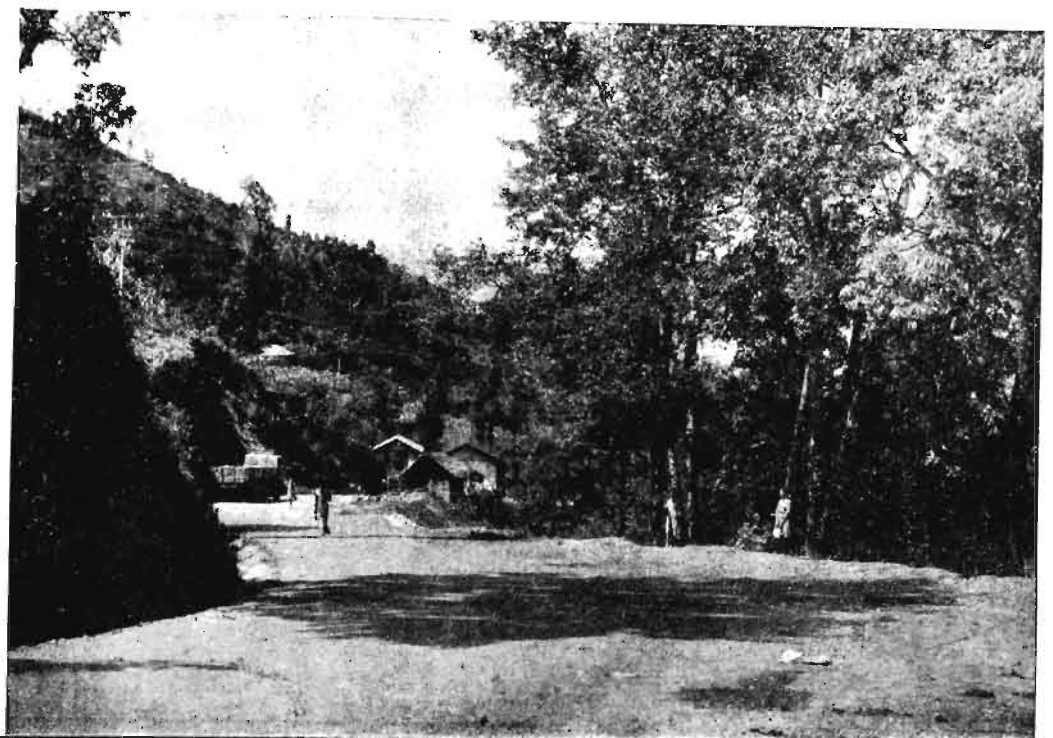
Drainage

The present village being situated on the hill-slope, water does not accumulate at any place in the village. The natural channels along a ravine-like slope for the passage of rain-water is locally called a *Jhora*, which also serves as natural drainage for the village. Prior to selection of any plot for the construction of a house, the villagers prefer a site, far away from a *Jhora*, the proximity of which to the dwelling is believed to cause damage to the plinth and the foundation of the house. After a heavy downpour the *Jhoras* look like small water-falls, especially where the slope is abruptly steep. Drainage along the *Jhoras* apart, water is also drained over the plots of land, prepared for terraced cultivation.

Places of worship

The creeds of the people of Upper Pedong are as varied as their ethnic groups. The villagers belong broadly to three religious faiths, namely the Christians, the Buddhists and the Hindus. In accordance with plurality of religions, the beliefs and practices associated therewith are likewise varied. But even then, the villagers professing the same religion do not have one and the same place for their community worship. Thus among the Buddhists, the Sikkimese, the Bhutanese, the Tibetans and the Tamangs have their own place of community worship on the basis of ethnic groups, even though in the same religious group. The entry of one ethnic group to the place of worship of another is not, however, forbidden or restricted.

The temple of the Buddhists is locally called a *Gompa* (Monastery), which in Tibetan language means a place (*Pa*) of meditation (*Gom*). Though the *Gompa* of the Sikkimese Buddhists, housed in an improvised structure roofed with corrugated iron sheets, is located in Upper Pedong in the enclave of the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Bhutanese Bhutias visit the *Gompa* of the Bhutias in the adjacent Sakiyong *Khas Mahal*, hardly a kilometre from Pedong Bazar, as the five *Dukpa* (Bhutanese Bhutia) households do not have a *Gompa* of their own in Upper Pedong proper.



Lift up the eyes unto the hills of the Himalayan village

The Kalimpong-Rishi Road approaching the village Upper Pedong



Jocund day stands tiptoe on the mystic mountain top

A view of the village showing how completely the dwellings have merged with the landscape



The Topkhana meadow

The ruins of the Damsong *Gheri* lie above this—the garrison used the meadow as a parade ground



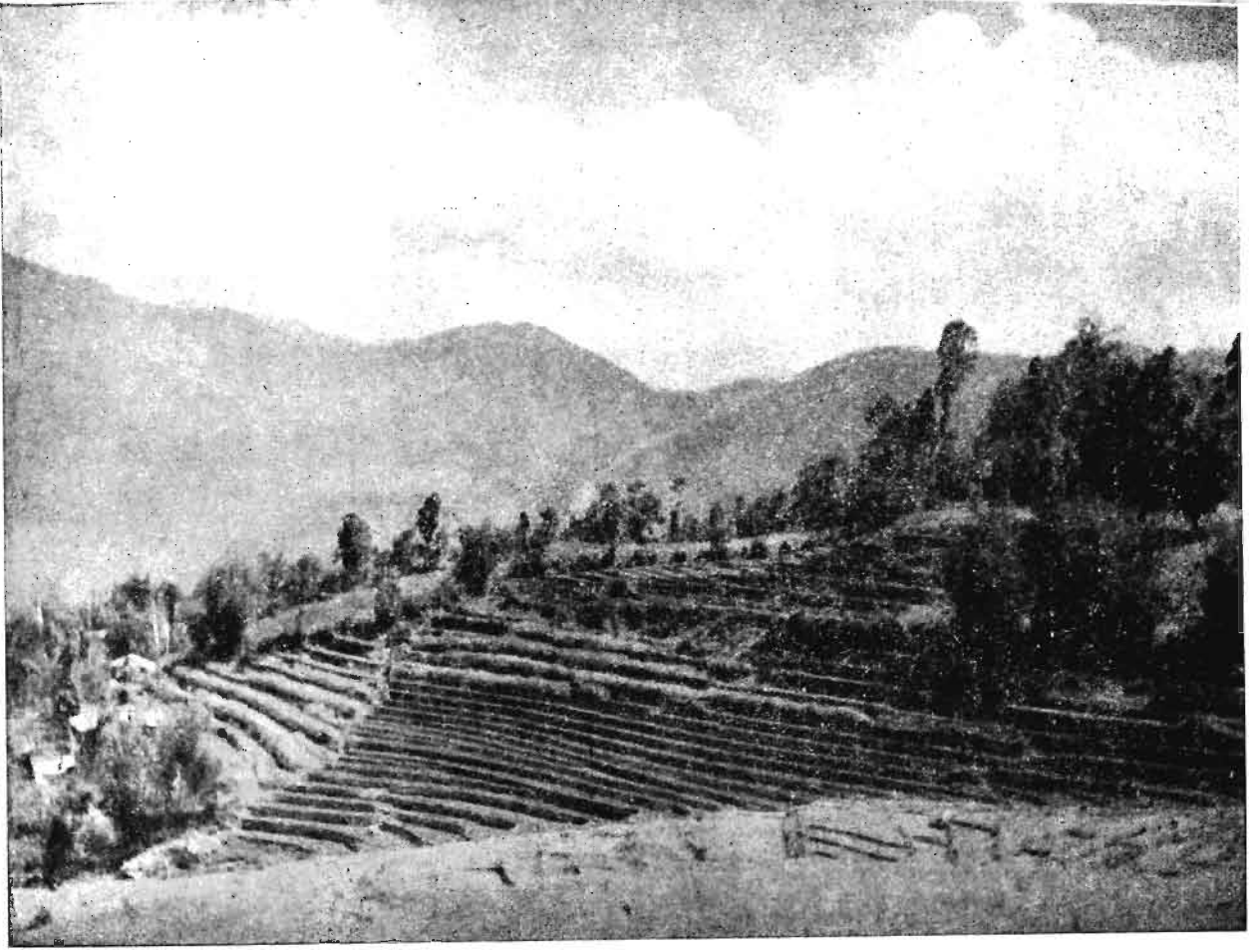
Ancient track along the rifted rocks with entrance once jammed with caravans

'And how the silence surged softly backward, when the plunging hoofs were gone' along the mule-track through the village, once traversed by itinerant merchants to and from Tibet



Round the rugged rock and along the uneven path

At his heels lie the vast and trunkless legs of stone of the mountainous path coursing through the village

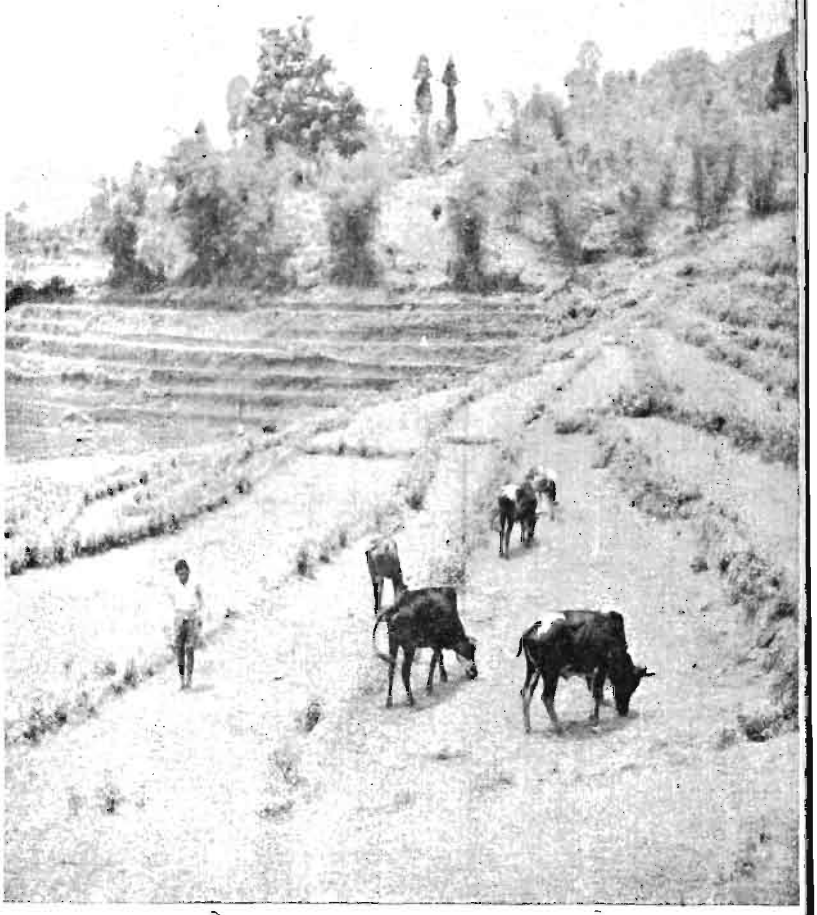


Making all rejoice

A gently sloping hillside near Pedong showing a typical example of *terrace* cultivation of paddy

'The mountain sheep are sweeter, but the valley sheep are fatter'. What of the bovine stock ?

Cattle grazing on the pastures of the wilderness of the hills where grass grows all up and down



A minor solution to a major problem

A little girl carries water from a trained *Jhora*





To learn to write and cyphe and measure

The Primary School



St. George's Mission School

A Secondary School run by the Roman Catholic Missionaries



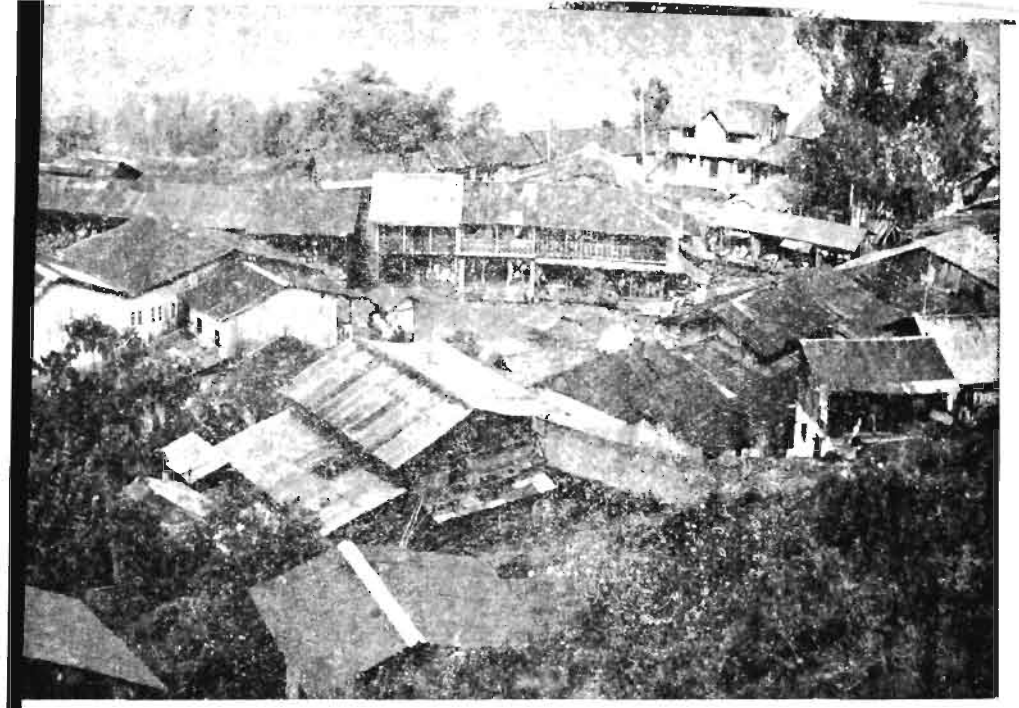
The Primary Health Centre

Medical aid brought close to the villagers of the area



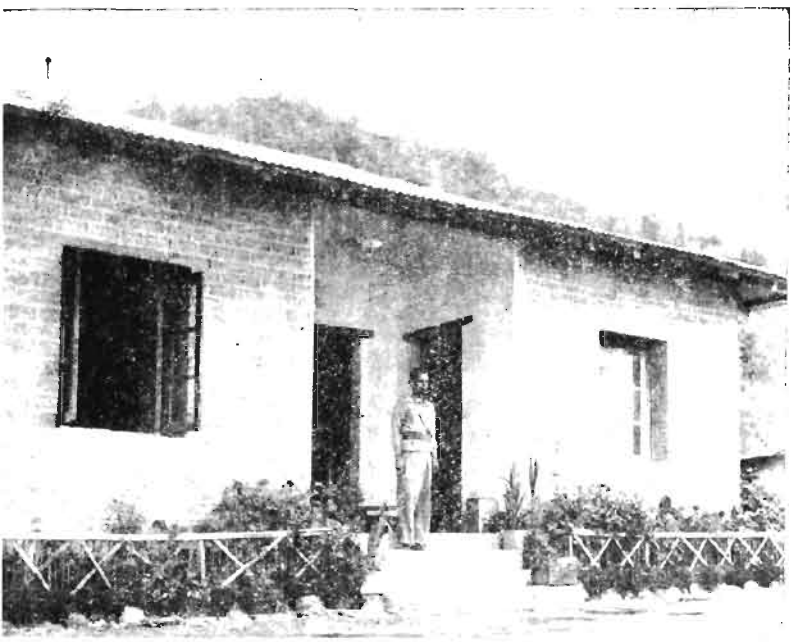
The Nurses' Quarters of the Health Centre

Residence of the members of the hospital staff including the modern *Hippocrates* and the followers of *Nightingale*



Old trade's plying

Pedong Bazar



Tongueless vigil and a careful watch

The Police Outpost in Pedong Bazar



Requiescat in pace

Tombstones white with the names of the deceased carved on them with or without epitaphs in the cemetery of the Roman Catholic Christians

4187



Towards the silent tomb of the earth shrouded with thickets, shrubs and grass

In cold graves underneath are lain the Dukpas and the Sikkimese Bhutias



Ruins of forgotten times

The citadel at Damsong built by *Gebey Achcho*, a Lepcha warrior chief

The Bhutanese *Gompa*, housed in a massive wooden structure with roof of corrugated iron sheet, is not only the oldest but also the biggest Buddhist *Gompa* of the neighbourhood. Another small-sized Tibetan *Gompa,* constructed in the recent past after the historic flight of His Holiness the Dalai Lama from Tibet to India and the influx of the Tibetan refugees as thereafter, is situated in Lower Pedong at a place, little below the Bazar area. The Tamangs too have their own *Gompa* at Upper Pedong Bustee, about 11 kilometres away from Pedong and three kilometres from Algarah Bazar.

The Hindu villagers have two temples in Pedong Bazar. The twin temples are pucca structures, situated side by side. The temple, dedicated to *Lord Satyanarayana* (one of the many incarnate agnates of *Lord Vishnu*) and founded in 1899, is bigger in size than that of *Sankarji* (*Mahadeva* of the Hindu Trinity), a temple of very recent origin. Pedong has no other temple. But the merchants of Pedong Bazar, mostly immigrants from Bihar and Rajasthan, have organised a *Hari Sankirtan Sabha* (Body of psalmodists) to sing hymns of *Lord Hari* (Synonym of *Lord Vishnu*) and organise weekly sessions of the recital of *Kirtans* (Devotional songs). Having no fixed place of congregation, the musical demonstrations are arranged in the covered shed of the *Bazar* (Market-place) at night. An earthen altar within an enclosed space in one corner of the shaded structure in the *Bazar* lays the venue for the community worship of some of the deities of the Hindu pantheon. This may well be treated upon as a temple of the Hindu villagers here for the private or community-worship of any god or goddess.

The Christians have sanctuaries of their own in separate Churches representing the different sectional groups. The Church for the Roman Catholic Christians, situated near the St. George's High School was constructed at Pedong by the Roman Catholic Mission of Paris in 1882, more by chance than out of any choice. The sponsoring authorities of the Parisian ecclesiasts had initially decided to go as far as Lhasa to found a Church there to convert the Tibetans, but were not granted any permission to visit Lhasa by the-then Government of Tibet. Consequently, the Missionaries from France, thwarted in their march to Lhasa, did not retrace their steps to Paris, but instead established the present Church here at Upper Pedong as an epicentre of the intensified proselytising activity with the ulterior end to transmit the messages of Christianity even upto Lhasa, if not beyond. Known as St. George's Mission, one of the oldest Missions in the subdivision of Kalimpong, it claims to rank second or third in importance in the district of Darjeeling as a whole.

Cemetery and burial ground

Peopled by different communities professing different religious faiths, Upper Pedong has accordingly earmarked different sites for the disposal of dead bodies by different castes and communities of the village.

Among the Christians, the Roman Catholics have their own burial ground in Upper Pedong, just below the Roman Catholic Church on the Rishi Road, the date of its establishment being as early as 1882, the year in which the Roman Catholic Church was set up in the village. Tombs and memorial stones in this graveyard are sometimes bedecked with boquets, garlands and flowers, offered to the deceased by the next of kin in memoriam. The Protestant Christians with no separate cemetery of their own for use by the members of their community in the village have sites for private burial grounds of individual households in or near their homesteads.

Among the Buddhists, the Bhutias have their own crematorium at a site, above the Sikkimese *Gompa* in Upper Pedong. Again, the Sherpas, all of whom profess Buddhism, have their cremation ground very near their settlement almost on top of the Pedong Hill.

The Tamangs, also Buddhists by religion, have their own cemetery to the north of the village outside its bounds. As for the Hindus, a scheduled place over an extensive area in the remote north-eastern part of the village serves as the crematorium for use by many households of the Hindu community for burning the dead bodies. Some households, however, use the same place, though at a different site, for burial of the dead bodies. Only the Christians are found to raise memorial stones on graves. Households of no other community, whether a Hindu or a Buddhist, erect any tombstone even if they bury the dead bodies.

Brief history of the region

A brief regional history of the area throws an important light on the socio-cultural and economic growth of the people all around. Interesting though it appears, the subdivision of Kalimpong even a century ago in 1865 was not included in the district of Darjeeling. It was transferred to the district of Darjeeling in 1866 (*vide* pp. iii, District Handbook of Darjeeling, 1951 Census, by A. Mitra, I.C.S.). The early history of the region is a record of internecine strifes and skirmishes between the three neighbouring Hill States of Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. The East India Company later became a party to the quadrangular battle over the hill-tracts, in which the *Queen of the Hill Stations*, lay slumbering and woke up at a more remote future. The district of Darjeeling including the present subdivision of Kalimpong originally belonged to the *Raja* of Sikkim and the *Rongpas* (Folk of the ravine or squatters of the land of caves), as the Lepchas alluded to themselves, were the indigenes of the place. In 1706 the Bhutanese had wrested from the *Raja* of Sikkim the area, presently constituted by the Kalimpong subdivision.

In 1780 the warlike Gurkhas, who after 'taking advantage of internal struggles among the old ruling clans of the Nepal Valley', had come to power and sought outlets for expansion, advanced towards the south, after they were baffled by the Chinese Empire in the north. They overran Sikkim and within the next thirty years they made inroads eastward as far as the Tista river.

The East India Company seized the opportunity of the victory of the British in the Nepal War (1814-1816) and by the Treaty of Titaliya in 1817 the Company had forced the Gurkhas to give up their claims to places in the lowlands along the southern frontier of Nepal, and to withdraw from Sikkim. By a Treaty with the *Raja* of Sikkim, dated the 10th February, 1817, a tract ceded by the Nepalese was given to him and this created a barrier between the eastern frontier of Nepal and Bhutan. Sikkim was maintained as a buffer State and the sovereignty of the *Raja* of Sikkim was guaranteed by the Company.

A decade later, troubles resumed and the opportunity was now taken by the Government of India to secure the cession of the hill-station of Darjeeling by the execution of a deed of grant by the *Raja* of Sikkim in 1835. In 1849 two British Officers, while travelling in Sikkim with the permission of the *Raja* of Sikkim, were arrested. This treachery was avenged by the annexation of the entire Terai by the British. Even then, raids on the British territory continued unabated and it was decided by the British, after fruitless negotiations for peace, to take possession of some more territory of Sikkim to ensure continuous peace and to prevent recurrence of similar troubles. Accordingly, a British attack on Sikkim followed and in March, 1861, Tumlong, the Capital of Sikkim, was occupied. The old *Raja* of Sikkim abdicated in favour of his son, with whom a Treaty was made on the 28th March, 1861, putting an end to all frontier troubles with Sikkim and securing freedom of commerce across the border of Sikkim.

Though everything turned quiet on the Sikkimese front, it was not so on Bhutan's

border. Incursions into the British territory, pillage on property, murders and imprisonment of the British subjects commissioned quite frequently by the Bhutanese did not give respite to the British administration in India. Threatened by the intelligence report of a plan of the Bhutanese to attack Darjeeling, the British took all precautions by taking up positions. But they set themselves soon on negotiations with Bhutan through the Eden Mission which failed miserably and was met with indignity. Instead of settling the old accounts, the British under duress signed a treaty giving up their claim to the Bhutan Duars. Journey back to Darjeeling in 1864 of Sir Ashley Eden proved difficult indeed.

Negotiations having proved infructuous, the British expedition to Bhutan in 1864 virtually advanced unopposed and ended in November, 1865, when a new Treaty, ceding Bhutan Duars, passes leading into the Bhutan hills and the area comprising Kalimpong subdivision to the British against an annual subsidy, was signed. The Bhutanese lost in Kalimpong the fortune, they had extorted from Sikkim about 159 years ago. And Kalimpong, then notified as a subdivision under the Deputy Commissioner of the Western Duars district, was transferred to the district of Darjeeling in 1866. The cession of Kalimpong in 1866 to the dominion of the British in India ushered in more or less an unruffled political equilibrium and an uninterrupted tranquility on the Indian borders with Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. But, the administrative history of Darjeeling district in general, and of Kalimpong and its neighbourhood in particular, was then in its infancy. Kalimpong continued to have been administered from the Sadar subdivision of the district with only a Manager of the *Khas Mahals*, working at Kalimpong under the Deputy Commissioner of Darjeeling district, police work having been under the charge of an Inspector. Kalimpong was given an elevated status and a distinct identity of its own in 1916, when Kalimpong subdivision was created. The annexation of Kalimpong or the constitution of the district of Darjeeling in the British fold of administration, however, conferred on it some privileges by which the laws or regulations meant for other areas could not normally apply to the district, unless specially extended to it. After Independence of India, the Constitution of India abrogated all the special privileges enjoyed by the district. Yet, some Acts, before application here, require modification to suit peculiar local conditions of the hills. Transfers of holdings in the *Khas Mahals* of the district from the hillmen to the plainsmen have not been permitted and except for special reasons, transfers from the Bhutias and the Lepchas to the Nepalis have not been allowed in the Kalimpong *Khas Mahal*. But, the policy was revised in respect of the land acquired for the purpose of developing Kalimpong as a hill station next in importance to Darjeeling.

It is only in the context of this historical background that the socio-economic profile of Upper Pedong can be drawn in clear details and the way of life of the villagers with their peculiar customs and habits, institutions and organisations can be understood in its proper perspective.

Myth or legend associated with the area

A local legend about *Gebey Accho*, the mystic Chieftain of the Lepchas, has transcended the geographical limits of a village or a subdivision and concerns not only Pedong or Kalimpong, but also its neighbourhood. Moreover, the legend is told and retold like folk-tales by both the Lepchas and the Bhutias. The notable characteristic of the legend is that the version varies in some factual details among both the communities. The Lepchas glorify *Gebey Accho* as a great potentate and a national hero, whereas the Bhutias look upon *Gebey Accho* as an enigmatic personality vested with miraculous occult powers. Yet, the legend keeps both the communities equally

spell-bound in the village or elsewhere. The Bhutia version of the legend of *Gebey Accho*, collected from the Head *Lama* of the Bhutia *Gompa*, serves its purpose in establishing the alleged superiority of the Bhutias to the Lepchas, not only in this world but also in the world beyond. The fatalism of the legend lies in the death of the Lepcha King in the hands of the Bhutias and appears to have been so contrived that it serves a predetermined end. The Bhutia version, *ad captandum*, is narrated below.

Long long ago, there lived a Lepcha couple at Daling (44 kilometres from Kalimpong and now in ruins). While the husband used to work in the jungle, his wife used to carry his tiffin to the forest. One day a devilish spirit, masqueraded as the husband, lay in wait for the woman in some other part of the forest. Quite in usual time the wife carried the tiffin and mistook the devil for her husband, to whom she offered the tiffin. Then they wooed each other. The real husband, on the other hand, waited in vain for his tiffin and in the afternoon hurried back home in hunger. He rebuked his wife for her lapse in not bringing him his meals. The wife kept silent, as she could realise how she had been hoodwinked by some devil in the guise of her husband. But, she did not disclose to her husband the mischief done to her by the devil. It is believed that the woman had conceived soon after and the son, born to her of the devil, turned into *Gebey Accho*, whose body was made of iron instead of bone and who attained in course of time supernatural powers.

Gebey Accho in his youth became the Chieftain of the local Lepchas and built a fort at Daling. But, not contented with the fort, he exercised his magical powers to build a magnificent *Gheri* (Fort) at Damsong (five kilometres from Upper Pedong) overnight. Relics of the fort that still remain there attract visitors from far-off places even now. *Gebey Accho* then ascended the throne and proclaimed himself the King of the Lepchas. Stories of his magical powers, which had already spread far and wide, had so frightened the neighbouring King of Bhutan that in him the Bhutanese King presaged troubles. So, a very high price was offered by him for *Gebey Accho's* head. Tempted by the prize, six or seven Bhutanese soldiers with a Bhutanese General, named *Are Tseti Dughe*, machinated to kill *Gebey Accho*. Disguised as Buddhist *Bhikshus* (Monks), the conspirators set out on a fake pilgrimage and arrived in Damsong, where they were cordially received by *Gebey Accho*, who had arranged an archery competition in honour of the guests. The Bhutanese soldiers in pseudo-appearance of pilgrims proposed to cook food, arrange the dinner and to serve the dishes themselves on that occasion, as they feigned to have had expert cooks in their party. After the archery competition was over, the guests sat down to dinner. Two of the cooks, who served the food, having failed to accomplish their vile design, *Are Tseti Dughe* appeared on the scene to serve cold drink. Just when *Gebey Accho* had stooped down to take the drink, the Bhutanese Army Chief severed his head. But, the severed head set itself to its former position. Repeated feats to sever it having proved ineffective, *Are Tseti Dughe* threw some dust on the decapitated body, and to the profound shock and amazement of the assembled guests, the severed head fell into a tank.

Dughe regretted throwing *Gebey Accho's* head into the tank, as he had earlier promised the Bhutanese King to bring the coveted trophy. At the same time he remorsefully realised that the spirit of *Gebey Accho* would haunt torture him throughout his life. In utter despair and penitence, *Dughe* committed suicide by drowning himself, with the ulterior motive to rule over the spirit of *Gebey Accho* as a superior ghost in the other world.

The Lepcha version of the same legend about *Gebey Accho*, collected from an educated Lepcha resident of Pedong *Khas Mahal*,

contended to extol *Gebey Accho* as a Hero and a *Saviour* of the Lepchas who rescued the community from an ignoble shame and upheld the dignity, solidarity and freedom of the land, in which they lived, and saved them from being trampled by the Bhutias. The story reflects the innate pride of a community for its assumed superiority to the other. Nonetheless, the legend has a stream of consciousness of the community, historically subjected to onslaughts from several outside powers, yet not cowed down to a state of subjugation or nervous trepidation, nor oriented to a pacifist attitude. The Lepcha version runs as follows :

Long, long ago, the Bhutanese used to depredate the land of the Lepchas. Sometimes, the Bhutanese Royal Army used to extort the produce of the poor Lepcha farmers as ransom and imposed unauthorised taxes upon them. Sometimes the innocent Lepchas were forcibly kidnapped by the Bhutanese and tortured for nothing. The Lepchas were then subjected to inhuman persecution in the hands of the powerful Bhutanese. It was in such a calamitous juncture of their history that *Gebey Accho* was born in a poor Lepcha family of a village, named Git Lashyong (at present Git Dubling *Khas Mahal* within the police station of Kalimpong). Grown into manhood, *Gebey Accho* applied himself to the task of organising and training the Lepchas in para-military lines. In no time, the Lepchas, disciplined and organised under the leadership of *Gebey Accho*, vowed to defend their motherland from the agressive incursions of the Bhutanese. Later, a big fort was built by *Gebey Accho* at Tamsang (Damsong of the present) along with some other forts in the neighbouring regions, of which the one at Daling is still famous. The Lepchas, rejuvenated and unified under their common Hero, not only courageously withstood the attacks of the Bhutanese, but also made such counter-offensives that the Bhutanese were forced to retreat and make a treaty. In the face of such a humiliation, the Bhutanese hatched on a heinous conspiracy to murder *Gebey Accho*, the enthroned King of the Lepchas. In honour of *Gebey Accho*, a grand feast was arranged by the Bhutanese, who offered to the invited Lepcha guests liquor in large quantities to make them heavily drunken. Taking advantage of the helplessness of the defenceless Lepcha King, a Bhutanese General assassinated him most brutally.

It is popularly believed that after the murder of *Gebey Accho*, the Bhutanese army captured Damsong and the neighbouring areas. The local people, whether Lepchas and Bhutias, are now well aware of the legendary figure of *Gebey Accho* and are also in the know of the stories of his assassination. Without entering into the merits of the legends, it may be observed that thematically both the versions have an element of folk-tale-like characteristics. Historically too, the events have some basic correspondence to the facts of the legend. The historic capture of Kalimpong by the Bhutias from the Lepchas fits well into the broad framework of the legend, especially when the latter alludes to the Forts of Daling and Damsong, which still exist there.

A version of the same legend also finds mention in the school texts of the local students. In a text-book on Nepali Essay-writing prescribed for the students of Class VII-VIII the legend is recorded. A translated version of the text is given below.

The consolidation of Lepcha Empire and their nationality under the leadership of Gebey Accho

Towards the middle of the 16th Century, the history of the Lepcha people can be traced. They migrated to the south and spread from Ilam (Nepal) to eastern Sikkim. According to Census 1941, the number of Lepchas in Darjeeling district was 12,000, but the total number of Lepchas of all places may be 25,000 to 30,000. It is to be noted that they never went down to the plains, as no traces of them can be found beyond the *Subuk* (Plains).

After the foundation of the Gorkha Kingdom by Prithi Narayan Shah, the Lepcha people together with the Kirats were subjugated. The Gorkha people advanced as far as the river Rangeet. The King of Sikkim feared the menace of the Gorkhas and entered into an alliance with the English and gave Darjeeling as a compensation. The Shah dynasty of Nepal gave the Lepcha people the freedom to practise their religion and culture. The Lepcha people then started migrating towards eastern Nepal. The same privileges were given to the Lepchas inhabiting Darjeeling district.

Kalimpong and Sikkim are the real places, where the Lepcha people are found in good number. The Lepchas of the place were suppressed by the Bhutanese King. The Lepcha people are not agriculturists, but the Dukpa King levied some land-revenue, which was forcibly collected.

The various folksongs bear testimony to the oppression of the Lepchas by the Bhutias. One such song is :

"Child, keep quiet. Don't fear. Dukpa will never take you....."

This shows that the innocent Lepchas very much suffered in the hands of the Dukpas. Meanwhile Gyit Long Shyul, a village in Kalimpong, saw the birth of a strong and intelligent Lepcha. His name was *Gebey Accho*. The village is named today as Gyit Dubling (former name was Gyit Long Shyul) at Budhabare *Khas Mahal.* A majority of the Lepchas can be found there. *Gebey Accho* was determined to emancipate his people from the subjugation of the Dukpa king. He organised an army with bows and arrows and *Jhampak* (Typical Lepcha weapon).

They took spears also and the army was stationed at Damsong Gari at Pedong *Khas Mahal.* They rebuilt the fort and extended it to Peswak and Rongpu (Sikkim). The name of the place in Peswak is Fungri and in Rongpu, it is Savang Dangri. They attacked the enemies from Fungri and the Dukpas evacuated the place invading the east. They entered Kalimpong and advanced as far as Dalimgree at Sombarey. From there they attacked Bhutan but it was followed by a peace treaty. To maintain this peace treaty, they arranged to have a feast. (Cf. History of Sparta). During night the trustful Lepchas were suddenly attacked by the Dukpas, as it was their conspiracy. *Gebey Accho* was stabbed on his bed. When the leader was found killed, the Lepcha soldiers scattered hither and thither. The captured soldiers were kept in a camp, where the Dukpa king cut the body of *Gebey Accho* into pieces and gave them to foxes and vultures.

The Lepcha Kingdom was again conquered. Immediately after this war, there was a famine at Kalimpong and it was believed by both the parties that the spirit of Gebey did so. Both the parties tried to propitiate the spirit of Gebey by offerings and sacrifices. The Lepcha community once for ever came under the subjugation of the Dukpas. With the spread of Christian missionaries, the place inhabited by the Lepchas was dominated by the missionaries. The Buddhist Lepchas and the Lepchas professing primitive religion (*Bon*) were converted into Christianity. After that they were given free education and all types of assistance *i.e.*, economic assistance and help in domestic affairs. Now the Lepchas and the Nepali community began to settle in the same place in the district from Ilam. With the passing of social regulation, irrespective of caste, sect and creed by Rana Jang Bahadur (contemporary of queen Victoria), the Lepchas were recognised as a nationality not distinct from the Nepalis. Besides, there were no restriction on the Lepchas from the English. Hence the Lepchas are called *Pitle Bhanr* by the Nepalis.

In course of time when there was good relationship between the Nepalis and the Lepchas,

there was inter-mingling of races ; and the Lepchas learnt the Nepali language. Even now the medium of instruction for the Lepchas is Nepali.

Etymology of the name of the village

The story goes that Upper Pedong and its surrounding areas were part of a dense forest many years ago, far beyond the pale of memory of the living generation of today. Incense trees, the most predominant variety in the-then jungles on account of their luxuriant growth, did not evade the notice of the travellers from Tibet, who used to halt at this place on way to Kalimpong. *Pe* in Tibetan means incense (*Dhupi*) and *Dong* means a tree. The Tibetan word *Pedong*, therefore, means an incense tree. The present village, the halting place of the Tibetan travellers of the past, was accordingly named Pedong, which word in course of time corrupted into the present form of *Pedong*.

Number of households

The village is multi-ethnic, in as much as members of 16 known and one unknown communities live side by side. The names of the communities are given in the table below.

The head of the household, belonging to the unspecified community, is a Christian orphan brought up in different stages of his life by different Missions including St. George's Mission in the village. It appears that according to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Lists Modification Order (1956), the Sikkimese Bhutias, Dukpas, Sherpas and the Lepchas are members of the Scheduled Tribes and the Kamis are members of the Scheduled Castes. Thus 42.5 per cent of the total households are members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. About 6.9 per cent of the total households and 35.6 per cent of the total families are members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively.

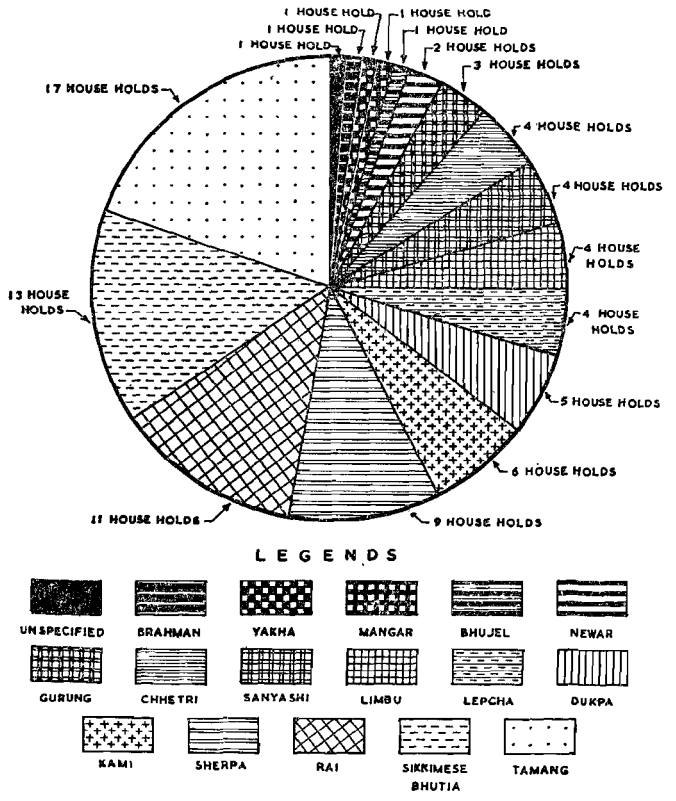


TABLE 5

COMMUNITIES AND HOUSEHOLDS

Community	No. of households
Sikkimese Bhutia	13
Dukpa	5
Tamang	17
Rai	11
Sherpa	9
Kami	6
Lepcha	4
Limbu	4
Sanyashi	4
Chhetri	4
Gurung	3
Newar	2
Bhujel	1
Mangar	1
Yakha	1
Brahman	1
Unspecified	1
Total	87

[redacted]


DISTRICT DARJEELING
NOT TO SCALE
Cultivated Land
Customs Office
Play Ground
In Years
Hindu
Buddhist
Christian


Meadow Road
Primary School
NAME OF THE

Residential pattern

Though inhabited by households of different castes, tribes and religious communities, Upper Pedong appears to hold itself aloof from the evil influences of parochialism in matters of residential arrangement. On scrutiny of the residential pattern of the different groups, no factional groupism, emanating whether from caste-hierarchy or from religious followings, appears to have influenced the residential pattern of the communities and groups. Affinity of the different communities has neither dictated nor shaped the residential pattern of the households of the village. In Upper Pedong all the families do not own their homesteads ; yet some of the non-owner residents of the village are granted the privilege to live on lands of their respective owners, even though the households are not landowners themselves. The privilege has been obtained by the non-owners of homesteads as *Pakhurias* (Share-croppers) of the landowners. Thus four Sanyashi, one Dukpa and one Limbu, four Tamang families live near each other in the lands of their common Limbu landlord. But, from the pattern of residential settlement of the village as a whole, one cannot altogether ignore the tendencies of families of the same ethnic group to live near each other, if not possible to live together. Houses of about fourteen Bhutias are situated on all the four sides of the *Gompa*, like a cluster. Houses of all the Kami, Rai and half of the Tamang families in the vicinity of the Bhutia enclave are situated in a dispersed state. Again, four Bhutia families, late entrants in the village, reside beside the Tamang and the Rai households.

The Tamangs, numerically the second majority community next to the Bhutias, have unlike the latter no cluster of their own. But, the houses of half the Tamang families of the village are situated within close range of each other, the residences of other Tamang families being dispersed all over the village.

The Rais too, though numerically the third major group in the village, do not have a compact residential locality of their own, their houses too being dispersed all over.

The Sherpas, the fourth largest ethnic group in the village, reside in an identifiable enclave of their own at the highest altitude of the village. The growth of their residential area being of very recent origin because of their late immigration, this village could not provide any site for their houses at lower elevation near the Rishi Road on account of non-availability of land mostly. Even when some plots were available, the price was beyond the reach of most of them. Consequently, the Sherpa households, mostly friends or relatives of each other, purchased land on the highest altitude for building their houses there. The cluster of the Sherpas is situated about 700 to 800 feet above Pedong Bazar, the place in Pedong *Khas Mahal*. The distance of the Sherpa enclave from the shopping area is considerable and makes it difficult for an intercourse with Pedong Bazar. Even for purchases of such common items as salt or match, a Sherpa has to come down to Pedong Bazar all the way from an altitude of 800 feet and climb up the height with the purchased commodity.

The Kamis, not living in a cluster though, are not far from one another. With the exception of the Sanyashis, all other communities, namely the Lepchas, the Limbus, the Chhetris, the Gurungs and the Newars, live in houses of intermixed settlement. Only four Sanyashi families, related to one another by kinship, live more or less closely as *Pakhurias* on the land of a Limbu landlord.

History of residential settlement

The Lepchas claim themselves to be the original residents of an area, which once formed a part of Sikkim and also of Bhutan. Many Lepchas of the early households, still settled in some of the *Khas Mahals* near Kalimpong such as Gitdubling, Bong, Sindibong, Dalapchan

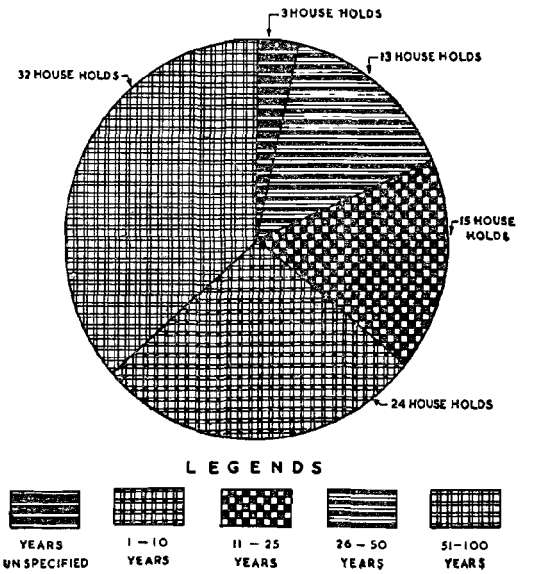
etc., as also in the two adjacent *Khas Mahals* of Upper Pedong, namely Sakyong and Kashone. But, none of them resides in Upper Pedong.

During investigation in the present village only two Sikkimese Bhutia families have been found to claim themselves as the aborigines of the region, but none of the two is acquainted with any history of the village expect that only the Lepchas and the Bhutias are referred to as the original residents of the neighbouring villages, living there for more than hundred years.

Now the Lepchas and the Bhutias in Upper Pedong are far outnumbered by several immigrant communities from Nepal. The elderly people associate the immigration of the Nepalis into Pedong *Khas Mahal* with the Nathung War of 1888 between India and Tibet. A Nepali of the Newar community, a contractor for the supply of military provisions to the British Government, had brought in his company a few Nepali households and settled in the locality. Later, they brought their friends and relatives.

Some other Nepalis associate their migration to Darjeeling with the construction of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railways in the seventies of the last century. They had heard from their grand-fathers and great grand-fathers that they were employed as labourers for earth-cutting work prior to the laying of the railway tracks. Construction over, the imported labourers mostly overspread into different directions of the district of Darjeeling in search of employment. Immigration of some households into Pedong *Khas Mahal* and the adjoining areas resulted at the end of this search. A good number of Nepalis again is said to have migrated to many Tea Gardens and Cinchona Plantations of the district to find a job. Later, some of them received land from the Government as *Raiyats* after settlement in different *Khas Mahals* of Kalimpong and took up agriculture. The biggest Cinchona Plantation of the area, comprising an area of 8000 acres of land upto 1949, was started in 1900 in the land of Munsong Reserved Forest two kilometres .from Upper Pedong. Again, the land-tenure system of *Pakhuria* according to which a landowner allows the tiller to settle on a portion of his land on the assured cheap labour from the *Raiyat* in times of need explains in part the immigration of some Nepalis to this village. The immigration of the Nepali households also bred of an economic necessity. The Nepalis took the initiative to modernise primitive methods of agriculture after having learnt cultivation by ploughing. Seasoned cultivators as they were, they could prove their usefulness after having displaced the less economic *Jhum* (Shifting cultivation), practised so long by the original Lepcha inhabitants of the place, by more efficient methods of ploughing and terraced cultivation. Besides, *Jhum* was wellnigh impossible in a place, where the Government was more stringent in the enforcement of the forest laws. But, the Lepchas and the Bhutias still possessed the land with no right of transfer to others. Hence, import of specialised labour, skilled in more

DURATION OF STAY (IN YEARS)



modern methods of cultivation, was an emergent need. Against this background the history of residential settlement of all the communities of the village may be examined. The table below will be helpful for the study of the growth of settlement in the village so far.

Though two Sikkimese Bhutia families and one Lepcha family do not specify the number of years of their residence in the village, the two Bhutia families nevertheless claim to be the earliest settlers. The arrival of the first batch of seven Nepali families in the village seventy to eighty years ago almost synchronized with the Nathung War. Some of these families came here on business to supply provisions to the military personnel. The immigration had reached its high watermark about 51 to 60 years ago, when the Cinchona Plantation at Munsong had started functioning in high speed. Some of the incoming families also had arrived here to work as plantation labour. It is significant that a small hamlet like Upper Pedong with practically no economic resources and with very little opportunities and openings for employment had attracted in course of the last 25 years 39 families, of which 32 households were Nepalis. Some had come here to settle on the land received on *Pakhuria* system, but most of them were drawn by the opportunities of employment as labourers in road construction work, which had attained an accelerated pace for some decades past. During the last 15 years as many as 33 families immigrated to the village. The construction of a portion of the Rishi Road from Algarah to Pedong, undertaken in 1950-51, and its maintenance in good condition ever since are no mean factors to have influenced the influx.

An octogenarian Nepalese of the Sanyashi community, who had immigrated here from Nepal about six decades ago remarked that in his youth when labour was very cheap in Nepal meagre earnings of a labourer posed a problem of living to many. Tempted by the news of relatively higher rates of wage in India many Nepalese had left their ancestral homes in Nepal for good and set out for India. Almost all the migrants had trekked their ways to India on foot and their journeys took one or two months to arrive at Darjeeling, which place most suited them because of lack of their experience of acclimatization to the plains.

TABLE 6

HISTORY OF RESIDENTIAL SETTLEMENT (YEAR)

Community	No. of household	No. of immigrant households that settled in the village for: 1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51-60 years	61-70 years	71-80 years	81-90 years	91-100 years	Year unknown
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	4	1	1	2	..	2
Dukpa	5	..	1	1	..	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	17	1	1	..	..	2	3	4	..	1	..	5	..	..	..
Rai	11	2	..	2	1	..	..	..	1	3	1	1	..	..	..
Sherpa	9	6	..	3	..	..	..	..	.	..	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	6	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Limbu	4	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	3	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	.	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	87	17	7	9	3	3	3	6	4	18	3	9	2	..	3

To enable one to know the places from which the present households or their ancestors had arrived several generations back, a table is given below. Apart from giving the places of origin of the households, it will also give an idea of the culture of the region so that the question of integration of the households in the present habitat or their resistance thereto may be understood with some depth.

It appears that two households immigrated to the village from the same *Khas Mahal*.

TABLE 7

PLACES WHEREFROM MIGRATED

Community	No. of households	No. of immigrant households from places in: Same police station: Pedong *Khas Mahal*	Sakiysong	Munsong	Barigel	Damsong	Kashone	Kalimpong town	Dalapchang	Same district: Kurseong	Darjeeling town
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Dukpa	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	17	1	1	5	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rai	11	..	..	1	..	1	2	..	..	..	..
Sherpa	9	..	..	4	..	4	1	..	..	..	..
Kami	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..
Lepcha	4	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Limbu	4	..	..	..	..	..	.	1	..	..	1
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.
Chhetri	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Newar	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	87	2	3	11	1	5	4	8	1	1	3

Community	No. of immigrant households from places in: Sikkim: Gangtok	Namchi Bazar	Rehnok	Singtom	Other parts	Bhutan: Paro	Nepal: Dolkha	Bhojpur	Ilam	Dhankhut	Other parts	Places unknown
Sikkimese Bhutia	1	2	..	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Dukpa	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	..	..	6	..
Rai	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	4	..
Sherpa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	.	..
Lepcha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Limbu	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Gurung	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Newar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Bhujel	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	1	2	2	1	4	5	5	8	2	2	12	4

Though all the Dukpa households came from Sikkim.

II

PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL LIFE

Introduction

Ethnic account

Bhutias
Sherpas
Tamangs or Murmis
Lepchas
Newars
Kamis
Bhujels
Sanyashis
Gurkhas
Chhetris
Mangars or Magars
Gurungs
Kiranti group
Rais or Jimdars
Limbus or Limboos
Yakhas

Residential lay-out and housing pattern

Households *vis-a-vis* bedrooms

House types

Constructional materials
Influence of the neighbourhood
Constructional plan

House-construction

Site-selection
Construction
Cost
Repair and maintenance
Privacy

Furniture

Consumer goods

Dress

Winter dress
Festive dress
Source
Change in the concept
Urban influence

Ornaments

Bangles
Necklace
Ornaments for the nose
Ornaments for the ears and feet
Source
Religion and ornaments
Trend in changing fashion
Decoration of the body

Food and drinks

Frequency of meals
Dietary composition
Vegetarianism and non-vegetarianism
Prohibited food vis-a-vis *social position*
Meals, menu and standard of living
Method of cooking
Feasts during festivals
Cooking utensils
Drinks

Fire and fuel

Life-cycle of the Bhutias

Phuchhaim (Pregnancy)
Nauran
Den (Marriage)
Na Dyan (Betrothal ceremony)
Marriage ceremony
Death
Sing Khee
Chyon Boo
Sing Lap
San Day
Cheu ji Chhi
Nee Siue-Cha Chi
Sheep Chu Shes Goo
Singh Dhee

Lom Chey
To Day

Life-cycle of the Tamangs

Birth
Name-giving ceremony and purificatory rites
Marriage ceremony
Rites in the house of the bridegroom and the bride on the day of marriage
Reception to the bridegroom's party and marriage-ceremony proper
Death
Funeral procession
Funerary rites in the crematorium
Period of mourning and restrictions
Purificatory rites

Life-cycle of the Sherpas

Name-giving ceremony and purificatory rites
Feast celebrating the birth of the baby
Marriage
Formal proposal
Negotiation for betrothal
Magna (Betrothal)
Marriage procession
Marriage ceremony
Bridegroom's return home
Death
Period of mourning
Ghewa (Purificatory ceremony)

Life-cycle of the Rais

Type of marriage
Mangi Bia (Marriage by negotiation)
Marriage ceremony
Ma Tug Ma (Presents offered by the bridegroom to the mother-in-law)
Chan Chin (Giving over the bride to the bridegroom)
Dhok Bhet (Formal introduction of the bridegroom)
Nuptial feast
Dulan (Bride's visit to her parents)
Choria Bia (Marriage by elopement)
Divorce
Death
Funeral procession

Rites in the burial ground
Selection of the site for burial
Rites connected with the burial
Rites on the day of burial
Period of mourning
Purificatory ceremony
Beliefs and practices connected with death

Life-cycle of the Kamis

Mangnu Din (Asking for the hand of the girl)
Sodeni (Formal negotiation)
Rit Bujhano (Presents offered to the girl's family by the boy's household)
Bia (Wedding ceremony)
The wedding procession
Reception to the bridegroom's party
Marriage-ceremony
Death

PEOPLE AND THEIR MATERIAL LIFE

Introduction

The Himalayas have set a magnificent back-drop for the little village Upper Pedong with a large number of communities, some with religion as the main crystallizing force for grouping together different households, some with territorial affiliations to explain the homogeneity of the groups and some others with ethnological characteristics to mark out some households on distinct entities of their own. Differences of the people appear magnified when examined ethnologically; but affinal bonds, when viewed against anecdotes of history or popular myths, minimise the ethnic differences and portrays the pen-picture of a family of different castes and creeds living together in the little enclave of a hilly village. In order to explain the background of each community, whether a religious, a territorial or an ethnic group, an ethnographic account of each is given in short to acquaint the readers with the points of difference and the points of unity. It is in the fitness of things that to enable the readers to have a better grasp on the ways of the life of the villagers of Upper Pedong constituted by seventeen communities an ethnic account of each community is called for. Such an account helps one appreciate the background of each community in as much as it presents generalised credentials about the people against their socio-cultural and politico-historical contexts in which the forces of change, accepted or resisted by the people with reference to their *in situ* cultures, may be understood properly and perhaps scientifically too.

Ethnic account

Bhutias

The people of Darjeeling and Sikkim, in general, and the residents of Upper Pedong in particular, attribute rather loosely the term *Bhutia* to any hillman other than a Nepali or a Lepcha. Some people even equate the identity of the Bhutias with that of any people professing Buddhism. Thus even among the Nepalis, the Buddhist Tamangs (Moormis), and the Buddhist Sherpas are sometimes referred to as Tamang Bhutias and Sherpa Bhutias, though according to the List of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Modification Order, 1956, the Sherpas are included in the Bhutia population and are treated as Bhutias. The term *Bhutia* is thus in practice found to be used more as a generic name than as any ethnic connotation bearing on territorial affiliations.

Dalton[1] has aptly said that the name opens out a very extensive field comprising the Little Tibetans proper and the people of Bhutan. One may recall in this connection the etymological derivation of the term Bhutia referring actually to the people of the Tibetan stock.

The Bhutias are one of the most interesting hilly peoples. Etymologically, *Bhutia* is a corruption of the Tibetan word *Bodpa* (of Tibet), *Bod* in Tibetan meaning Tibet and of being signified by the word *Pa*.

As the Tibetans call themselves *Bodpas* or the inhabitants of Tibet, the specific name Bhutia, which originally applied to the inhabitants of *Bod* or Tibet in general, has now become a generic term, bringing under its fold a wide range of hilly people including some of the Nepalis and the Lepchas also. The Bhutias are generally very hardy people with considerable physical strength, stamina and vigour. These people had fought against inclement weather for years together, surmounted the difficulties of the hilly terrains and had conquered the loftiest roads and the most perilous passes. These people are capable of enduring exposures for long periods at a stretch and of carrying heavy burden of load for long distance without either any pause or any rest.

According to Article 2 of the Constitution of the Bhutia Association of Darjeeling District, the Bhutias comprise the following territorial sub-groups.

TABLE 8

SUB-GROUPS OF THE BHUTIAS

Amdos	Inhabitants of Amdo in Tibet
Denjongpas	Inhabitants of Amdo in Tibet
Dukpas	Inhabitants of Sikkim
Gyarongpas	Not known
Kerongpas	Not known
Khanpas	Hailing from Kham province in Tibet
Khunuwas	Not known
Ladakpas	Hailing from Ladak
Sherpas	High-altitude mountaineers
Shingsarpas	Hailing from Singsa in North East Nepal
Sogpos	Not known
Tibetans	Inhabitants of Tibet
Walungpas	Not known
Yakmapas	Not known
Yolmos	Also known as Khagati or paper-markers

1 Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, by E. T. Dalton, reprinted in Indian Studies, Past and Present, Vol. I, No. 2, January, 1960, p. 282

Again, according to Dash[2], the Bhutias and the Tibetans have been grouped together as (1) Sikkimese Bhutias (2) Sherpa Bhutias or Bhutias of Nepal (3) Dukpa Bhutias or Bhutias of Bhutan proper and (4) Bhutias of Tibet or Tibetans.

A brief account of the different sections of the Bhutias, as found in Upper Pedong, is given below :

SIKKIMESE BHUTIAS

The Sikkimese Bhutias reside in the northern part of Sikkim towards the border of Tibet. Most of them admit rather openly and unobtrusively that they are a mixed people, born of a Tibetan father and a Sikkimese (probably Lepcha) mother. Campbell[3] holds that when a Tibetan had ascended the Sikkimese throne at the request of the Lepchas more than 300 years ago from now, a large number of Tibetans and Lamas had then come to Tibet and had settled there rather permanently. The Sikkimese Bhutias are the descendants of the Tibetans who had domiciled in Sikkim and later intermarried with the Lepchas and the Dukpas. This information is also substantiated by the observation of Hastings[4] that the "Tibetans came into the country (Sikkim) in the 17th Century and usurped the Government. They have now much Lepcha blood in them which, however, has not sufficed to improve them. They brought Lamaism with them and with Lamaistic literature, introduced the elements of civilisation."

2 Bengal District Gazetter, Darjeeling, by A. J. Dash, 1947, p. 75-76

3 Note on the Lepchas of Sikkim, by A. Campbell, in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1940, Vol. IX, Pt. I, No. 100, pp. 379-388

4 Encyclopoedia of Religion and Ethics, by James Hastings, Vol. 2, pp. 511-512

Compared to the Lepchas or Denjongpas as the Sikkimese call themselves, the Bhutias are much more turbulent, retaining still their Tibetan character to a large degree. Buddhists of the Red Hat Sect, wherein the Lama priests are allowed to marry, the Sikkimese Bhutias have a good physique and a fair complexion.

SHERPA BHUTIAS OR SHERPAS

The Sherpas have been discussed in connection with the Nepalis.

DUKPAS

Dukpa, the metamorphosed form of the Tibetan word *Drugpa*, means the inhabitants of the place of thunder, as *Drug* in Tibetan means *thunder* and *Pa* means *of*. Bhutan being contiguous to Assam with records of high rainfall, lightning and thunder are believed to be quite a common occurrence there. The Tibetans, therefore, prefer to refer to the Bhutanese as *Drugpas* (Inhabitants of the Land of Thunder).

According to Eden[5], Bhutan was not in the possession of the Bhutias for more than three centuries from date. The country, originally inhabited by peoples from the south, was conquered some centuries ago (probably in the 17th Century), by the Tibetan invaders who drove from the mountains the old residents, except those who were made slaves by the conquerors. But this story was not sustained by Dalton.[6]

Almost all writers on the Himalayan tribes unanimously hold that the Dukpas or the Bhutias of Bhutan are a Mongoloid people of Tibetan stock, the Dukpas of Upper Pedong even claiming a Tibetan origin. The Bhutias, according to Hastings[7], bear unmistakable trace of close affinity in appearance with the Tibetans, and this is the more striking, the further north they live. They are a very fine people ; there are some really tall men amongst them.

"As a whole, the men are indolent and addicted to strong drink. Physically they are robust and muscular. Their chief amusements are archery and quoits. In character, they may be described as plucky, hot-tempered, truculent, avaricious, and unforgiving. While cruel to their enemies, they are kind and charitable towards their friends"[8]. The Maharaja of Bhutan is related by marriage to the ruling family of Sikkim.

TIBETANS

The Tibetans are the inhabitants of *Bod* (Tibet). They hail from different districts of Tibet including the districts of Kham and Amdo. The inhabitants of Kham are believed to have magnificent physique. The Tibetans profess Buddhism of the Yellow Hat Sect, whereof the *Lamas* (Monks or priests) are celibate and cannot marry.

The population of the Bhutias in the district of Darjeeling as recorded in different Censuses, is given in the following table.

TABLE 9

BHUTIAS OF DARJEELING (1901-1961)

Year	Population	Remarks
1901	9,315	Sherpas not included
1911	10,768	Not known whether Sherpas are included or not
1921	10,710	Ditto
1931	5,334	Sherpas not included
1941	7,612	Ditto
1951	10,417	Ditto
1961	9,198	Sherpas, Totos, Dukpas, Kagatays, Tibetans and Yolmos included

5 Report of Mission to Bhootan, by A. Eden, 1873, p. 129

6 Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, by E. T. Dalton, reprinted in Indian Studies, Past and Present, Vol. I No. 2, January, 1960

7 Encyclopoedia of Religion and Ethics, by James Hastings, Vol. II, p. 562

8 *Op. cit.*, p. 278

Sherpas

The Sherpas with their international reputation as high altitude mountaineers are believed, despite their Tibetan origin to have originally come from the north-eastern parts of Nepal. This is sufficiently attested to by the philology of the term *Sherpa*, which in Tibetan language denotes a man of (*Pa*) the East (*Shar*). A hardy hillman of the Tibetan stock with markedly Mongolian features with slit eyes and prominent cheek bones, a Sherpa male of an average built is 5¾ ft. tall. Of all the Nepalese communities, the Sherpas are regarded as the most devout to follow their religious faith. Recruited as combatant rank and file in the Indian and the Nepalese armies, the Sherpas have good accounts of soldiery to their credit. Found to inhabit the Sadar subdivision of the district of Darjeeling and the different *Khas Mahals* of Kalimpong subdivision in the district of Darjeeling, the population of the Sherpas in the district as a whole in different Census years from 1901 may be viewed at a glance in the following table.

TABLE 10

SHERPAS[9] OF DARJEELING (1901-1961)

Year	No. of Sherpas
1901	3450
1911	Not available
1921	Not available
1931	5295
1941	6929
1951	8998
1961	Not available separately, because of their inclusion in the population of Bhutias

With a fairly long experience as climbers and porters in different Himalayan expeditions, the Sherpas have earned esteem for their courage, fortitude and a keen sense of humour. "The Sherpas, a hardy hill race of the Tibetan stock, are tough, intelligent, friendly and brave. There are innumerable stories of their courage and loyalty on expeditions, their indomitable good humour in adversity....."

"Their shuttered and anachronistic way of life has given the Sherpas a sturdy independence ; it has also perhaps fostered a certain grotesque heartiness that seems especially assertive no doubt, because of an innate sense of self-protection, when there are Europeans in the offing. The characteristic is almost exemplified in the appearance of the average Sherpa villager. He is not a big man, 5 ft. 6 inches or so is probably the normal height, but he is broad and weathered-looking, rather like a Toby jug. His face is brown, but no more than a sunburnt Neapolitan's and is of a slightly Mongolian caste.

"He wears a kind of shirt over breeches and high, embroidered Tibetan boots of wool and leather. His overcoat is of thick brown wool, and he often wears it slung around his middle like a bath towel.

"For *Chang* (Beer) and *Rakshi* (Rice spirit) are undoubtedly the chief of the everyday pleasures of the Sherpas of Khumbu. On the march in the valleys there are frequent halts for *Chang*, which in these parts is a glutinous semi-liquid like alchoholic porridge. In the evening the *Rakshi* pot passes fast and frequent, and is inclined to make the Sherpa even more insensible than usual to personal delicacies."[10]

As pointed out earlier, all Sherpas profess Buddhism of the Red Hat Sect.

Tamangs or Murmis

A Mongolian or semi-Mongolian caste, claimed to be the earliest settlers in Nepal, the Tamangs or the Murmis have very little know-

9 District Census Handbook, Darjeeling, 1951 Census, by A Mitra, I. C. S., pp. xxxix.

10 An article written by the Times' Special Correspondent with the British Everest Expedition of 1953 published in the Statesman on June, 17, 1953 and, reprinted in the District Handbook of Darjeeling, Census 1951, by A. Mitra, p. xl

ledge of any tradition of their origin. The population of the Murmis, a largely numerous community, found in almost all parts of Nepal Valley as also in different parts of Darjeeling district, is not insignificant even in Sikkim. In Nepal there is a great concentration of the Tamangs in the tracts between the Dood Koosi and the Valley of Nepal. In the words of Campbell[11], the Murmis are "decidedly a Mongolian tribe, and certainly the least handsome of all the mountaineers of this part of the Himalayas. They are, however, a very powerful and active people. Their standard of stature is taller than that of the Lepchas and Limboos. They are not so cheerful as the Lepchas, having a good deal of the gravity of the Bhotiahs, but they are good-tempered, and altogether free from prejudice to strangers..... The Moormis are not admitted into the ranks of the Nipal army, being considered as unmilitary people ; as ammunition-carriers, klassies, and gun-lascars, however, they are in request". But their physical characteristics and also their exogamous divisions (*Thars*) bearing Tibetan names lead Risley[12] to opine that "they are descended from a Tibetan stock, modified more or less by intermixture with Nepalese races". According to Hooker,[13] the Murmis "are of Tibetan origin and called *Nishung* from being composed of two branches, respectively from the districts of Nimo and Shung, both on the road between Sikkim and Lhassa" (Italics by the Editor).

In Tibetan *Ta* means pony and *Mang* means many. A Tibetan scholar residing near Upper Pedong pointed out in course of the survey that the Tamangs, originally a trading class in Tibet, dealt in ponies. The sense of the appellation of *Tamang* or people dealing in horses, which the Tibetans would elsewhere give to the Murmis usually, is not accepted ordinarily by the Murmis (Tamangs) of Upper Pedong. According to one Tamang informant of the village, the word Tamang is probably a derivative from the Sanskrit word *Tamra* (Copper), as formerly the people of the Tamang community worked in copper mines. Another Tamang interviewee of the village interprets the word *Tamang* as a coinage from the name of *Tamrakushi* river in Nepal, on the banks of which lives a major section of the community.

Dalton[14] holds that the Murmis are a "nomadic and pastoral branch of the Bhutias" on the ground that they are "Mongolian in appearance, Buddhist in religion and speak a language which appears to be a dialect of the Bhutia". Usually, they inhabit elevations of 4000 to 6000 feet. They are a large, powerfull and active race. They have very little hair on the face. Though Buddhists, their Lama priests can marry. The Tamangs of Nepal also observe Hindu festivals.

A recent publication has thrown interesting light on the past history of the Tamangs[15]. 'According to their own history, the Tamangs originated from four families living at a place called Wuijhang. The four families were Bal, Yongon, Moitan and Ghising, which are, it should be noted, now four of the biggest Tamang Kindreds'.

Tamang tradition records that one day three brothers, Brahma Vishnu and Mahesur, went out shooting[16]. All day long, they wandered in the jungle but saw no game of any kind, until they suddenly came across the cow bison Kama Dhenu. Vishnu killed the bison with an arrow and three brothers, being tired and hungry, immediately started to prepare the

11 Note on the Limboos and other Hill Tribes, by A. Campbell, in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1840, Vol. IX, No. 102, p. 612

12 Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, 1891, Vol. II, p. 119

13 Himalayan Journal, Chapter V, by J. D. Hooker, reprinted in District Census Handbook, Darjeeling, Census 1951, by A. Mitra, p. cxxxv

14 *Op. cit.*, p. 287

15 Nepal and the Gurkhas by the Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1965, p. 111

16 *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112

carcass. Having skinned the animal and taken out the bowels, Mahesur, being the youngest, was sent to wash them in a stream which ran close by. While he was doing this, Brahma and Vishnu cooked some of the meat and divided it into the three portions, one for each of the brothers. When the meat was ready, the two elder brothers, realising that it was cow's flesh and therefore, not to be eaten, hid their shares. On Mahesur's return, they told him that they had already eaten and bade him eat his own share. When he had finished, the brothers showed the meat they had concealed and abused him for having eaten cow's flesh. Mahesur became much enraged and struck his brothers with the intestines, some of which clung round their shoulders and accounts for the wearing of the holy thread. Having eaten the forbidden meat, Mahesur was socially degraded. The Tamangs, who still eat beef, are believed to be his descendants and he, as their chief deity, intercedes with God on their behalf !

The Tamangs of Nepal are recruited to the combatant ranks in the Gurkha regiments. Numerous in the district of Darjeeling, where the Murmis work mostly as cultivators and labourers in the tea-gardens, the distribution of Murmi population in the district of Darjeeling in different Census years is given in the table below.

TABLE 11

MURMIS OF DARJEELING (1901-1961)

Year	Population
1901	24,465
1911	27,226
1921	30,450
1931	33,461
1941	43,114
1951	49,890
1961	Not available

Lepchas

The Lepchas are the aborigines of the mountain forests surrounding the district of Darjeeling. Found in Sikkim, Darjeeling, Eastern Nepal and Western Bhutan, their habitat spreads over a wide territory.

The word Lepcha is popularly believed to be a derivative from the Nepali word *Lapcha,* meaning vile speaker. The uncharitable allusion to the indigenes of Sikkim by the Nepalese in actuality means people of vile speech. But, the *Lepchas* would call themselves *Rongpa* (People of the valley) in their own language (*Rong* means Valley and *Pa* means of). Sikkim is called *Lhyop* or *Lho* by the Lepchas. They would designate Bhutan as *Ayeu* or *Aieu.* Though composed of two groups Rong and Khamba, Rong is supposed to be the name for the Lepchas, while the Khambas are an emigrant group from the Kham region in Tibet. According to local tradition and regional beliefs, the Khambas came from the east in the company of the Jimdars (who went to Nepal and who still share this tradition) and the Mech (who settled in the plains at the foothills of the Himalayas). Campbell[17] has given a fairly good account of a legend about the Lepchas. More than 325 years ago, the people of Sikkim, comprising the Lepchas and the Bhutias, were too often disturbed by the struggle for supremacy between their chiefs, having had no peace. Confusion and chaos were consequenced by these internecine struggles. After a long period of rivalry and jealousy, the *Lamas* counselled that a *Raja* (King) should be sought for in some distant country and to him the people, irrespective of clans and classes, should owe allegiance. In pursuance of the unanimous decision, a group of *Lamas* set out in search of a ruler for Sikkim. A pretty long search brought the priests to the province of Kham in Tibet, where they came across a boy whose horoscope appeared auspicious. The crown of Sikkim was offered to the boy who readily accepted it. Thenceforward in Sikkim started the rule of a *Raja* embodied in a Khamba personage.

17 Note on the Lepchas of Sikkim, by A. Campbell, in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1840, Vol. IX, No. 100, p. 380-381

Though writers on the Himalayan tribes are mostly unanimous that the Lepchas are of true Mongolian type, not much is known about their origin and past history. Hooker[18], while describing the Lepchas, writes, "the earliest traditions which they have of their history date no further back than some three hundred years, when they describe themselves as having been long-haired, half-clad savages. At about that period they were visited by Tibetans, who introduced Boodh worship, the plaiting of their hair into pig-tails and very many of their own custom. Their physiognomy is, however, so Tibetan in its character that it cannot be supposed that this was their earliest intercourse with the transnivean races. Whether they may have wandered from beyond the snows before the spread of Boodhism and its civilisation, or whether they are a cross between the Tamulian of Indian and the Tibetan, has not been decided.....

"A group of Lepchas, is exceedingly picturesque. They are of short stature—four feet eight inches to five feet—rather broad in the chest, and with muscular arms but small hands and slender wrist. The face is broad, flat and eminently Tartar in character, flat-nosed and oblique-eyed, with no beard, and little moustache ; the complexion is sallow or often a clear olive ; the hair is collected into an immense tail, plaited flat or round.'' The account of Campbell, as quoted by Risley[19] about the Lepchas provides an interesting reading. It runs that ".....the men are bulky for their height, but rather fleshy than sinewy. The muscular development of their limbs is inferior to that of the Magars, Gurungs, Murmis, and other Parbattiahs. They are very fair of skin, and boys and girls in health have generally a ruddy tinge of complexion. This is lost, however, in adolescence, although the fairness continues. The features are markedly Mongolean, but there is a fullness and roundness of feature accompanied by a cheerful expression and laughing eye which renders the most pleasing one. The total absence of beard and the fashion of parting the hair along the crown of the head adds to a somewhat womanly expression of countenance in the men, and the loose bedgown sort of jacket, with wide sleeves, which they wear, contributes still more to render it rather difficult for strangers to distinguish the sexes, especially in middle age. The men very often look like women and the women sometimes like men. The hair is worn long by both sexes ; the younger men allowing it to hang loose over the shoulders, the elders plaiting it to a tail, which sometimes reaches to the knees. The women of rank wear their hair in two and sometimes in three tails, tying it with braids and silken cords and tassells. The Lepchas, both male and female, are dirty in person, rarely having recourse to ablution. In the cold and dry season this renders them unpleasant inmates of a close dwelling, but in the rains, when they move about and are frequently wet, they are clean and sweet. The temperament of the Lepcha is eminently cheerful, and his dispositions really amiable. In ordinary intercourse, they are a very fascinating people, and possess an amount of intelligence and rational curiosity not to be met with among their Bhotia, Limbu, Murmi, or Gurung neighbours, and indeed rarely, if ever to be seen among people so completely secluded from foreign intercourse as they always have been. They are wonderfully honest, theft being scarcely known among them ; they rarely quarrel among themselves. I have never known them to draw their knives on one another, although they always wear them. For ordinary social purposes of talking, eating, and drinking, they have great unanimity, but for any more important purposes of resistance to oppression, the pursuit of industry or trade, their confidence in one another is at a low pitch ; they fly bad government rather than resist it, and used to prefer digging for yams in the jungle and eating wretchedly innutritious vegetables to enduring

18 *Op. cit.*, pp. cxxxiii-cxxxiv

19 Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, Vol. II, 1891. pp. 6-7

any injustice or harsh treatment. They are singularly forgiving of injuries, when time is given them, after hasty loss of temper. Although they were ready enough to lodge complaints before the Magistrate against one another in cases of assault and other offences, they rarely prosecuted to a decision, generally preferring to submit to arbitration to making mutual amends and concessions".

But, the Lepchas of Upper Pedong do hardly conform to the accounts given above, and the change in outlook, appearance or dress has been brought about by cultural contact with other communities, especially so with the Gurkhas and the Limbus with whom they have connubial relations.

The sophisticated Lepchas[20] residing in the town or in its outskirts have been increasingly switching over to Nepali customs, their brethren in the far-off bustees have been clinging despondently to their age-old customs and traditions.

"Their traditional method of cultivation is that of *Jhuming* by which they burn down a patch of jungle and cultivate it for a year or two before moving on to some other jungle area. It is a wasteful and inefficient system, but it no doubt accounts for their dislike of fixed employment and their interest in jungle life".[21]

The history of the Lepchas dates back to the time of their King Turve who ruled over them about 540 years back by which period they had entered Sikkim. To this place of refuge, they gave the appellation of *Nelyang* (A place of cave). The Lepchas with their primitive ways of life in the forests, with no cattle and with very little land under personal cultivation and with subsistence mainly on the produce and chases of the forests lived quite restfully. After the death of King Turayek the throne of Sikkim was usurped by a Tibetan (Phung-tshogs rnam-rgyas or Phuntsho Namgyel) and this marked a turning point in the history of the Lepchas. The successive Kings began to marry the Lepchas and their associates followed suit.

Even as late as the first half of the 19th Century, the Lepchas had clung desperately to their traditional culture, habits and customs. The advent of the Europeans to their side of the Himalayas gave them a crushing blow, the shock of which they could never overcome.

During the British regime, when every tribe was encouraged to come and settle in this part of the Himalayas, the Gurkhas, the Murmis and several other hill tribes came to the land of the Lepchas for settlement, after having burnt the jungles. Ousted by the intruders, the Lepchas wandered from place to place and from hill to hill to find a good habitat. "The Lepchas, the free sons of the forest, the hearty yeomen of the land, the Lords of the soil, became the servants of servants, the very slaves of slaves. The women too became the victims of the licentious ; the fall of the Lepchas was complete. Oppressed and crushed on all sides, the Lepcha race and language came to be considered unfashionable. Many of the Lepchas intermarried with Bhutias and repudiating their own race, denominated themselves as Bhutias.[22] This is how the transformation of the Lepchas into Bhutias took place.

The Lepchas have their legends about the *Tower of Babel* and the *Great Deluge*. It is not known whether they brought the legends with them from behind the snows. But curiously enough, they have associated the legends with their present place of residence.

One of their first achievements was to build a *Tower* and thereby to reach the sky.[23]

20 A Short History of Darjeeling District, Its Hill Peoples, by Dr. B. K. Mukherjee and Lt. Col. A.V.A. Mercer, Kurseong, 1962, p. 19

21 Bengal District Gazetters, Darjeeling, 1947, by A. J. Dash, p. 77

22 Grammar of Rong Language, by Colonel G. B. Mainwaring, Calcutta, 1876

23 Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, by James Hastings, Vol. II, p. 511

Many hundreds and thousands of Lepchas, it is claimed, were engaged in that lofty work. After years of arduous work, when the *Tower* touched the sky, the men at work on top of the *Tower* called for more stones, but unfortunately the people below misinterpreted the indication from above the *Tower*. They thought that they were being asked to cut away the foundations. They did so and the *Tower of Babel* gave way killing half the population of the tribe. The site and ruins of the *Tower* are believed by the Lepchas still to exist in Sikkim. They also believe in the legend of their mystic chieftain *Gebey Accho*, already narrated earlier.

The Lepchas[24] are primarily animists, but some features of Tibetan Lamaism have superimposed themselves on their basic beliefs and in the Darjeeling area may have now become Christian. Altough they have their own languages, which they claim to be the oldest of all hill dialects, most of them speak Gurkhali as well. Very superistitious, they spend much of their time in appeasing evil spirits, and are also reputed to indulge in witchcraft and in the casting of spells. Their professional exorcists, who may be male or female, are known as *Mun* (Italics by Editor). They also have an extensive knowledge of the jungle, of its wild life and vegetation, and especially of its poisons and herbs.

TABLE 12

LEPCHAS OF DARJEELING (1901-1961)

Year	Population
1901	9,972
1911	9,706
1921	9,669
1931	12,101
1941	12,468
1951	13,164
1961	14,910

24 Nepal and the Gurkhas, by the Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, London, 1965, p. 124

In Darjeeling district the Lepchas are found mostly in the *Khas Mahals* of Kalimpong subdivision and also in the Cinchona Plantations. The population of the community in different Censuses in the district of Darjeeling is enumerated in the precedent table.

As per the Scheduled Castes' and Scheduled Tribes' Lists (Modification) Order, 1956, the Lepchas are members of the Scheduled Tribe throughout the State of West Bengal except in the Purulia district and the territories transferred from the Purnea district of Bihar. In Darjeeling district they explain about 15.4 per cent of the total population of all the Scheduled Tribes of the district.

Newars

Oldest inhabitants of the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal, the Newars are said to have migrated into this part of the Valley from the east of Mahachina. According to local traditions, they are believed to have gone to Nepal as soldiers under Nanda Deva from South India.

They had a great sway in Nepal for a very long time until 1769, when they were overthrown by the Gurkhas, embodying the Chhetris, the Mangars and the Gurungs. To commemorate their association with the long rulership over Nepal, they have assumed their surname as *Pradhan* (Chief).

The Newars profess a religion presenting a corresponding mixture of the Indian and Tibetan creeds.[25] According to some Newar informants of the neighbourhood of Upper Pedong, the Newars had migrated to Nepal from Mewar in Rajputana (Rajasthan) in the remote past and the word Nepal is believed by them to be a distortion of the word *Newar*.

Unlike most other Nepali castes and tribes, the Newars do not come under the fighting tribes of Nepal, though they are recruited to the

25 Sketches from Nipal, by H. A. Oldfield, London, 1880, p. 7

combatant ranks in the armies. Intellectually said to be one of the most advanced communities of Nepal, their artistic qualities are attested to by the excellent painters and sculptors found among the Newars. Work in metals and woodcarving also bear the stamp of their artistic creativity. Good agriculturists, keen traders and skilled workers in wood and crafts, the Newars have good acumen in business, for which purpose they had migrated to Sikkim, Bhutan and to places as far as Lhasa in Tibet more than a hundred years ago and quite a number of them had domiciled in Tibet where they had substantial business interests.

The Newars are said to have a complicated and complex caste organisation of their own with an elaborate caste hierarchy, comparable to that of the Hindus, consisting of the Brahmans, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras.

Found in the Sadar and Kurseong subdivisions and also in the *Khas Mahal* areas of Kalimpong subdivision of the district of Darjeeling, the population of the Newars in different Censuses is given in the table below.

TABLE 13

NEWARS OF DARJEELING (1901-61)

Year	Population
1901	5,770
1911	6,927
1921	8,751
1931	10,235
1941	12,242
1951	14,827
1961	Not available

Kamis

The blacksmith and artisan caste of Nepal, with some also engaged in work in the precious metals, the Kamis claim to be the descendants of the mythical *Saint Viswamitra* and prefer to call themselves *Viswakarma*. The names of various sections of the Kamis lead Risley[26] to conjecture that the Kamis might be of Indian origin. According to Risley, their physical characteristics also suggest that they had migrated from India and intermarried freely with some of the indigenous races of Nepal. The Kamis are recruited as armourers in the Gurkha regiments.[27]

Though not much is known about the community, Porter made some interesting remarks about the community in 1931 Census.[28] "..... they are the artisan and blacksmith caste of Nepal and their claim on the previous occasions was to be recorded as Viswa Brahman. During the last decade, they had secured a recognition by the All India Mairh Rajput Conference held at Muttra, but like the corresponding caste in Bengal, they do not seem to have made up their mind whether to aspire to Kshattriya or Brahman status, an uncertainty which is perhaps not inexplicable in view of the descent claimed from Viswamitra, who was first a Kshattriya and later a Brahman himself. Perhaps the most astonishing contention of the caste was that put forward by the Financial Secretary to His Highness the Maharaja of Sikkim, himself a member of this caste, to the effect that Kami, shown by Sir George Grierson as a separate language, was, in fact, no language at all and that the mother tongue of the Kamis in Nepal, Sikkim and neighbouring parts was Khaskura pure and simple, a claim which is of course a corollary of the claim to Brahmanical status and Aryan descent and is analogous to a similar claim made, by the Newars".

Quite numerous in the district of Darjeeling, but particularly so in the towns, the Tea Estates and the *Khas Mahals* of Kalimpong sub-

26 Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, 1891, Vol. I, p. 393 & Vol. II, Appendix K, p. 88

27 Bengal District Gazetteers, Darjeeling, by A. J. Dash, 1947, p. 75

28 Census of India, 1931, Bengal & Sikkim Report, by A. E. Porter, 1933, Vol. V, Part I, p. 469

division, the population of the Kamis in the district of Darjeeling in different Censuses is presented below.

TABLE 14

KAMIS OF DARJEELING (1901-61)

Year	Population
1901	9,826
1911	10,939
1921	11,779
1931	11,331
1941	16,272
1951	19,432
1961	19,851

The Kamis, as per the Scheduled Castes' & Scheduled Tribes' Lists (Modification) Order, 1956, are members of the Scheduled Caste throughout the State of West Bengal except in the Purulia district and the territories transferred from the Purnea district of Bihar. They formed about 26.5 per cent of the total Scheduled Caste population of Darjeeling district, according to 1961 Census.

Bhujels

Formerly slaves in Nepal, the Bhujels now enjoy a status, improved considerably in recent years, some of them having been recruited to the combatant ranks in the Second World War. No tradition of their origin nor any past history is known. In the district of Darjeeling there were 5,816 Bhujels in 1941 and 5,745 Bhujels in 1951.

Sanyashis

Said to be religious mendicants, the Sanyashis return their surname as *Giri*. Some of them were recruited in the combatant ranks in Nepal during the Second World War. Though much is not known about them, they were never very numerous in the district of Darjeeling, where they numbered 1,151 in 1901, 1,060 in 1911 and 1,085 in 1951, according to Mitra.[29]

Gurkhas

The Khas (Chettri), the Gurungs, the Mangars, and the Thakurs are given the general appellation of Gurkha. The term *Gorkha* is popularly believed to have originated from the name of the eponymous deity of *Gorakhnath* (*Gorakshanath*) belonging to the Royal Family of Nepal. The first three communities *viz.*, the Khas, the Gurungs and the Mangars, as dominant tribes overthrew the Newar Dynasty in Nepal in 1769. Famous for magnificent soldiery both in the Indian and the British Armies, the exploits of the famous Gurkha Regiments are well-known throughout the world. As soldiers, the Gurkhas are professional amateurs; even though they are paid to fight, they like to fight. It is commonly believed that they kill with tender firmness and bear no rancour against the victims.

A people renowned for valour and chivalry, they are said to be the descendants of the aboriginal tribes who intermarried with the Rajput and other Hindu refugees in the hills of Nepal during the Mohommedan conquests in the 12th Century. Their real habitat lies in the west of the Valley of Nepal. As a class, they have markedly Mongolian features ; they have a low stature, with good muscular chest and limb development and fair complexion. They are gently homicidal, warm-hearted and hot-blooded. They are honest to the core and have a strong sense of family, home and duty. They find it almost impossible to lie.

Chhetris

The word *Chhetri*, a corruption of the Sanskrit word *Kshatriya*, means one of the fighting castes. During the 12th Century many high caste Indians, fugitives because of the Moslem invasion, sought sanctuary in the hills

29 District Census Handbook, Darjeeling, 1951 Census, by A. Mitra, p. xl

of Nepal. On account of their caste and intelligence, they were soon accepted at their own worth by the people in whose country they had settled. On the earliest and the most distinguished of their converts was conferred the rank of the Chhetri, a status also given to the offsprings of the Brahmans and the local women. It is from this mixture of the two peoples that the present strong tribe of the Chhetris, at one time known as Khas, has sprung.[30]

The Khas tribe with the adopted name of *Chetri* also constitutes one of the fighting tribes of Nepal with records of its participation in the overthrow of the Newar Dynasty of Nepal in 1769. Recruited to the combatant ranks in the Gurkha Regiments, they claim to be the representative of the Kshattriyas of classical tradition. In Risley's[31] view they, are in many cases entitled to appeal to their markedly Aryan feature in support of their claim.

Most of them are aware of the legend in the *Ramayana* that the mythical *Saint Parasurama* had exterminated their race from the earth times and again. The *Saint Viswamitra* is believed to have come to their rescue in the revival of their caste. "The Khas[32] is generally slighter, more active, less fleshy than either the Mangar or the Gurung ; more arrogant, passionately fond of arms ; averse to all labour in arts, but will enter into agricultural and pastoral pursuits". Dash[33] holds that the tribe has probably a large admixture of Aryan blood.

Widely distributed throughout the district of Darjeeling, their population has varied from Census to Census.

30 Nepal and the Gurkhas, Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1965, p. 119

31 Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, 1891, Vol. II, p. 184

32 Sketches from Nipal, by H. A. Oldfield, London, 1880, Vol. I, pp. 169-170

33 Bengal District Gazetteers, Darjeeling, by A. J. Dash, 1947, p. 72

TABLE 15

CHHETRIS OF DARJEELING (1901-61)

Year	Population
1901	11,597
1911	12,599
1921	Not avaliable
1931	Not available
1941	Not available
1951	30,463
1961	..

Mangars or Magars

A characteristically fighting tribe belonging to the martial classes of Nepal, the Mangars are one of the trio (dominant tribes of Nepal) which had toppled the Newar Rule in Nepal. Recruited as combatants to the Gurkha Regiments, they supply a large number of soldiers to the Indian and the Nepalese Armies.

Of their early history, though little is known, they probably lived near Plapa from very early times. They first came into prominence about 1100 A. D., when Mukunda Sen, the Magar King of Plapa and Batoli, had invaded and conquered the Nepal Valley, after having committed terrible atrocities during the reign of Hari Deva, the King of the Valley. Before the arrival of the Rajputs, the Magar nation probably consisted of twelve *Thams*.....each governed by a chief.....Some records identify the 12 areas as Argha, Gulmi, Tasma, Musikot, Khamchi, Ghiring, Rising, Bhirkot, Payung Garhung, Dhor and Satung.[34]

In Nepal as members of the Mukhya group they are highly esteemed for their soldierly qualities. The Mangars, according to Risley[35], believe that their original habitat lies in the Valley of Dhoreh on the banks of the Karnali-Bheri river in Western Nepal from which place they had spread to Likhukhola and thus made

34 Nepal and the Gurkhas, Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1865, p. 93-94

35 Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, 1891, Vol. II, p. 74

their way into Eastern Nepal. According to Hodgson[36], the original seat of the Mangars is most of the central and lower parts of the mountains, between the Bheri and the Marsyandi rivers. But Hooker[37] holds that the Mangars, the aborigines of Sikkim, were driven by the Lepchas westward into the country of the Limboos and later by the Limboos further west still. They are said to have been savages, and not of Tibetan origin, and are now converted Hindus.

Judged by their physical characteristics, the Mangars must be classed as Mongoloid, their naso-malar index being slightly lower than that of the Tibetans, while their complexion, eyelids, stature and the general cut of their features stamp them as a cross in which the Mongolian element on the whole predominates.[38]

Hodgson's account states that one of the original seats of the Magars is the *Bara Mangranth.*[39] It is not altogether impossible that the name *Mangar* might have originated from the place of their residence.

The population of the Mangars in the district of Darjeeling is presented in the table below.

TABLE 16

MANGARS OF DARJEELING (1901-1961)

Year	Population
1901	11,912
1911	12,451
1921	14,934
1931	16,299
1941	17,262
1951	19,413
1961	Not available

36 Origin and Classification of the Military Tribes of Nepal, by B. H. Hodgson, in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1833, Vol. II, No. 1, pp. 220-221

37 Extracts from Himalayan Journals, by J. D. Hooker, as reprinted in the Census Handbook of Darjeeling, by A. Mitra, 1953, p. cxxxv.

38. Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, 1891, Vol. II, p. 74

39 *Op. cit.*, pp. 220-221

Gurungs

A nomadic, pastoral community subsisting by rearing and grazing cattle, cattle-breeding being an important occupation in the economic life, the Gurungs like the Mangars also took part in the overthrow of the Newar rule in Nepal. Recruited to the combatant ranks in the Gurkha Regiments, many of them have been recruited to the Nepalese and the Indian Armies also. They have the reputation of being one of the best fighting tribes of Nepal. Like the Mangars they too belong to the Mukhya group in Nepal.

The ancient Kings of the Gurungs had their strongholds in Ghurdrung, Kaski and Lamjung, but as in the case of the other hill tribes of Nepal, there is no written record of Gurung history and what is known is based largely on myth. One story refers to an old Gurung settlement in Ghundrung under the suzerainty of the *Raja* of Kaski, who allowed them to continue their own customs, much as they do to this day. Although now officially a Hindu, the Gurung at home still makes little use of the services of a Brahman but calls in a *Lama* or a *Gyabring* for all priestly functions and may also employ a *Jhankri.*[40]

The original seat of the Gurungs, is believed to be in the line of country parallel to that occupied by the Mangars, and somewhere in Tibet beyond Nepal. Of a markedly Mongoloid type, a Gurung often has a slightly curved bridge to his nose, in other words a Gurkha version of a Roman nose. In nature they are generally larger and more powerful than either the Mangars or the Khas. "The Gurungs are less generally and more recently redeemed from Lamaism and primitive impurity than the Mangars, and are considered much below than in point of caste...But though both Mangars and Gurungs still retain their own vernacular tongues, Tartar faces and careless manners,

40 Nepal and the Gurkhas, by the Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1965, p. 88

yet from constant intercourse with and military service under the predominant Khas, they have acquired the Khas language but not to the oblivion of their own and adopted, with however several reservations, the Khas habits and sentiments.

"As they have submitted themselves to the ceremonial law of purity and to Brahman supremacy, they have been adopted as Hindus ; but they have been denied the sacred thread, and take rank as a doubtful order below the Kshatriya-not Vaisya nor Sudra, but something superior to both of the latter grades."[41]

Well distributed throughout the district of Darjeeling and numerous in the tea-gardens in the hills, the Gurung population is given in the following table.

TABLE 17

GURUNGS OF DARJEELING (1901-61)

Year	Population
1901	8,738
1911	9,628
1921	9,575
1931	11,154
1941	15,455
1951	17,864
1961	Not available

Kiranti group

The term *Kiranti* includes the Rais or Jimdars, the Khambus, the Limbus or Yakhthumbas and the Yakhas, though the Danuars, the Hayus and the Thamis also claim to be Kirantis. But, the first three communities, generally recognised to be of superior social status, do not admit the claim of the latter.

It is a geographical term applied to the original inhabitants of Kirant Des, a tract in the east of Nepal, bounded on the west by Dud Kosi and on the east by the Singalila range or the Arun or the Tanbar river. Hodgson[42] holds, "By means of notices contained in the classics of the east and west we are assured that the Kiranti people was forthcoming in their present abode from 2000 to 2500 years back, and that their power was great and their dominion extensive, reaching possibly at one time to the delta of the Ganges. Moreover, the general tenor of these classical notices is confirmed by the *Vansavalis* or chronicles of Nepal proper which show a long line of Kiranti sovereigns ruling from the mythic age of the shephered kings (Gopal) down to the 14th century of our areas". To the Kirantis the local tradition of Kirant backed up by distinct historical data assigns an unusual amount of power and population. It is unknown when the Kirantis were expelled from the plains of India and if they at all held permanent possession in India. But, according to Hodgson[43], "it was the Mall dynasty of Nepal proper which about the middle of the 14th century expelled them from the great valley ; and the Sahs of the eastern or Vijayapur branch of the Makwanis by whom their independence in the mountains, probably about the same period, was greatly trenched on, whilst the Sahs of the house of Gorkha, now sovereigns of the modern kingdom of Nepal, completed the subjection of the Kirantis about a century ago."

Legends relate that formerly they killed and ate every kind of animal including cows. Later war was thrust upon them by the Gurkhas and eating of beef was prohibited among them after the Gurkha conquest. Being anxious to conciliate with the vanquished enemies, the Gurkhas conferred upon the most influential among them powers to rule certain districts. The Jimdars invested with the conferred power were given the title of *Rai* and the Limbus that of

41 Sketches from Nipal, by H. A. Oldfield, London, 1880, Vol. I, p. 173

42 On the Kiranti Tribe of Central Himalaya, by B. H. Hodgson, published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1858, Vol. XXVII, No. 5, p. 447

43 *Ibid*, p. 447

Subba. All the Jimdars and the Limbus of Darjeeling district use the titles still now.

"When the Khambus and the Limbus were conquered by the Gurkhas, the Gurkha King, to conciliate them, conferred upon the more influential men among them, commissions sealed with lal mohor, granting them power to rule certain districts. With these commissions were given the title of Rai to the Khambus and of Subba to the Limbus".[44]

Hodgson[45] estimated the number of the Kiranti tribe of the central Himalayas round about a quarter of a million. In the remote but unascertainable past the Kirantis were the most numerical community in the central part of the Himalayas, when their country was customarily spoken of as 'the land of the *Na* (Nine) *lakh Kirant*,' the Chiefs or the Kings of the Kirantis having been known as *Hangs* and the headmen of their villages called *Pasung*. Hodgson[46] holds that Kirantis have not, nor ever had, letters or literature. About their religion the Kirantis are said to have very vague ideas. They have also no name for God nor even for any special deity. There is no hereditary priesthood among them nor have they any class set apart and educated for the office. Some of the villagers of the Kiranti group do, however, opine that they are not sure as to their position in the Hindu society and about their conformity to religious practices prescribed by the Hindu *Sastras*.

Rais or Jimdars

One of the three dominant tribes of the Kiranti group, the Jimdars or the Rais are a fighting tribe of Nepal. The antiquity of the Jimdars and the complex character of their language make them, especially in relation to other Himalayan tribes similarly characterised, interesting as an element of the Himalayan population. Though not usually considered as belonging to the warrior classes, they are popularly believed to have offered a stiff resistance to the invasion of the Gurkhas.

Formely known as Kirat, Kiranti or Kichak, the Rais have a very recent origin. Also called Jimdar, because they cultivated *Jim* or land, the Rais return cultivation as their traditional occupation. Risley[47] treats the Rais and the Jimdars as synonymous with the Khambus. The Jimdars of Darjeeling district have assumed the title of *Rai* and return the name of their caste also as Rai. But, if pressed to give the name of their caste, they would return it as Jimdar. But most of the Rais now-a-days do admit Khambu and Jimdar to be synonymous terms connoting the same ethnic group. A pertinent reference may be made to the opinion of O'malley[48] who reports that the Khambus and the Jimdars "appear to be of the same stock, the Jimdars being a more completely Hinduised section. They still however eat and drink together and intermarry and many of their subcastes are the same, e.g., Kulung, Chaurashia and Lohorong. They both call themselves Rais, and a Jimdar when asked if he is a Khambu, will admit that he is so". Gait[49] points out, "in British territory the Khambus claim to be Jimdars and assume the Kiranti title Rai, but in Nepal their pretensions are ridiculed and they are excluded from all social intercourse with the Kirantis proper.....they eat beef—an abomination in the eyes of the real Kirantis". Their oral tradition dating them back to remote past, when they were a numerous and powerful people, is in the absence of any written material too vague to be verified. They claim to be the descendants of Parubang

44 Nepal and the Gurkhas, Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London 1965. p. 97

45 *Op. cit.*, p. 449

46 *Ibid.*, p. 451

47 Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, 1891, Vol. I, p. 459

48 Census of India, 1911, Vol. V, Part I, Report on Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and Sikkim, by L. S. S. O'malley 1913, p. 5 2

49 Census Report of 1901 on Bengal, by E. A. Gait, Vol. V Part I, p. 457

(Kirateswar) and Shang Nima *(Parbati)*. A tradition claims that originally they came to Nepal from Kasi or Benaras. So, even though Kiranti is a geographical appellative applied to the inhabitants of Kirant, a tract to the east of Nepal, many hold that they are called Kirantis because of their descent from Kirat, their great mythical ancestor. Most of the Rais are aware of the great fight between *Kirateswar*, their mythical ancestor, and *Arjuna*, the great *Pandava* Hero of the Indian Epic, the *Mahabharata*. In conformity with the belief of all Kiranti tribes the Rais also hold that formerly though they ruled over the whole of Nepal, the displeasure of *Kirateswar*, provoked by some unknown offensive action of their own, led to their defeat in the hands of the invading Gurkhas. In the end of the catastrophe the Rais become aliens in their own soil. A popular legend, current among the Rais, goes that an image of *Parubang* in some part of Nepal is zealously guarded by the Gurkhas in order to allow any Rai never to have a glimpse of the image. The Rais ardently believe, however, that if any Rai ever visits the holy shrine of *Parubang* and offers to the deity some ginger and liquor, the lifeless image would be resurrected. Such an eventuality will also herald the restoration of the Rais to power, ousting the Gurkhas from their seat. The Rais are well aware that

TABLE 18

RAIS OF DARJEELING (1901-61)

Year	Population
1901	33,133
1911	40,409
1921	41,236
1931	47,431
1941	56,794
1951	64,745
1961	Not available

the Gurkhas who also know this secret take every care in disallowing the Rais any entry into the shrine of *Parubang* or in any place near about. The Rais are said to have more than fifty sub-castes, each with a distinct language of its own and sometimes with different dialects too.

The most numerous community distributed throughout Darjeeling district, the population of the Rais has been shown.

Limbus or Limboos

Next to the Rais, the Limbus are one of the constituent communities, grouped together under the Kirantis. The Lepchas, the Bhutias and the Tibetans settled in Bhutan, Sikkim, and Nepal speak of the Limbus as Tsong, because the five *Thuma* (Sub-tribes), included in the class known as *Lhasa-Gotra*[50], emigrated to Eastern Nepal from the district of Tsong in Tibet. To the Lepchas, however, they are known as *Chang*. This, according to Risley[51], might be a corruption of Tsong. To most of the hill tribes the Limbus are popularly known in the name of their title *Subba*.

According to Hodgson[52], the homeland of the Limbus lies between Arun to Mechi and Singlilela ridge. But Campbell[53] holds that the "Limboos or a large portion of the inhabitants in the mountainous country lying between the Dood-Koosi and the Kanki river in Nipal, and are found in smaller numbers eastwards to the Mechi river, which forms the boundary of Nipal and Sikkim. In still fewer numbers they exist within the Sikkim territory, as far east as the Teesta river beyond which they very rarely settle. In Bootan they are

50 Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, 1891, Vol. II, p. 15

51 *Ibid.*, p. 15

52 On the Kiranti Tribe of the Central Himalayas, by B. H. Hodgson, published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1858, Vol. XXVII, No. 5, p. 445

53 Note on the Limboos and other Hill Tribes Hitherto Undescribed, by A. Campbell, published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. IX, No. 102, 1840, p. 595

unknown, except as strangers". In Eastern[54] Nepal, supposed to be their original home, there is a large concentration of the Limbus. Hooker[55] reports them to be the "earliest inhabitants of Tambur Valley, though they have a tradition of having originally emigrated from Tibet, which their Tartar countenance confirms". Campbell[56] is inclined to include in the general term Limbu people also known as the Kerantis (probably Kiratis), the Eakas (according to Hodgson, Yakhas) and the Rais. But the notion of the people about the real nature of the differences expressed in multiple denominations is so confused that all the terms are very frequently used synonymously with the word Limbu, as the appearance, habits and inter-group relation do not suggest any dissimilarity. Furthermore, inter-marriage has negated the possibility of distinctive entity of each group. The Puranas are eloquent of the Kerantis (Kiratis) as a warlike people or mountain *Mlecchas*; the Eakas (Yakhas) are distinguished from the Rais by their habitat, confined to the lower and central ranges of the mountainous tract between the Arun and the Kanki rivers. The Limboos consider themselves to be the autochthons of the country, they presently occupy. They have, at least, the satisfaction that none of the neighbouring tribes have disputed their claims by a counter pretension. But, they are divided in their opinion on the point of their nativity. According to Campbell[57], the Limbus have occupied the valley of *Tambar Khola* for a long period and, therefore, there is practically no cogent ground for ascription of the origin of the Limbus as a separate tribe to any place other than *Tambar Khola*. Campbell[58] finds some Limbus to have mentioned China, as their original habitat before immigration to Nepal, in their attempt to explain their existence in an alien soil of different people with language, religion and habits at polar distance from theirs. But, the belief based on hearsay does not throw any light on their precise idea of the location of China or of the period of their emigration. The flat features, oblique eyes, yellow complexion and beardless faces of the Limbus, are surmised by Dash[59] to attest to their descent from the Tibetan settlers in Nepal. But, the same features lead Cambell to hold them to belong to the great Mongolian race, though it is not known as to which of the numerous divisions the Limbus exactly belong.

Though not belonging to the regular fighting tribes of modern Nepal, the Limbus take pride in declaring themselves a military community with many stories and anecdotes about their brave heroic deeds in the past constituting their lores. They have wrested their position of comparable standing and status beside many warlike communities of Nepal. Eulogic references to their martial qualities have been occasioned by their spectacular resistance to the Gurkha invaders. Their recruitment to the combatant ranks in the Nepalese and the Indian Armies has become a routine feature. In Nepal the Limbus are exclusively enlisted in the Eastern Nepal Regiments of the Gurkha Brigade. The Limbus are sometimes confused with the Lepchas by anthropologists in an inquiry about ethnic identification of each. Hooker[60] specifying the points of difference mentions that the Limbus are more sinewy and slender than the Lepchas. The Limbus use *Cookree* (Nepal curved knife), wear loose cotton trousers and a tight jacket. But on account of some of their habits being similar to those of

54 Bengal District Gazetteers, Darjeeling, by A.J. Dash, 1947, p. 74 and District Handbook, Darjeeling, 1951 Census, by A. Mitra, p. xiii

55 Extracts from Himalayan Journals, by J. D. Hooker, reprinted in District Handbook, Darjeeling, 1951 Census, by A. Mitra, p. cxxxv

56 Note on the Limboos, and other Hill Tribes Hitherto Undescribed, by A. Campbell, published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1840, Vol. IX, No. 102, p. 595

57 *Ibid.*, p. 595

58 *Ibid.*, p. 595

59 Bengal District Gazetteers, Darjeeling, by A.J. Dash, 1947, p. 74

60 *Op. cit.*, p. cxxxv

the Lepchas, intermarriage between the two communities is constant and frequent. Campbell[61] does not miss the diacritic marks of ethnic identity and mentions that the "Limboo is very little taller in stature than the Lepcha, somewhat less fleshy, and more wiry in the limbs, as fair in complexion, and as completely beardless. He is scarcely ever ruddy as the Lepchas sometimes are, his eyes are if anything smaller, and placed more to the front than the Lepchas ; and his nose, although somewhat smaller, is rather higher in the bridge than that of the Lepcha. He wears his hair long, but does not plait it into a tail ; has no fancy for bead necklaces ; wears a *Kookri* instead of the *Ban* ; and wide trousers and a jacket or *Chupkun* in preference to the robe and long jacket of the Lepchas. To a person used to closely observing the different people of this neighbourhood, it becomes intuitively easy to recognise a Limboo from a Lepcha by his features and figure alone ; but as no man can describe even his horse or dog, and far less his sheep and camels, leaving out the colours, so as to render them cognizable to another person, neither is it easy to give the difference by which a Limboo is recognised from a Lepcha, in such a manner as to render them obvious to strangers".

According to modern writers[62], the Limbus or Yakthumbas, have a tradition that they came originally from Benaras, but although they are possibly mentioned in the early Hindu writings, no history of the Kiranti exists on which any dependence can be placed. The Limbus and the Rais are rather more Mongolian in appearance than the Gurungs and Mangars, and any attempt to place their origin in the South is probably due to the desire to show a Rajput origin, a sentiment not unknown amongst the Himalayan tribes".

61 *Op. cit.*, p. 596

62 Nepal and the Gurkhas, by Ministry of Defence, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1965, p. 98

While discussing religion of the Limbus, Risley[63] finds them declaring themselves as Hindus. He states "where their surroundings are Hindu, they describe themselves as Saivas... They take to Buddhism only in a Buddhist neighbourhood."

The present pursuit of the Limbus is restricted mostly to agriculture, grazing, trade and porterage in the district of Darjeeling. With a fairly large number of persons residing in the Tea Garden Areas in the hills and in the *Khas Mahal* areas of the Sadar and Kalimpong subdivisions the Limbu population in the district of Darjeeling in different Censuses is given below.

TABLE 19

LIMBUS OF DARJEELING (1901-1961)

Year	Population
1901	14,305
1911	13,804
1921	14,191
1931	16,288
1941	17,803
1951	19,835
1961	Not available

Yakhas

Next to the Rais and the Limbus, the Yakhas, another tribe belonging to the Kiranti group, hail from the same area as the Rais and the Limbus. Agriculture is their traditional occupation. The Yakhas take the surname of Dewan. Gait[64] has noted numerous exogamous groups, all of which are declared as descendants of a common ancestor. The Yakhas have a dialect of their own and are recruited to the combatant ranks in the Nepalese Army.

Residential lay-out and housing pattern

Situated on the slope of the hills, Upper Pedong with tiny wooden houses presents a picturesque view, even from a distance, to an

63 Tribes and Castes of Bengal, by H. H. Risley, 1891, Vol. II, p. 17

64 *Op. cit.*, p. 458

entrant visitor. In the calm loneliness of the hills against the luxuriance of the verdant forests and the thick growth of the wild green on the upper ridges, the village Upper Pedong stands like a sentinel on vigil. A look at the houses on the slope from a top ridge gives the viewer the impression of an oil painting on a canvas.

As pointed out earlier, the residential pattern of the village does not appear to be strictly caste-oriented, being subject to a number of factors. First, the spirit of caste-distinctions does not pervade the hillmen. Secondly, quite some households with no land of their own live in the residential plots, allotted to them by the respective landowners. In all the cases the tenants have no choice other than settling in the plots allotted to them. Lastly, in hilly areas where the slope of the hills hallmarks the suitability of the site of a proposed house, it often happens that the buyer reconnoitring a plot of land has no option other than purchasing a particular plot, adjudged suitable against landslips and favourable to drainage from the house. The purchased plot in that case may not be always near the residence of the members of the buyer's own community. Convenience and exigencies of situation are the main factors in the choice of sites for residences, rather than any sociological or affinitive considerations. The residential pattern of Upper Pedong has not for that matter been strictly guided by ethnic considerations. As exceptions, the houses of the Bhutias, both Sikkimese and Bhutanese, are mostly situated in a compact enclave beside the *Gompa* and most houses of the Tamang households are also in the proximity of each other. The houses of the Rais are dispersed all over the village. The houses of two, three or sometimes four Rai households might be found close to one another, where the heads of the respective households happen to be brothers or else close relatives. But as a whole, the Rais in general are little influenced by considerations of caste solidarity in their residential arrangements.

Only the Sherpas have a clearly demarcated residential area of their own. The Sherpa families, immigrant in the recent past to Upper Pedong, could not get any land at lower altitude near the main residential locality of other communities, close to the Bazar area. Forced by necessity, they had settled at higher altitudes, formed a residential locality of their own and zealously guarded their exclusiveness. The houses of the Kamis, though not situated in one single segment of Upper Pedong, are not very far off from one another. The houses of the four Sanyashi households, related to each other by kinship and bound by common interests of co-tenancy under the same landholder dwell in one area. The houses of all other communities, interspersed throughout the village, present an agglomerated residential pattern of several communities. Religion seems to be a dormant feature of the residential layout. The Christian households live near their Church and Mission. The Buddhist households mostly live near each other. Isolated cottages follow a linear pattern parallel to the main road. But then, the huts are not all situated on the same plane along a ridge of the hill. In conformity to the housing layout in the Himalayan districts, the houses are located at different altitudes of the same hill, one connected with the other by a narrow foot-track. Only in plac s, where a hill affords a spacious plateau of a fairly large area or where a ridge extends over a wider slope, small huts are found to be clustered. On the whole, the houses are dispersed throughout the village, greater concentration being in lower altitudes. The central feature of the housing pattern and residential layout of Upper Pedong mark the houses to be in lower elevation (about 5,000 feet), very little far from the market place at Pedong Bazar and at almost the same altitude ; the higher the altitude and the greater the distance from the market-place and the

shopping centres at Pedong Bazar, the fewer are the houses. Households have thus been influenced by marketing and shopping facilities available in lower altitude

A foot-track, later converted into a mule-track from the main road, winds up along the village to make its course and to open ways for negotiation by the villagers of Upper Pedong. The track leads ultimately to Munsong Cinchona Plantation. About fifty per cent of the houses at Upper Pedong are situated on both sides of the serpentine hilly path, though not always linearly arranged, just on its side but quite often far from the path. Though one can hardly justify the use of the term road in a literal sense, except, of course, innumerable meandering alleys of the hill leading to the huts of the households of Upper Pedong, no other road virtually exists in the village under study.

The exterior look of even an average house in Upper Pedong conveys the aesthetic sense, innate generally in the rugged hillmen. Leaving aside some exceptionally remarkable houses bearing traits of artistry of the respective owners or occupiers, there is hardly a single hut which does not have an adjoining garden of flowering plants. Every household of Upper Pedong is an amateur floriculturist and flowers happen to be an integral part of the hillman's life in as much as gardens are inseparable from the huts. This passion for flowers does not yield to the problems of space. Even in huts without any open space, the households grow flowers in earthen tubs and flower-pots, often arrayed in suitable corners of the house. The huts generally look neat and spruce as a result of wielding of broomstick and application of swab. The slope of the hills being helpful to drainage, the households keep the surroundings clean and sanitary. Water-logging has never appeared as a problem to pester the villagers. Huts of the families belonging to the Nepali communities appear tidier than those of the Bhutia or the Lepcha communities.

The houses of Upper Pedong, on the whole, tend to consist of the constituent elements like the main residential hut, the kitchen and the goatshed or the cattleshed linearly arranged and constructed on a narrow strip of land. Cottages of longitudinal dimension in Upper Pedong conform to the local housing pattern in this hilly area, where on account of the dearth of squarish or rectangular plots of land in the same plane the huts expand along the same terrace on the same plane, in case any addition or extension of the main structure is necessitated. Even despite the presence of two or three houses appearing in a small cluster on more or less the same plane in one or two areas of Upper Pedong, one does not come across the cluster of conglomerated houses, so commonly found in the plains. The slopes of the hills have been a contributory factor to the peculiar housing pattern found here.

If the index of affluence of a householder in the plains is reckoned on the measure of housing, the same measure may not serve the purpose equally well in Upper Pedong. The idea of construction of a *Pucca* house of brick and mortar that proclaims the economic potentialities of its owner in a village in the plain areas, is negatived by climatic considerations. A two-storied wooden house or a single-storied wooden cottage of the bungalow type with an open lawn, or a kitchen garden, or an orchard near the house and a separate kitchen, is commonly owned by well-off persons here in this hill village. The cattleshed, piggery, goatshed or the poultry-yard farm and the latrine are all housed in separate structures, a little away from the main residential part. Walls and floors of the rooms are invariably made of wood; windows are fitted with glass-panes, as for greater part of the season, especially in winter, the households have to keep the windows and doors shut against fog and mist but allowing sufficient light into the room. An essential element of the house of a well-to-do household is an enclosed

verandah, its entrance sometimes also serving the purpose of drawing rooms or parlours. The roof of such a house is generally made of corrugated iron sheets, inlaid with a ceiling of wood inside the rooms. A family of the middle income-group lives in a house with walls of thin wood or split bamboo plastered with mud or with walls of stone. But, walls, made of stone, a little costlier than those of split bamboo plastered with mud, are not ideally suited to the chilly climate of the hill. The floors of such a house are, however, wooden and the roofs are thatched with straw. The windows in some houses are fitted with glass panes, but not in all. Usually the households do not have any privy, though they have separate kitchens. The poor people offer a different picture and a contrast too. The houses of the poor families have walls of split bamboos plastered with mud, mud floors and straw roofs. Houses are mostly single roomed and without any separate kitchen. Some households do not have separate sheds to shelter their livestock.

Interior decor of the rooms of all the houses in general, without any regard for economic distinctions, are highlighted by pictures, paintings, and photographs. The walls of the rooms of most of the villagers are decorated with pictorial calendars. A photograph in the house of a Buddhist family with the pictorial representation of *Lord Buddha* is an adornment for the walls ; the Christian households likewise wall up pictures of *Lord Christ*. The Hindu households too have a knack for decor of the walls with printed pictures or wall calendars representing deities of the Hindu pantheon ; photographs of the members of the households or of the nearest of kin are found hung up above the arches of the entrance doors. Printed extracts of Biblical passages, bound in wooden frames and walled up in the rooms reflecting the devoutness of the Christian households, are not used as fanciful adornments only. Again, pictures of the Buddhist Trinity, mounted on specially made wooden frames in one corner of the room in the house of the Bhutias are revered as living deities. Incense-sticks burn all the time lending an air of sanctity in addition to the aroma to the living rooms. In the kitchens of the Bhutia or Lepcha households and in some households of some Nepali communities like the Rais, the Limbus and the Kamis grid-irons or iron hooks tied with ropes and suspended from the ceilings preserve large slices of ham or beef or meat of buffaloes over the oven. While the rooms of the well-to-do and average middle class families are neatly furnished with pictures, photographs and furniture, most of the articles of daily use being arranged tidily in the wooden shelves on the wall, the poor families are in an unenviable position, the rooms being stuffed with innumerable articles of use, such as beddings, boxes, garments, etc., in utter dishevelment and complete disarray. The single rooms of the indigent families, often without any furniture worth the name, betray their poverty rather than their aesthetic senses.

One of the most striking points of housing in Upper Pedong is that quite a sizable number of families have no homesteads of their own, being only granted the right to use residential plots allotted to them by the concerned landowners under a system, locally known as *Pakhuria*, in which the tenants are authorised to construct houses on the residential plots allotted by the landlords, on condition that they would cultivate a portion of the landowners' land on crop-share basis. The Table 20 would throw light one the nature of ownership of the houses.

Whereas 50.5 per cent of the households live in houses, the homesteads of which they do not own, about 32.2 per cent of the total households and 63.6 per cent of the families without their own homesteads use land on *Pakhuria* system. Of the seven households living in rent-free houses, one is a Brahman family, headed by

the priest of the local Hindu temple. The head of the Sikkimese Bhutia family, the *Head Lama* of the Sikkimese *Gompa*, lives in tenements, built on *Devottar* land (land gifted to a temple to defray the expenses of management). Three households including one Sikkimese Bhutia, one Newar and one unspecified with their heads serving as teachers in the local High School live in free quarters, provided by the Mission. Two other single-membered households, each consisting of labours in the employment of the Forest Department, Government of West Bengal, live in the free quarters under the Forest Beat Office. The three households comprising a Chhetri housewife (husband being in service at Barrackpore, dt. 24-Parganas), one Rai worker in the local Sheep-Breeding Station and one Sikkimese Bhutia road-labourer, live in houses on monthly rental of Rs.3/-, Rs.5/- and Rs. 10/- respectively, their respective landlords being a Sikkimese Bhutia cultivator of the village, a Sikkimese Bhutia resident of the neighbouring village Sakyong and one Dukpa trader of Upper Pedong. To let out houses, however, is not commonly practised by the landlords of the premises in Upper Pedong.

Out of 28 families who live on residential plots belonging to others, 20 households have constructed the houses themselves; the remaining eight households live in houses not built by them. Only a solitary Sikkimese Bhutia household in Upper Pedong own four houses, two of which are tenanted on rent, one has been given to his sister free of rent, the owner household itself living in the fourth house.

Three households of the village also own houses, situated outside the village. A Sikkimese Bhutia teacher who lives in rent-free quarters provided by the local Missionary School owns a house, an ancestral property, at Sakyong where his mother lives alone, met by her son occasionally.

TABLE 20

HOUSES AND HOMESTEADS

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households living in				No. of households living on *Pakhuria* system in	
		Own houses in own land	Relatives, houses	Rented houses	Rent-free quarters	Houses constructed by themselves	Houses built by the landowners
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	9	..	1	2	1	..
Dukpa	5	2	1	..	..	1	1
Tamang	17	5	2	..	..	9	1
Rai	11	7	..	1	..	2	1
Sherpa	9	6	..	..	..	1	2
Kami	6	4	..	..	1	1	..
Lepcha	4	2	1	..	..	..	1
Limbu	4	2	..	..	..	1	1
Sanyashi	4	..	2	..	..	2	..
Chhetri	4	2	..	1	..	..	1
Gurung	3	1	..	..	..	2	..
Newar	2	1	..	..	1	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
Total	**87**	**43**	**6**	**3**	**7**	**20**	**8**

A Tamang woman of the village who supervises cultivation of land in her ownership and whose son is a well-placed Government official in Madhya Pradesh, owns a house in Kalimpong, where her son's wife lives with other members of the household.

A Rai cultivator of the village owns a house at Kasyone where the house remains vacant, as the household lives in Upper Pedong for better educational facilities.

Households *vis-a-vis* bedrooms

Next in importance to the ownership of houses and the status of the users with reference to the tenure of occupation and status of their households with reference to the houses in which they live, comes up the question of *per capita* sleeping space of different families in respect of bedrooms in their possession. The housing condition of the majority of the people, as reflected in the number of bedrooms, is far from being satisfactory for majority of the households of Upper Pedong, as the householders mostly occupy one bedroom each. The sociological importance apart, economic status of household is to some extent determined by the number of rooms in the possession of a household.

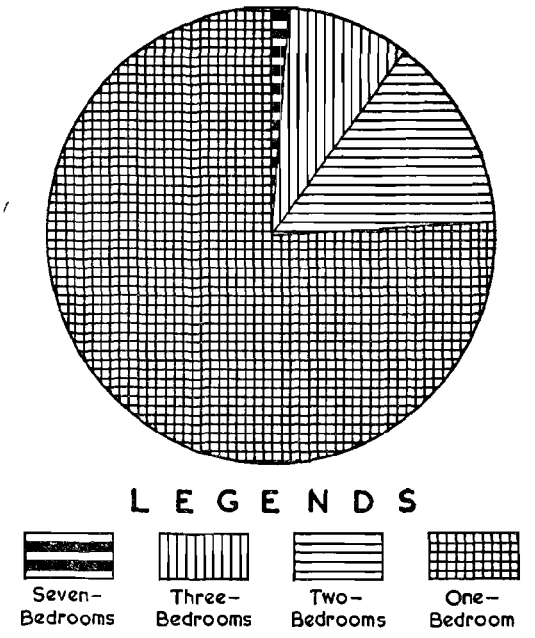
Though a little more than 75.8 per cent of the households live in one bedroom each, none of the Kami, Sanyashi, Chhetri, Bhujel, Mangar and Yakha households and one household of the unspecified community have more than one room in the use of one family each. Of the latter group, four households constituted by one family each of the Kami, Sanyashi, Mangar and Yakha communities do not face any hardship on account of scarcity of bedrooms, as all of them are single-membered. About 13.8 per cent of the households have two bedrooms each, about 9.3 per cent of the families have each more than three rooms and only one family has seven bedrooms. The occupation of seven bedrooms by one family is a little unusual

TABLE 21

NO. OF BEDROOMS AND THE USER HOUSEHOLDS

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households possessing				Total no. of bedrooms
		One bed room	Two bed rooms	Three bed rooms	Seven bed rooms	
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	9	3	1	..	18
Dukpa	5	4	1	..	..	6
Tamang	17	13	3	1	..	22
Rai	11	7	1	3	..	18
Sherpa	9	7	2	..	..	11
Kami	6	6	..	..	..	6
Lepcha	4	2	1	1	..	7
Limbu	4	3	..	..	1	10
Sanyashi	4	4	..	..	..	4
Chhetri	4	4	..	..	..	4
Gurung	3	2	..	1	..	5
Newar	2	1	..	1	..	4
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	1
Mangar	1	1	..	..	..	1
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	1
Brahman	1	..	1	..	..	2
Unspecified	1	1	..	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**66**	**12**	**8**	**1**	**121**

HOUSEHOLDS AND BEDROOMS



occurrence and more an exception than a general rule. The Limbu family, composed of three couples with seven adult members comprising four females and three males, is adequately provided with rooms, more than what is necessary for the household. The living condition of the households acquires a different meaning, in case the families are correlated to the number of bedrooms and the total number of members in each family.

Dearth of space in the living rooms poses a sociological problem to only three households of the village, one Limbu, one Sherpa and one Rai. The Limbu family is provided with only one room for two couples. The Sherpa household suffers from a similar problem, as two couples have to sleep in one room in its possession. Two bedrooms in the possession of the Rai family cannot meet the needs of three couples. One can only visualise the magnitude of the problem of living with which the three house-

TABLE 22

COUPLES LIVING IN BEDROOMS WITH ADULTS

Community	Total no. of households living in one bedroom	No. of households forming no regular families	No. of households forming regular families	No. of regular households with couples living in bedrooms with			
				One adult	Two adults	Three adults	No adults
Sikkimese Bhutia	9	2	7	1	2	1	3
Dukpa	4	..	4	2	1	..	1
Tamang	13	2	11	2	2	..	7
Rai	7	5	2	..	..	1	1
Sherpa	7	1	6	..	1	..	5
Kami	6	2	4	2	..	..	2
Lepcha	2	..	2	..	1	..	1
Limbu	3	1	2	..	1	..	1
Sanyashi	4	2	2	..	..	..	2
Chhetri	4	1	3	1	..	..	2
Gurung	2	1	1	1	..	..	..
Newar	1	..	1	..	..	..	1
Bhujel	1	..	1	1	..	..	..
Mangar	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	1	..	..	..	1
Total	**66**	**19**	**47**	**10**	**8**	**2**	**27**

holds are burdened to subtly adjust conjugal privacy to the shortage of rooms. Delicate as it is to probe into the consequences of sex-life from the hard realtiy of the shortage of space, no question has been asked to the households to save an embarrassment to both the interviewee and the interviewer.

The sociological import of living does not become meaningful on examination of married couples only. If adult members of both the sexes without connubial relationship live together in the same room, the situation can be accepted by anyone as unsatisfactory. But the problem worsens, if a married couple has to share a bedroom with some adult members of the family. One may examine Table 22 to have an insight into their problem.

The problem of accommodation appears to be acute in the case of 20 households in which the married couples are forced by necessity to share one bedroom with some other adult members of the family.

The table below gives the number of families according to their size and the number of bedrooms in their possession.

TABLE 23

FAMILIES AND BEDROOMS

No. of members in each household	Total no. of house-holds	Number of households possessing			
		One bed room	Two bed rooms	Three bed rooms	Seven bed rooms
One	7	5	1	1	..
Two	8	8	..	..	..
Three	10	9	1	..	..
Four	13	9	3	1	..
Five	18	15	1	2	..
Six	9	8	..	1	..
Seven	9	8	1	..	..
Eight	6	4	1	1	..
Nine	2	..	2	..	..
Ten	..	..	..	..	..
Eleven	2	..	1	1	..
Twelve	2	..	1	1	..
Sixteen	1	..	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**66**	**12**	**8**	**1**

More than 66.6 per cent of the families with one bedroom being used by each family, have more than three members in each. Similarly, 50.0 per cent of the households, each with two bedrooms, have more than five members in each. Likewise 50.0 per cent of the households with three bedrooms in use of each have six members or more in each family. Seven bedrooms are perfectly in keeping with the necessity of the Limbu family with 16 members. But, two single-membered households are better provided with bedrooms than their counterparts with the same size of family. The head of the Tamang household with two bedrooms, a store and a kitchen being the Commandant of the Armed Forces in Madhya Pradesh, his old mother lives here alone in the house. The Gurung household with three bedrooms, a store and a kitchen is now headed by a married female, husband of whom, a *Naik* in the Indian Army, lives in the place of his posting. She lives by herself alone in the house. Provided with more than what is necessary, the two households have a surplus of bedrooms in their possession. The table amply exemplifies that more than 67.3 per cent of the families, each living in one bedroom, are constituted by families with five members or less, while the rest living in single bedroomed houses are composed of six to eight members. The fact that the present village is situated at an altitude of more than 5000 feet, where the temperature is cold, living space for each is not as unsatisfactory as it may appear at first sight. Moreover, the size of an average bedroom varies from 120 square feet to 192 square feet.

House types

Even though houses in Upper Pedong are different from the housetypes of the plains of West Bengal, one cannot overlook the importance of the functional elements of the houses from one's consideration. In other words, the use of rooms not only hints at the material culture of the people and their ways of living but also suggests in very broad outlines

the economic characteristics of the village and the households therein. In the latter case, the index of prosperity or poverty is made explicit when one examines the needs of the households in the context of their cultural life, whether changed by extraneous forces or not, and when one examines how the needs are met. The Table 24 will concern the different elements of a house and their uses by the households of the village.

If separate kitchen and latrine are construed as two most vital elements essential for a household to enable it to live in a house conforming to the modern concepts of hygiene, sanitation and public health, 50.0 per cent families do not enjoy these two amenities. About 50.0 per cent of the households which have this basic amenity, provided by their houses, include all the Lepcha, Newar and Brahman families and the household of the unspecified community. Again, none of the Sanyashi, Bhujel, Mangar and Yakha households has any separate kitchen. These families as well as some households of other communities without kitchens cook their food either in their bedrooms or in the attached open space or verandahs. Separate latrines are in the possession of only 19.5 per cent of the households. The rest make use of the slopes of the hills near thickets or *Jhoras* to serve as latrines.

Social awareness bred of education and urban culture-contacts seem to have initiated some households in the use of latrines. The house- holds with separate latrines are either ex-army personnel or teachers.

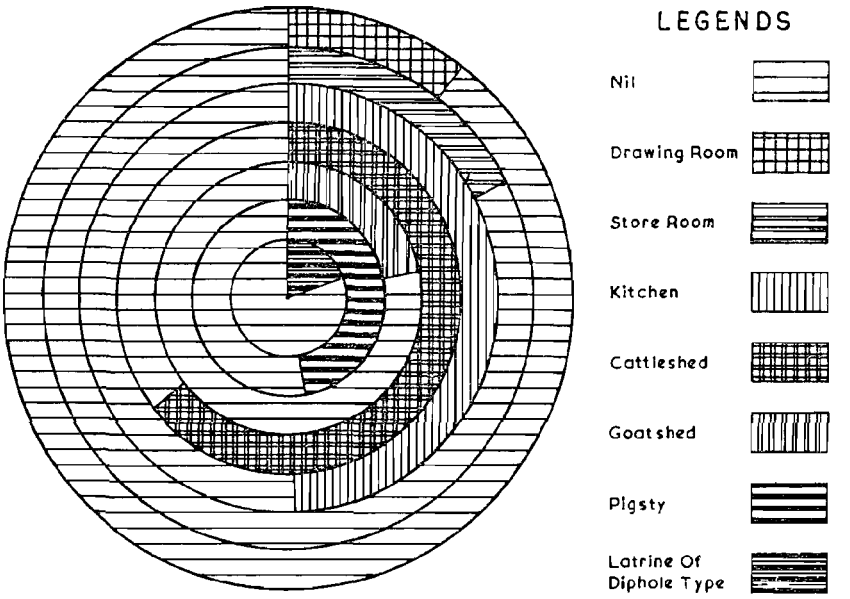
Separate kitchens being in the possession of half of the total families, separate store-rooms are used by a still lesser number. Only 17.2 per cent of the families of Upper Pedong have separate store-rooms. The have-nots keep their provisions either in the kitchen, where they have them separately stored or they stack the

TABLE 24

FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS OF THE HOUSE

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of families having in their houses						
		Drawing room	Store room	Kitchen	Cattleshed	Goatshed	Pigsty	Latrine of the dug hole type
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	2	5	11	10	..	10	2
Dukpa	5	..	1	2	2	2	4	1
Tamang	17	2	1	7	11	4	5	5
Rai	11	1	2	7	8	2	6	3
Sherpa	9	1	2	1	8	3	7	1
Kami	6	..	..	2	5	1	2	..
Lepcha	4	..	..	4	1	1	3	1
Limbu	4	1	1	1	3	2	2	1
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	1	1	3	3	3	..	..
Gurung	3	..	1	1	1	1	..	..
Newar	2	1	1	2	1	..	1	2
Bhujel	1	..	..	..	1	..	1	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**9**	**15**	**43**	**56**	**19**	**41**	**17**

HOUSEHOLDS AND FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS OF THE HOUSE



provisions along with other domestic utensils and furniture in the living room itself. Drawing rooms are in the possession of 10.3 per cent of the families. Open space at the entrance of the house is utilised in receiving guests, visitors or friends by almost all the households.

Only four cattle-owning households comprising two Tamangs, two Rais and one Limbu do not have separate cattlesheds, their cattle being sheltered in the verandahs outside their rooms. Similarly, three households consisting of one Rai, one Gurung and one Bhujel have no goat-shed, though they have goats. They keep goats in their living rooms. Likewise, three households constituted by two Sherpas and one Limbu rearing pigs have no pigsty.

Constructional materials

Local climate has shaped the housetypes and also influenced the choice of constituent materials in their construction. Use of cement and concrete in the construction of residential houses is negated by the chilly winter, when mercury touches very low points. Concrete roofs as well as cemented walls and floors tend to make the rooms damp and cold. Since housetypes here in the village or elsewhere in the region are dictated largely by considerations to keep the rooms warm, roofs thatched with straw are regarded ideal for the purpose. Yet, the well-to-do families prefer corrugated iron-sheets to straw for use as material for the roof, considerations being twofold. Apart from providing a durable covering structure for the roof, corrugated iron-sheets eliminate the three-yearly or four-yearly recurring expenditure on thatching of the roofs anew. The disadvantage of corrugated iron-sheets in shielding the room from the cold outside is counteracted by wooden ceiling and floor.

The cost of construction of the roof with corrugated iron-sheets goes up not only for the expensive material but also by the additional expense called for by the wooden ceiling. Straw is, therefore, the prime choice and it is used by the majority in constructing roofs of their houses. The observation is supported by the Table 25.

TABLE 25

MATERIAL OF THE ROOF

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households making the roofs with: Corrugated iron-sheets	Straw
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	7	6
Dukpa	5	1	4
Tamang	17	4	13
Rai	11	2	9
Sherpa	9	..	9
Kami	6	1	5
Lepcha	4	..	4
Limbu	4	1	3
Sanyashi	4	..	4
Chhetri	4	1	3
Gurung	3	1	2
Newar	2	2	..
Bhujel	1	..	1
Mangar	1	1	..
Yakha	1	..	1
Brahman	1	..	1
Unspecified	1	1	..
Total	**87**	**22**	**65**

About 74.7 per cent of the households have used straw in roofs of their houses. Corrugated iron-sheets, having been used by 25.3 per cent of the families, indicate the users' prosperity rather than preferential attitude.

Climatological factors have influenced the people in selecting material for the walls of their houses as in the case of roofs. *Pucca* walls of brick and mortar or cement and lime are not suited to local conditions. People discard these materials out of their experience of the failure of the *Pucca* walls to insulate the rooms from the cold outside. People have, therefore, learnt to adapt themselves more to the use of bamboo, wood and twigs plastered with mud in erecting walls for their rooms. Likewise, mud provides the constituent material for the floors of houses of about 66.7 per cent of the households at Upper Pedong.

Though wood, when used in the construction of walls, makes the rooms more comfortable

TABLE 26

MATERIAL OF WALLS AND FLOOR

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of households living in houses with walls of: Mud	Wood	Twigs plastered with mud	Bamboo plastered with mud	Split bamboo	Stone	Bricks	No. of households living in houses with floors of: Wood	Mud	Cement
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	1	5	1	3	1	2	..	12	1	..
Dukpa	5	..	1	1	2	..	1	..	4	1	..
Tamang	17	..	1	2	11	..	..	3	1	16	..
Rai	11	..	2	3	6	..	..	..	1	9	1
Sherpa	9	..	3	1	5	..	..	..	..	9	..
Kami	6	..	4	..	2	..	..	..	2	4	..
Lepcha	4	..	..	..	3	1	..	..	..	4	..
Limbu	4	..	..	..	3	..	1	..	1	3	..
Sanyashi	4	..	..	1	3	..	..	..	..	4	..
Chhetri	4	..	..	..	3	..	1	..	1	3	..
Gurung	3	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	1	2	..
Newar	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..
Bhujel	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Mangar	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Brahman	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Total	**87**	**1**	**21**	**10**	**43**	**2**	**7**	**3**	**28**	**58**	**1**

than any other material, its prohibitive cost, beyond the means of many, deters the majority from using the same.

Next to wall and roof, the third element of a room is its floor. It appears that 88.9 per cent of the households of the Bhutia communities, both Sikkimese and Bhutanese (Dukpa), live in rooms with wooden floors. Only 13.0 per cent of the families of other communities have rooms with wooden floors.

Influence of the neighbourhood

The housing pattern of the villages neighbouring Upper Pedong reveals no sharp deviation from that of the village under study. In the neighbouring villages too, roofs of the houses are made of either corrugated iron sheets or straw, the walls are built with either wood or bamboo plastered with mud and the floors are either wooden or earthen. The financial means of the households determine to a large extent the materials to be used in the construction of the different elements of a house. Some numbered few well-off households of the neighbouring villages own more than one house in different altitudes; the house at a higher altitude is visited in summer, winter being spent in the house at a lower altitude. Upper Pedong does not have any such family with two houses for two different seasons. Of all the houses in the village taken as a whole, five houses, each being owned by one Limbu, one Newar, one Tamang and two Bhutia households respectively, deserve notice because of their attractive structure. Besides, the Hospital, the School and the Church are housed in magnificent structures, which may be favourably compared with houses of similar functional use in any hill town in the district of Darjeeling.

Constructional plan

The houses in Upper Pedong superficially hold out the impression to a casual observer that they have been constructed after a carefully designed plan. The main entrance gate to a house is generally situated at a higher elevation, while the rear door of the house as also its windows are usually situated at a lower elevation along the dip of the hill. Houses are built on strong foundations to withstand extreme cold and heavy rainfall. The houses of most of the Bhutia families look like two-storied hutments. Wooden planks making the floor are generally laid down three or four feet above the ground-level, sometimes even more, say five or six feet above the ground-level of the floor, the enclosed space beneath the ceiling of wooden planks serving as groundfloor and sheltering domesticated animals. The bedrooms and the kitchen above the groundfloor are reached by an attached staircase. But, for single-storied houses the plinth is mostly raised about three feet above ground-level. The facade and the rear end of almost the majority of houses have attached verandahs with enclosing railings, the space serving as a sitting room or a parlour. The housing plan of the village has one common characteristic. The kitchen, cattleshed, pigsty and the goatshed of the house are located in separate structures. The cowshed is generally constructed a little away from the dwelling room, mostly at a distance of a few yards. Cattlesheds generally measure five to six feet in height from floor to ceiling and the roofs are usually thatched with straw horizontally. Walls, if any, are made of the branches of available trees or split bamboo, the cattlesheds in most cases being without any enclosing walls. Pigsheds are likewise constructed in one corner of the house, the height from floor to ceiling varying between three to four feet and the shed being walled by bamboo fencing or large blocks of stone. The latrines, which few houses are provided with, are constructed with walls of bamboo and roofs of straw at some distance from the main residential house. A platform is raised three or four feet above a ditch on the ground-level. Houses with *Kutcha* earthen floors are built on a plinth raised three to four feet above the ground-level, whereas the plinth is raised four

to six feet above the ground-level in houses with wooden floors. Bedrooms in most houses are not provided with more than two windows and one door, the insufficiency of the former being explained by the cold wind, fog and mist of the hills. The result inescapably leads to absence of ventilation and adequate light and sunshine in the rooms.

House-construction

Construction of a house in the hills has its own distinctive feature not observed otherwise in the plains.

Site-selection

Care is exercised to select a suitable site for a house. Steep slope of the hill locating the site is always avoided. A *Jhora* or any other available source of water, natural or trained, near the site of the proposed house is always desired. The villagers in general perform no elaborate ritual at the time of site-selection for a house, the Bhutias, the Sherpas and the Tamangs being found sometimes to call in their *Lama*, who recites prayers from sacred text, *Lhabab Thuje* in Tibetan, and performs some esoteric ritual to ward off evil spirits haunting the site for the proposed house. Likewise, the Chhetri, the Sanyashi, the Gurung, the Mangar and the Newar households requisition their Brahman priests to hold the worship of *Satyanarayana* in the site itself. Before construction is started, the Rai, the Limbu and the Lepcha households fall upon their respective priests to observe some magico-religious rituals sacrificing fowls in appeasement of evil spirits. The sacrificial ceremony is undertaken to immunise the workers engaged in construction of the house against all evil influences and harmful power of the malignant spirits and also to protect the inmates of the proposed house from bad omens.

Construction

The monsoon in this part of the Himalayas being characterised by incessant downpour and a cheerless weather for a number of days at a stretch, the autumnal months starting from September augurs the season of house-construction and annual repair and other routine work for the upkeep of the house. The onset of the rains, being considered unfavourable for such work, marks the cessation of all activities connected with construction.

In constructing a house with floor of mud, walls of bamboo and roof of straw, the first phase of the work is to raise a plinth above the ground-level varying from two to four feet. Along with the work on the plinth of the house, the thick, round poles of well-grown *Sal* or *Segun* are sunk into the ground all along the plinth with an average distance of four feet in between the poles. Once the columns of timber are piled, the second phase starts with erection of walls in linear arrangement of the grounded poles. Split bamboos fitted into a framework of wood or splinters of bamboo are erected to stand as walls of the house. The structure for the ceiling to support the roof of the house, provided by bamboo poles or wooden beams and cross-beams, rests on the main columns of wooden pillars. The slope of the roof is designed by fitting wooden beams or bamboo poles with king-pins and joists at suitable angles. Thatch of straw completes the roofing work. Sometimes, mud is plastered upon the wall of split bamboos. Some gaps are left to fix wooden windows and doors, while raising the walls.

Some Sikkimese Bhutia, Rai, Limbu and Tamang residents of Lower Pedong, Dalep Chand, Sakyong *Khas Mahal* and Kashyone *Khas Mahal* are employed during construction. While skilled persons like thatchers are engaged on a daily wage of Rs. 4.50 *paise* per head, the unskilled workers doing miscellaneous work like preparation of mud or erection of mud walls are paid a daily wage of Rs.3.50 *paise* per head.

Five carpenters including three Sikkimese Bhutias, one Lepcha and one Limbu of the

village are employed on daily a wage of Rs.4.00 *paise* per head. In times of urgent need carpenters of Sakyong and Kashyone are also requisitioned.

Cost

In course of last five years or so, Upper Pedong witnessed the construction of eleven new houses in all. While national economy has been in the grip of inflation for several years past in the wake of the development, the little village Upper Pedong in the distant corner of the district of Darjeeling has not been outside its pale. High prices having affected all aspects of the village-life for a fairly long period, constructional costs of houses also registered a steep rise because of the effect of the country-wide inflation on the wage of labour and cost of materials. Any comparative study of the changing cost-pattern over a period of time on the construction

TABLE 27

CONSTRUCTION OF NEW HOUSES IN FIVE YEARS

Community	No. of owners	Details of construction	Functional elements	No. of years since construction	Cost (In Rupees)
Sikkimese Bhutia	One	Two-storied house with roof of corrugated iron-sheet, walls of bamboo plastered with mud and wooden floors	Two bedrooms, one storeroom, one kitchen, one cattleshed and one pigsty	Five	4,000
Tamang	One	Single-storied house with roof of corrugated iron-sheet, wooden ceiling, walls of bamboo plastered with cement	Three bedrooms, one drawing room, one goatshed, one cattleshed and one latrine	One	4,000
Tamang	One	Single-storied house with roof of straw, walls of bamboo plastered with mud and earthen floors	Two bedrooms, one drawing room, one kitchen, one cattleshed, one latrine and one pigsty	Six	900
Tamang	One	One-storied house with roof of straw, walls of bamboo and mud and earthen floors	One bedroom	One	120
Tamang	One	One-storied house with roof of straw, walls of mud and earthen floors	One bedroom	Three	150
Rai	One	Ditto	One bedroom with attached verandah	One quarter	200
Sherpa	One	Ditto	Ditto	Three	175
Kami	One	One-storied house with roof of straw, walls of wood and earthen floors	Ditto	Two and a half	400
Lepcha	One	One-storied house with roof of straw, walls of mud and earthen floors	One bedroom and one kitchen	One	300
Gurung	One	One-storied house with roof of corrugated iron-sheets, wooden walls and earthen floors	Three bedrooms, one storeroom and one kitchen	One	3,000
Bhujel	One	One-storied house with roof of straw, walls of stone and earthen floors	One bedroom and one verandah	Three	350

of a house becomes difficult because of the absence of comparable data. Nevertheless, the data on the eleven newly constructed houses of the village will be meaningful in conveying an idea of the present-day costs of construction of a house. The table prepage relates to different aspects of construction of houses and their costs.

Repair and maintenance

Houses in Upper Pedong do require repair and need attention from time to time. But, repair-work is mostly restricted to alteration of the roof of the house. As 65 houses, out of eighty five, have roofs thatched with straw, the roofs necessitate periodic maintenance every three or four years. The expense for thatching of a roof varies from Rs.25·00 *paise* to Rs.50·00 *paise* on an average. Barring the 12 dilapidated houses of the very poor families, comprising three Sikkimese Bhutias, two Tamangs, two Sanyashis one Dukpa, one Sherpa, one Kami, one Lepcha and one Chhetri, other houses of the village look apparently well. Some houses of the Bhutias, built about three or four decades ago, call for immediate repairing and remodelling work ; the wooden planks constituting the floor and the attached staircases are in such a neglected state of disrepair that they can give way any time. Want of funds or of earnings has disabled 12 households from giving attention to necessary additions and alterations in their houses.

In course of the last ten years only eleven households either undertook the work on extension or attended to minor repair-work and periodic thatching of the house. One Sikkimese Bhutia pensioner repaired and extended his house nine years ago for Rs.3,000.00 *paise*. Two Tamang households repaired their houses and thatched the roofs for Rs.30.00 *paise* and Rs.25.00 *paise* respectively. The extension of one bedroom together with repair-work costs one Rai family Rs.100·00 *paise*, while roofs were thatched by another Rai and one Sherpa at a cost of Rs.15·00 *paise*. One Sherpa spent Rs.20·00 *paise* on thatching work and some minor repair work. One Kami spent Rs.40·00 *paise* on minor repairs, whereas the cost for the same by a Limbu was Rs.25·00 *paise*. Thatching work cost one Lepcha Rs.15·00 *paise* and one Sanyashi Rs.12·00 *paise*.

Privacy

In building a house no attention seems to be particularly paid to a boundary wall or fencing enclosure around the house. The slope of the hill provides a house with the necessary privacy.

Furniture

The items of household furniture connote how the way of life of the people is adjusted to and maintained in local contexts and also suggest the economic capabilities of the households to afford the use of certain household furniture to meet certain domestic needs. Besides, use of certain items of furniture attests to socio-cultural accoutrements of the different communities against backgrounds of their own and also their deviation from the traditional items of household use. The Table 28 relates to use of certain items of furniture to meet particular needs.

The table is a pointer to the standards of living rather than to social or cultural accomplishments. Thus, if 25 households comprising one Chhetri, one Kami, two Lepcha, two Limbu, three Sanyashi, three Bhutia (including two Dukpa), four Rai and six Tamang families do not own even crude bedsteads, one need not seek any sociological theory to account for the absence of this item of furniture. Abject poverty accounts for their failure to conform to the general practice. Again, 50.0 per cent of the households possess at least a chair each, while a table is in the possession of 34 families. But as the table above does not show the combination of the different items of furniture in the possession of individual families, the Table 29 provides the information.

TABLE 28

USE OF FURNITURE

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of households possessing							No. of households with mirror
		Crude bedstead	Chair	Table	Bench	Stool	*Jalchowki*	Wall-shelf	
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	12	10	10	6	8	8	8	13
Dukpa	5	3	2	2	..	3	1	1	5
Tamang	17	11	5	5	3	6	5	3	17
Rai	11	7	8	3	4	5	3	4	11
Sherpa	9	6	4	2	1	2	1	1	9
Kami	6	5	2	1	..	3	2	2	6
Lepcha	4	2	2	2	1	2	..	1	4
Limbu	4	2	1	1	2	2	1	..	4
Sanyash	4	1	..	..	1	1	..	..	4
Chhetri	4	3	2	2	1	2	2	1	4
Gurung	3	3	2	2	..	1	..	..	3
Newar	2	2	2	2	2	1	..	..	2
Bhujel	1	1	1	..	1	..	..	1	1
Mangar	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Brahman	1	1	1	1	..	1	1	1	1
Unspecified	1	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**62**	**43**	**34**	**22**	**37**	**25**	**23**	**87**

TABLE 29

ITEMS OF FURNITURE

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of households possessing							No. of house-holds possessing any item of furniture like bedstead, chair, table and bench
		Bed-stead	Chair	Bedstead, chair and table	Bed-stead and bench	Bedstead, chair and table	Bedstead, chair and bench	Bedstead, chair, table and bench	
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	1	..	..	1	5	..	5	12
Dukpa	5	1	..	..	..	2	..	..	3
Tamang	17	5	..	2	..	1	..	3	11
Rai	11	1	2	2	..	..	1	3	9
Sherpa	9	1	..	4	..	..	..	1	6
Kami	6	3	..	1	..	1	..	..	5
Lepcha	4	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	2
Limbu	4	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	2
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Chhetri	4	1	..	..	..	1	..	1	3
Gurung	3	1	..	..	..	2	..	..	3
Newar	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2
Bhujel	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Mangar	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**16**	**2**	**9**	**3**	**15**	**2**	**17**	**64**

About 75.0 per cent of the households of the village possess at least one essential item of furniture like bedstead, chair, table and bench. Of the 64 families with furniture, only sixteen households possess only bedsteads. Of the remaining 46 households having at least two of the four main items of furniture, as many as 34 households (39.1 per cent of the total households) have either three or all the four items. Compared to other communities, the Bhutias are well-off, as 83.3 per cent of the households of their community possess some furniture or other.

In the absence of a dealer in furniture in the neighbourhood except in Kalimpong, some of the purchaser households visit Kalimpong for the purchase of an item of furniture, though most of the families get their furniture manufactured at home by carpenters on wage.

Necessary timber for the furniture sized at home is never in short supply, because of the abundance of forests in the vicinity of Upper Pedong. But, home-made furniture never attains the same finish as those available in the shops and show-rooms of the cabinet-makers at Kalimpong. So, the well-off families are inclined to purchase ready-made furniture from Kalimpong.

Consumer goods

Use of different items of consumer goods like hurricane lantern, torch-light with dry cell batteries, petromax, kerosene stoves, etc. by different households is illustrated in the Table 30.

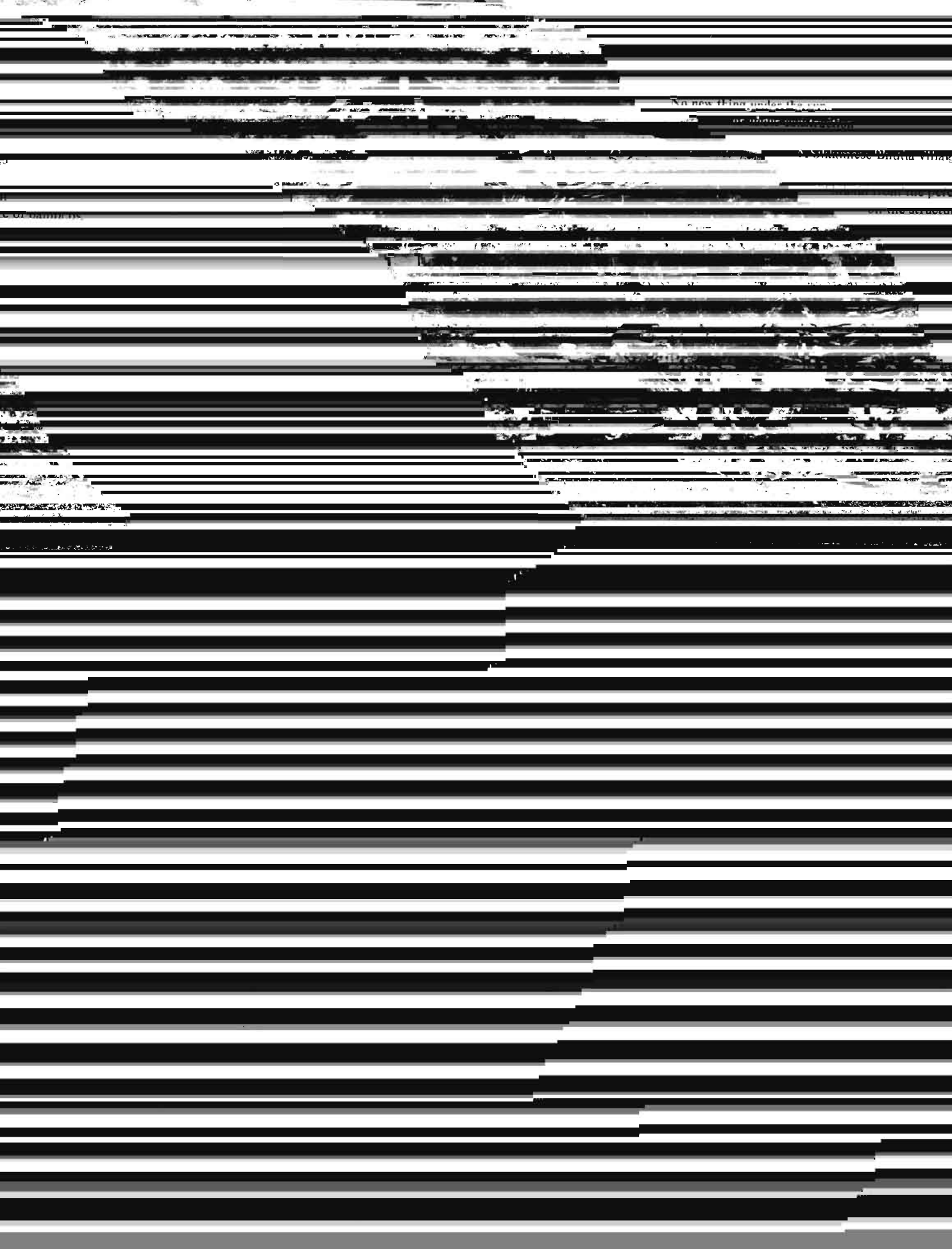
For lighting purposes, hurricane lantern with the fuel of kerosene oil is used by 55.2 per cent of the households, the rest not being financially so solvent as to afford its use. In 39 households which do not use hurricane lanterns, *Diba* (lamp of crude make and shape from metallic foils recovered from empty tin containers, rejected by grocers and merchants) substitutes

TABLE 30

CONSUMER GOODS

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households possessing				
		Hurricane lantern	Petromax	Torchlight with dry cell batteries	Kerosene stove	Radio receiver set
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	7	..	4	1	..
Dukpa	5	2	..	1	..	..
Tamang	17	4	1	4	..	1
Rai	11	9	..	2	..	..
Sherpa	9	6	..	1	..	..
Kami	6	2	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	4	3	..	2	..	..
Limbu	4	2	..	1	..	..
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	3	1	1	..	..
Gurung	3	3	..	1	..	..
Newar	2	2	..	1	1	1
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	1	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	1	1	..	..
Brahman	1	1	..	1	..	..
Unspecified	1	1	..	1	..	..
Total	**87**	**48**	**3**	**21**	**2**	**2**





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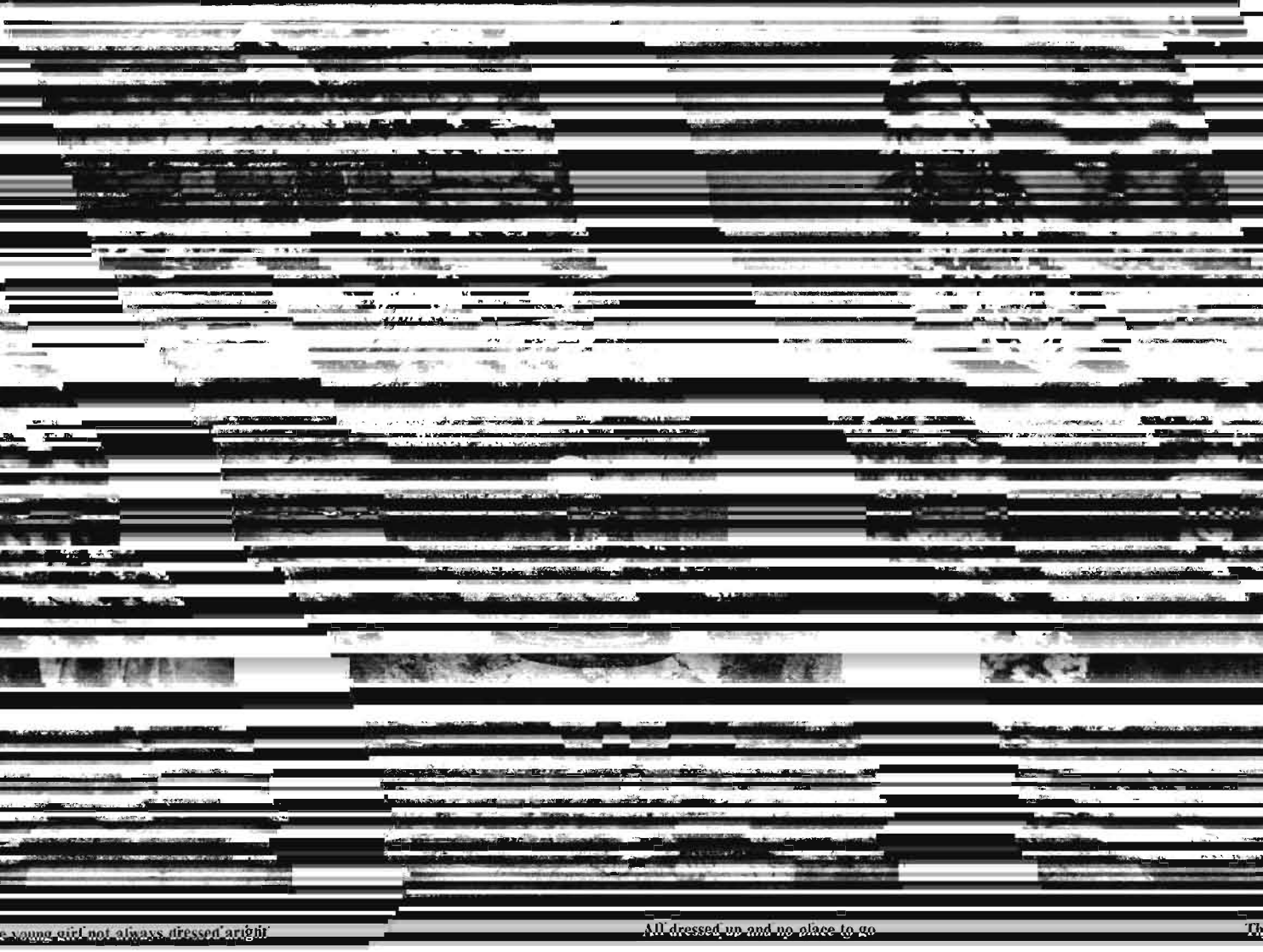
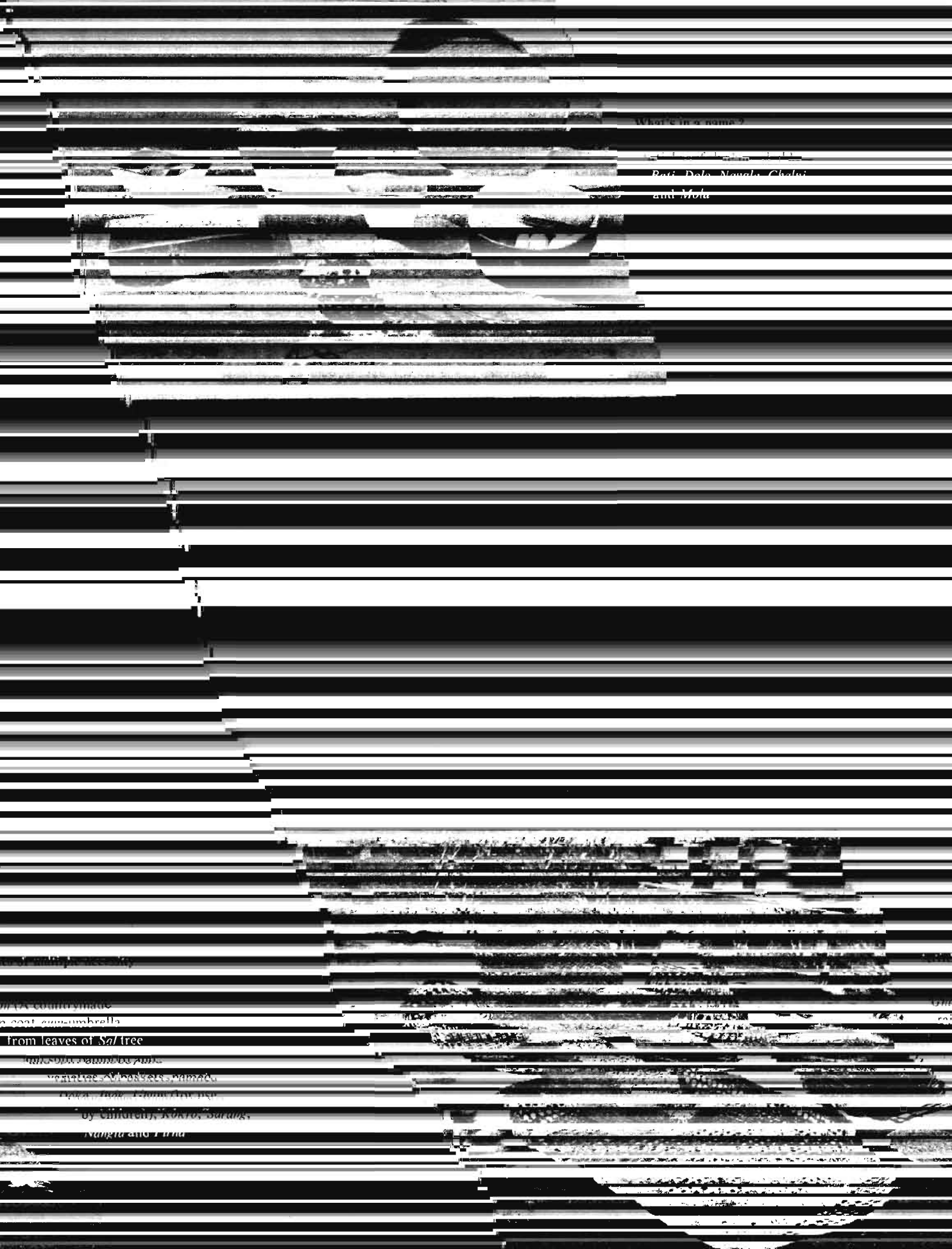


young girl not always dressed aright

All dressed up and no place to go



as a contrivance for lighting their rooms. Though kerosene oil provides fuel for *Dibas* in the households, too poor to use hurricane lanterns, the cost of which is Rs.6·00 *paise* per piece, the same for a *Diba* is much less, 0.25 *paise* being the price for a piece. Only 24.1 per cent of the households use torch-light with dry-cell batteries, a useful handy lighting gadget at night, indoor or outdoor. A kerosene stove, popular with the housewives of the plains as a portable oven which can be lighted anytime at will, is not used. Its absence in 85 households is explained by the fact of its unfelt need, as ovens in the kitchens of all the households burn day and night because of the abundant fuel provided by firewood and other wood of the forests available at a nominal cost. Radio-receiver sets are items of luxury to many, though not all are incapable of its use because of limited means. Radio-sets, run on electricity, cannot operate in this village where there is no supply of electricity. Hence, transistorised receivers are the only choice. But, cheap sets of transistorised nature being not locally available, those in Kalimpong and Darjeeling cost much higher than the same in Calcutta. Therefore, families with both the desire and the means to purchase radio-sets are discouraged by the prohibitive price at Darjeeling and Kalimpong. Bicycles being impossible to pedal in the hilly roads with sharp gradients, no household owns or possesses this vehicle.

It is indeed interesting that only six households acquired some new item of consumer goods in course of last five years. Two households using kerosene stove acquired the item in course of half a decade. In case of petromax the latest user is one Tamang household. Torchlights were acquired by one Sikkimese Bhutia family and one Limbu household in the period under reference, during which one Dukpa purchased a timepiece.

Dress

Dress of different households in Upper Pedong is varied not only in form, texture, material and colour, but also in nature. It reflects the co-existence of both traditional and non-traditional dress among the families of different communities.

The Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas (Bhutanese Bhutias) have their own traditional attire. The males ordinarily wear *Fogo*, a long robe-like upper garment stretching from the shoulder above to the ankles below. A sewn piece of cotton cloth with one end encircling the shoulders, it girdles the whole body. To tailor a piece of this garment for an adult, one requires about 14.53 to 16.46 metres of cloth. The *Fogo*, both cotton and woolen, is usually worn over a shirt. Likewise, the traditional apparel of the Bhutia womenfolk for daily wear is known as *Mogo* or *Bakhu* in their vocabulary. Worn over a full-sleeved blouse, a *Bakhu* too, like a *Fogo*, encloses the neck and hanging loosely, reaches the ankles. One end of the attire is girdled round the waist, where a piece of cloth, known as *Pangden*, (resembling an appron) is tucked up only by the married Bhutia women. About 9.14 to 10.97 metres of cloth are necessary to make a piece of *Mogo*.

The apparels of the Sherpas, both male and female, are almost akin to those of the Bhutias. The difference in the dress of the Sherpa women is marked by two apron-like *Pangdens*, hung from the girdle of the *Mogo* on the waist, one in front in the usual Bhutia style and one behind. Again, like the Nepali women, the Sherpa females cover their heads with a piece of unsewn cloth, called *Majetro*. The people jocularly remarks that the dress of a Sherpa woman is semi-Bhutia and semi-Nepali.

Though living within the same village, the Nepali communities like the Tamangs, the Rais, the Limbus, the Sanyashis, the Chhetris, the Gurungs, the Mangars, the Yakhas, the Bhujels and others wear dresses, completely different from those of the Bhutias and the Sherpas. An adult Nepali male puts on a cotton *Pyjama* (Country-trouser) of the North Indian type,

locally known as *Sural,* and *Daora* or *Angia* (Shirts). They also wear *Patuka* (Waist-band) round the waist, on the left side of which a typical iron knife, traditionally known as *Khukri,* sheathed in a scabbard is buckled. A cotton or felt cap covers the head, comprising the traditional Nepali head-dress. Leather slippers and footgears in some cases are also used.

A Nepali grown-up girl wears a *Gunui* or *Fanriyo,* a piece of unsewn cloth, usually 4.57 metres in length, and 1.14 metres in breadth. It is put on round the waist like a petticoat down to the feet with pleats in front. Unlike the *Sari* (Unsewn cloth of Indian women), a *Gunui* is never drawn above the waist, not even any of its ends. It is, therefore, a lower garment of adult females of the Nepali communities. A full-sleeved sewn blouse, a *Cholo* comprises the upper garment.

All Nepali women cover their heads with *Majetros,* also called *Majitros.* Besides, every Nepali woman would always girdle round her waist rather tightly a long piece of unsewn coloured cloth, called *Hembari,* usually 3.66 metres in length. *Majetros* and *Hembaris* are inimitably associated with the wholetime dress of the Nepali women.

A Buddhist Lepcha male generally wears a a cotton vest-like dress, known as *Pagi,* comparable to the *Fogo* of the Bhutia menfolk because of the close semblance of the two. A *Pagi* covers the whole body from the shoulders down to the ankles, leaving only the arms bare. But, it is not a Lepcha dress for daily use. Instead, it is worn by the ordinary Lepcha menfolk on the occasion of some religious ceremony or festival. Ordinarily, the Lepcha adult males mostly wear shorts, shirts and footwears. The dress of the Lepcha woman is not much original in making it look differently from that of a Nepali female of adult age. A cotton blouse, known as *Tugo,* provides the upper garment of the Lepcha woman, while the lower garment, called *Damdyam* by the Lepchas, is an unsewn piece of cotton cloth, usually 4.57 metres in length and worn round the waist like a petticoat.

Young boys of all the communities, irrespective of their ethnic and religious diversities ordinarily wear either shorts or trousers and shirts with leather footwears. Panties or shirts and frocks are used by the girls of the village. Boys and girls including children of both the sexes attending schools wear dresses, as specified by their respective schools. Though uniformity in dress of the boys and girls of most of the communities in Upper Pedong is the general feature, meriting no attention in particular, well-off Bhutia households possess traditional apparels even for their children.

The females in the Bhutia and the Sherpa families always wear their traditional attires, taking pride in their traditional dress. But the males in the households of these two communities do not all put on their traditional dress for their daily use. Some males wear instead either trousers or *Pyjamas* and shirts. Unlike the Bhutias of both the sexes and the Sherpa women, males of the Sherpa, Lepcha and other communities do not reveal any sense of pride for their traditional dress. The dresses of the Nepalis, both men and women, are much liked by persons even of the non-Nepali ethnic groups. This process of assimilation of the particular trait of the material culture of the Nepalis is set to work by the women especially. The males, especially the educated section having contacts with sophistication through visits outside, notably the district and the subdivisional headquarters, have switched over to the European form of dress, getting used to coats, trousers, neckties and shoes. The spell of western culture, through emulation of the dress of the latest cut and fashion, is indeed a powerful force exemplifying its effects on the younger converts to the occidental culture, if not to the inner spirit and philosophy of the civilisation of the west. The comprehension of

enlightenment by the youth and the elite of this far-flung hilly village has found expressions through their dress. Thus whether out on the road or at work, the menfolk wear shorts and vests or shirts, the women having contrarily opted for Nepali costumes as their outdoor dress. *Bakhu* is the ordinary working dress of the Bhutia working girls and women. White, red and blue appear to be the favourite colours of the women.

Every villager is found to possess two sets of dress with exceptions in the case of the well-off families, members of which have each three, four or even five sets of dresses. In sharp contrast, members of the poor Dukpa, Tamang and Sanyashi families have only one set of dress for each.

The climate of the place being cold and annual mean average temperature recording much lower points than in the plains and water being icy cold round the year and scarce during winter and summer, daily washing of clothes is an unpleasant and irksome job for the villagers. Once a week and sometimes even once a fortnight the households wash their clothes. In some cases proper thoughts of routine wash and cleanliness are not given to the clothes, till they get stained, soiled and dirty. For washing the clothes are boiled with washing soda or soap, but to rinse them, they are not struck or thrown against the ground manually. Instead, hard strokes of wooden clubs are applied to the clothes, while they are treated with water. Though in Pedong Bazar the Bihari washerman of the Dhobi caste runs a laundry, charging 0.15 *paise* per article of wash, only seven households consisting of two Sikkimese Bhutias, two Tamangs, two Newars and one unspecified utilise his services.

Winter dress

The altitude of Upper Pedong makes the use of winter garments almost imperative throughout the year. Persons in the affluent families with monthly income of Rs.200·00 *paise* or under have full suits of pure wool or tropical wool. While some members of the families of middle income-groups of Rs.150·00 *paise* or so a month have full woolen suits, some have either woolen coats or woolen trousers. Though costly garments of tropical wool are beyond the means of many, the climate leaves the villagers no choice other than using winter dresses of wool. Poor income may make one renounce one's desire for full suits of wool, but it cannot force one to discard a woolen sweater. Winter garments of cheaper stock, made mostly of flannel, cotswool etc., are put on by the poor. Most of the women at Upper Pedong know the art of knitting sweaters, jumpers, mufflers and many other garments from wool-staple that they knit during leisure hours throughout the year for relatives and friends. Women, in general, wear woolen sweaters or blouses. Urban influence has initiated the women of the affluent households in the use of woolen cardigans and lady's coats. They include some Sikkimese Bhutia, some Tamang, Limbu and Newar women. Woolen wrappers are not found to be used by anyone. During winter the Bhutias and the Sherpas wear woolen *Fogo* and *Bakhu*, which are said to serve as excellent winter garments.

Festive dress

On festive occasions like religious ceremonies, marriages, fairs etc., the villagers of the different communities and creeds put on gay and colourful attires. Most of them keep in stock some of their best dresses for wear on festive occasions. About fifteen affluent families purchase new clothes during such festivities. Those who cannot afford to have new dresses and those who do not have any dress in their wardrobes wash and clean the dresses of daily use. The Bhutias and the Sherpas get *Fogo* and *Bakhu* especially prepared from linens of pleasant colours and staples and from costly Chinese brocades of fine texture and colour. A few Bhutias claim to

have with them traditional costumes, tailored at a cost of Rs. 1000·00 *paise* and in some cases even at higher costs.

Source

In Pedong Bazar there are at least a dozen shops, stocked with ready-made garments, suit-lengths of both cotton and wool and cotton textiles of very common varieties. To the permanent shops of the place are added few other open-air temporary stalls, selling ready-to-wear garments and winter dresses of multiple varieties on the biweekly *Hat*-days. The people mostly make their purchases of ready-made garments and clothings from these shops and stalls. The villagers also visit the neighbouring markets at Algarah, Kagay and other places, especially on *Hat*-days for the same purpose. But for making purchases in bulk or for buying costly garments and textiles the villagers visit Kalimpong where the same article sells cheaper than that at Pedong Bazar. The well-to-do villagers as also the young people at times visit the big shops and stalls in Kalimpong and Darjeeling too in the hope of getting the latest designs and varieties catering to a wide range of choice. Sometimes, clothes are also tailored there. Trousers, shirts of the English make, coats and full suits are not always purchased readymade. On the other hand, some are tailored in big shops on order. In Pedong Bazar there are nearly half a dozen tailoring shops, also stocking ready-to-wear garments for sale, the establishment being owned and run by members of the Damai community, of which tailoring is said to be the traditional occupation. The Damai traders, well-trained in tailoring, charge from their customers moderate rates and draw a large number of villagers to their shops for dresses made according to specifications. The Bhutias and the Sherpas get their traditional dresses tailor-made in Pedong Bazar.

Change in the concept

To the educated section, comprising especially the youths of the Bhutia and the Sherpa population, traditional dresses have been fast losing their appeal, as evident from the waning number of users. Over the younger persons, very few of whom have any traditional dress worthy of notice, tradition of their own age-old dresses has practically lost its sway. Very few youths have the traditional dresses which they don only during festive occasions. Even among the Nepali communities the traditional double-breasted, long, tapetied coat-shirts, kind of Jodhpur trouser-breeches, and little round skullcap, have long taken leave of the present generation. Leaving aside the few elderly and unsophisticated persons, the males have been used to get themselves robed in the European style in English shirts, trousers and coats for more than a decade.

On account of a prolonged contact of 50 years or so with different Nepali communities and for many other immediate and remote causes, the Bhutias, the Lepchas and the Sherpas (A community of Nepal though, they are more akin to the Bhutias in the expression of their cultural traits) have been imbued with a strong and irresistible temptation of relinquishing their traditional dress in favour of their present-day sophistications. An elderly, conservative Bhutia villager mournfully remarked, "The day is not perhaps very far, when our traditional costumes will be lost for ever and eventually forgotten". It is, however, interesting that in inverse proportion to the number of males giving up their traditional costume the Bhutia and the Sherpa women hold on their customary attire with steadfast zeal. One plausible explanation volunteered by an enlightened Bhutia woman for the apparent apathy of the womenfolk for any deviation in the use of their dress is the colourful look of the Bhutia *Bakhu*. The Nepali dress for the females, in use locally and regionally, and consisting of an upper garment (Blouse), a lower garment, a waist-band and a veil is considered rather poor substitutes for the Bhutia *Bakhu*. The latter looks more colourful and is also easy to wear.

Among women of the Nepali communities, though the custom does not lay down any orthodox principle to cover blouse with an end of the *Gunui,* some have presently developed a fascination for the Bengali style of draping a *Sari* round the body. Consequently, *Gunui* is put on by a Nepali girl as immaculately as a Bengali girl wears her *Sari.*

Urban influence

With improved means of communication and available facilities of direct transport from Upper Pedong to Kalimpong (an hour's journey), Darjeeling (four hours' travel), Gangtok (four hours' journey) and to Siliguri (involving travel of four hours), the villagers have greater opportunities of visit to the important urban centres of the region. The impact of the urban force is well manifested in the changing concept of dress among the sophisticated and the neo-literate section of the villagers of Upper Pedong.

Latest designs and fashions introduced in the towns are not lost on the young people, even though they may be somewhat late in catching the contagion of the fashion-world promptly. While drain-pipe trousers and T-shirts hold a goodly number of young boys spellbound, synthetic fabrics are equally a craze to both the sexes.

On a resume, the people's awareness of wearing dress spick and span gets a pronounced dimension, when one remembers that the little village of Upper Pedong is located in the extreme corner of the district at a distance of about 24 kilometres from the nearest town of Kalimpong. Distance has not damped the people's enthusiasm to keep abreast of changes in designs, motifs, colours, textures, new improvisations and inventions. A superficial observer will be at his wit's end to reconcile the poverty of a poor labourer to the first impression about him from his woolen suits. For that matter, the puzzle will get all the more complicated and knotty, when one finds a woman of the lower economic order dressed in a piece of artificial silk but working on the roadside as a day-labourer.

Ornaments

Ornaments are as much a temptation to the women of the hills as they are to the females elsewhere. Ornaments of some material or other are found to be used in 75 households (86.2 per cent of all the households), because ornaments are not looked upon only as the means of body decoration but are considered to insure the owners against uncertain financial hazards befalling in future, provided the constituent material is not a base metal. Gold is the legal tender for both the sexes not only for the intrinsic value of this precious metal and the assured sense of security it instils into the minds of the owners but also for the esteem it earns and the consequential social ranking of the owners of golden ornaments. The only ornament used by the Christian males of all the communities and some males of the non-Christian households is the golden ring.

Ornaments in use in Upper Pedong are characterised by their typical designs and also by the variety of constituent materials. Gold and silver both constitute the most important metals used in making the ornaments. Stones, minerals and beads are also used in making the ornaments. Jewellery as also tempting charm-boxes and varied ornaments of gold and silver studded with turquoise and coral of pink and red varieties. Beads of turquoise, coral, amber, jade and agate are also very popular with the women. If a household is not affluent enough to afford costly ornaments, its women still go in for ornaments of brass, glass or synthetic chemical compounds. In such a household earrings of brass and necklaces of cheap beads substitute costly golden ornaments. The Table 31 will be specific about the households of the village with reference to the material used in the families to make their ornaments.

Assumption of the premise that gold by itself or in association with silver indicates a family's affluence will mislead one to the incorrect finding that 44.8 per cent of the households with ornaments of gold are well-to-do. In fact, quite a smaller number is really affluent. Even the households with golden ornaments own only one or two items of gold. Though one should not accept the quantitative data furnished about ornaments by the villagers as absolutely fool-proof or cent per cent correct, one cannot either reject the analysis as being based on superficial observations or incorrect data. Attempts to check and cross-check the present information by participant observation method have been taken to eliminate all possible dilutions in the primary data.

Secondly, if the data fail quantitatively to present a satisfactory picture, qualitatively the returns will not fail to yield the desired result. It needs mention that questions to probe into one's movable or immovable assets and valuables make everyone suspicious. At one stage of enquiry panicky villagers were under the impression that under the cover of socio-economic enquiry Government really wanted to assess the valuables and ornaments of the households in Upper Pedong to force them at the end of the enquiry to contribute to the Defence Fund of India. The impact of the

TABLE 31

ORNAMENTS

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of households with women using ornaments of: Gold and stones	Silver and stones	Gold, silver and stones	Gold and other inferior metals and stones	Silver and other inferior metals	Inferior metals or stones	Stones	No. of house-holds using no orna-ments	No. of house-holds without any female
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	8	..	1	..	1	1	..	2	..
Dukpa	5	2	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Tamang	17	10	1	1	4	..	..	..	1	..
Rai	11	5	..	4	..	..	..	..	2	..
Sherpa	9	..	4	2	..	..	2	1	..	..
Kami	6	2	2	1	..	..	..	..	1	1
Lepcha	4	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..
Limbu	4	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Sanyashi	4	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	1
Chhetri	4	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	3	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Newar	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Brahman	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**39**	**9**	**14**	**6**	**1**	**5**	**1**	**12**	**5**

Gold Control Order was also adverse on the villagers so as to have made them unfavourably disposed towards the enquiry. It was only after patient hearing that confidence was restored in the public mind. Some illustrations of the methods employed to gain the villagers' confidence and co-operation are helpful in acquainting the readers with the situations in the field of investigation.

In course of interrogation with one Christian household, head of which was the wife of an Army-man and very recently married, question on ornaments was in the first instance replied to in the negative. But repeated exhortation and the question if she did not even have the wedding-ring touched her vanity and she admitted at last that she possessed not only her marriage-ring but also a necklace and an earring. It transpired that the respondent got alarmed by the hearsay that attempts were being made on behalf of the Government to assess the wealth of the village-women. The fact stands that about 72.0 per cent of the households with womenfolk have some ornaments of gold for use by their female members. But mere possession of golden ornaments does not thereby indicate the owner families to be at par with the 13 households constituted by seven households with no ornaments and six other families using ornaments of stones and inferior metals.

Ornaments, whether of gold, silver or stones, are different from those of the plains in design as also use.

Bangles

Locally called *Chura*, *Bala* or *Kankan*, gold bangles used on wrists by womenfolk in affluent families do not reveal either any delicate designs or decorative motifs and artistic finish. Rather crude and massive-looking, a pair of golden bangles contain 35 grammes to 60 grammes of gold. Golden bangles being very costly and restricted to the womenfolk of the few well-off families, bangles of silver, brass, glass and synthetics are in popular demand by the average women of the village.

Necklace

Of all the ornaments, necklace seems to be the most popular item among girls, though only two households have each a golden necklace. Most other girls, therefore, wear a necklace either of silver or of beads and semi-precious stones.

Reji is popular among the Bhutia women and also among women of some of the Nepali communities. About 80 to 100 pieces of four-anna coins of silver or other coins in currency, are required to make a piece of *Reji*.

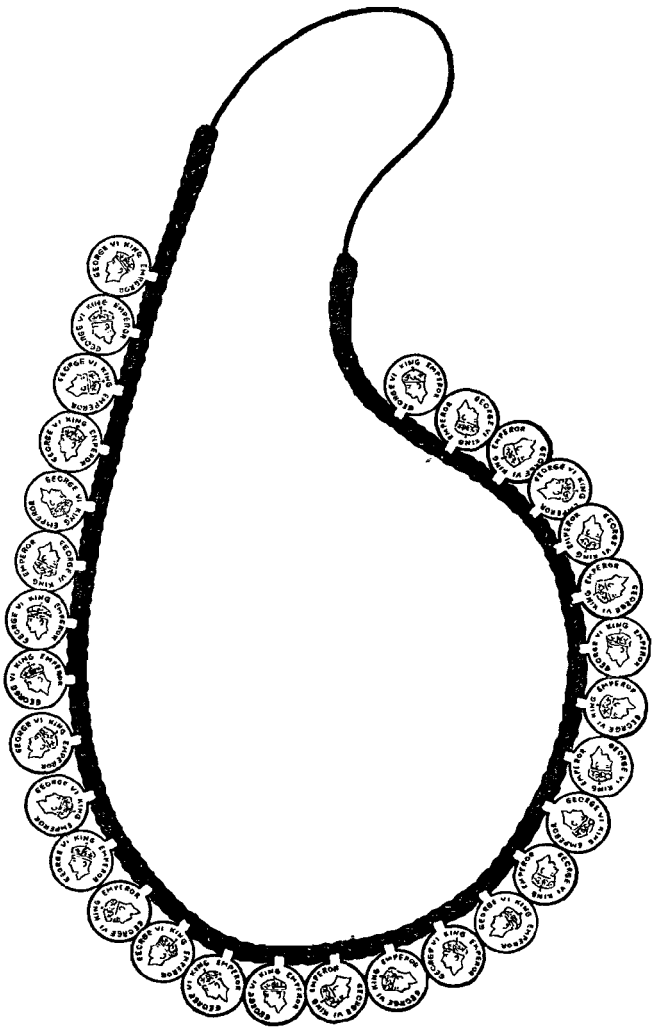
Necklaces of crude beads and semi-precious stones like coral, amber, turquoise and cornelian are especially popular among the Bhutia, the Sherpa and the Lepcha women, whom wear stones in the belief that peace, plenty and prosperity are ensured by some stones, if not all.

A Menga (Necklace made of stones) used by a particular Sherpa household is said to be valued at Rs.900.00 *paise*, if not more.

Ornaments for the nose

Ornaments for the nose are in general used by women of all communities, but particularly so by those of Nepal. Of the golden ornaments for the nose, mention ought to be made of two varieties, *viz.*, *Bulaki*, *Dhungri*.

Bulaki hangs from the nasal septum, while those tucked just upon the nostril are called *Dhungri* and *Tukri*, when the diameter of the ornament is large, extending even upto an inch or so. A small nose-gud, *Bulaki* and *Tukri* or *Dhungri* simultaneously are used also at times. About three grammes of gold are required along with Rs.5.00 *paise* to make *Tukri* with delicate engravings.

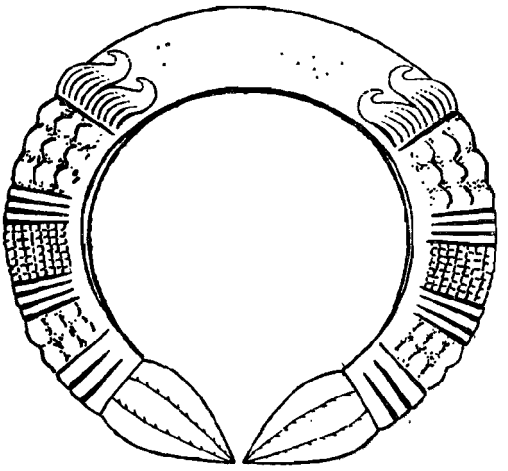


Reji—a necklace, made of a number of four anna coins, silver and black corn



Mala—a neckchain of stone-beads

Chura—a bracelet, made of silver





Bulaki—a golden ornament for the nose

Ornaments for the ears and feet

Ornaments in use for the ears in the village are many and named according to their designs, *viz.*, (i) *Marwari*, (ii) *Fuli*, (iii) *Dungri*, (iv), *Kundal*, (v) *Tooltool* and (vi) *Cheptay Soon*. Most ornaments for the ears are made of gold, silver or brass and some of rold-gold. Earrings are used by women of all the communities. The most striking local variety is the one designed as *Marwari*, looking like hoops with a diameter of about three inches and covering the entire ear. In the making of a pair of earrings of the *Marwari* design, gold worth 4.3 grammes is required along with a labour charge of Rs.6.00 *paise* to Rs.7.00 *paise*. Earrings with designs of floral motifs are known as *Fuli*. *Kundals* or earrings of prodigious diameter, say about 1.5 inches, are much popular among the Sherpa and the Bhutia women.

Silver ornaments, known as *Kalli*, were used on feet as anklets earlier, but are not in use now.

Source

There is neither a goldsmith nor any shop in the village of Upper Pedong or in the market at Pedong Bazar. To seek golden ornaments, the villagers have to visit the subdivisional town of Kalimpong, where there are some jewellery shops manufacturing ornaments for sale in the counter. Ornaments of precious metals are bought at Darjeeling too. Ornaments of silver and other inferior metals like brass, glass, rubber, plastic, and rold-gold are readily available in all the nearby market-places at Algarah, Pedong Bazar and Kagay during the *Hat*-days. Pedlars also appear in the village, roving about from door to door with their wares of cheap ornaments on display for sale.

Religion and ornaments

Religion is supposed to have some correlation with the ornaments used by women of the Buddhist faith *viz.*, the Bhutias, the Sherpas and the Tamangs. Miniature replicas of *Lord Buddha* are used as lockets in the necklaces worn by the Buddhist women of the village. Likewise, the Christian women put on tiny lockets or medals with embossed figurines of Lord Christ on their pendants. Besides, some ornaments used by the Buddhist women contain charms-script of prayers or hair of a *Lama*, as magico-religious contraptions against evil spirits. Amulets, with scripts of sacred prayers of *Lord Buddha*, are put on by some Buddhists round their necks or arms. *Lamas* write the prayers on a small paper, which is tucked into the amulet. Stones are also supposed to promote the well-being of the wearer.

Trend in changing fashion

A palpable trend for greater simplication of designs has set the fashion. Traditional ornaments like massive bangles, *Reji*, *Bulaki* and *Marwari* are said to be losing their popularity among the younger people. A casual glance on a belle on the village-road or at the nearby markets would bring home the fact that most of the traditional ornaments and ornaments of precious stones as distinct from China-beads are used only by the elderly womenfolk. In contrast, the young people seem to be attracted by more simplified forms of ornaments of cheaper metals like stainless steel, synthetics, alloy, rold-gold etc. Barring the elderly women, the womenfolk in general at present wear necklaces of stainless steel, Darjeeling stones and China-beads which were not in their good book even a few years ago. Ornaments for the nose seem to be passing out of currency. Some women wear a bangle in one hand and a wrist watch in the other, while many others do not wear any ornament at all. The fashion, set by the foreign tourist women in Darjeeling and Kalimpong, has touched this distant village to attract the neophytes.

Decoration of the body

The natural complexion of the Lepchas, the Bhutias and also some of the Nepali

communities is fair and bright. The elderly people in the village do not take to any foreign aid of cosmetics to beautify their bodies artificially and to heighten their natural beauty and grace. But, younger people, especially the maidens, are very fond of cosmetics like powder, snow, cream, nail-polish, lip-stick etc. The increasing popularity of marketed cosmetics and other artificial means of personal decoration is said to be the direct fruit of growing urban influence of Kalimpong and of the semi-urban marketing centres like Algarah and Pedong Bazar. A well-dressed belle of Upper Pedong looks as handsome as her counterpart in Kalimpong or Darjeeling. Even in the matter of dressing their hair, the people do follow suite of their urban counterparts. The womenfolk dress their hair and braid it into two locks like pig-tails. The locks are tied with silk cords and tassels. Sometimes they arrange their locks into buns or coiffures. To two barbers in Pedong Bazar where on the *Hat*-day villagers from the neighbourhood also come for a hair-cut. There is in addition a hair-cutting saloon in Pedong Bazar. A hair-cut charges 0.25 *paise* for small boys and 0.50 *paise* for adults.

Food and drinks

Both variety and quality distinguish the food of the people of Upper Pedong. Tea has become an integral part of the diet as well. A peep into any kitchen brings to one's notice a giant kettle on the oven ready with boiling water all the time. And everytime is tea-time in the village, so that a visitor is always offered a cup of tea, however unearthly the hour may be. A lusty smile radiates the face of the host offering tea in the chilliest weather and making a guest feel at home in the poorest hut as the most cheery place to drop in.

Frequency of meals

Three meals a day seem to be the general order. All the households take food thrice a day. Lunch is taken in most of the households between 7-30 A.M. to 8.30 A.M., tiffin at 12 noon to 1 P. M. and dinner at night between 7 P.M. to 8 P.M. A few affluent households follow a different routine in taking their food. They take breakfast in the early morning, lunch at noon and dinner at night. Though all the households take three meals uniformly, they take tea with the feeling of slightest hunger. Some 10 to 12 households take one or two light tiffins or refreshments in addition to the three main meals.

Dietary composition

Rice is the staple food of the people in Upper Pedong. Next to rice, maize is another semi-staple food. In view of the recent scarcity and high price of rice, the villagers are getting more and more inclined to maize, substituting rice as staple diet. Two principal meals and a tiffin meet the hunger of the day for the average villagers. As a matter of fact, rice is always preferred in the two principal meals to maize or wheat which only makes the bread for the tiffin. Even two or three years back, two principal meals with rice as the staple food and one or two tiffins of bread constituted the general food habit in this village. But, a change in dietary composition of the households, so far as staple diet is concerned, has been imperative on account of shortage of rice and also its high price. The Table 32 will speak for the staple diet of the households.

All the households, now consuming maize in dinner, took rice even two or three years ago. With their preference still for rice, they find it difficult to have rice twice in their principal meals because of the pressure on their family budget by the rising price of rice.

Rice of the sun-dried variety is preferred to the boiled one and none takes rice of the purboiled variety. Maize is usually taken in the form of *Chapati* (Hand-made bread). For the purpose of preparing *Chapati*, maize is first ground into flour in the mill. Whole grains

of maize, dry-roasted on the oven and mixed with chilli are taken as tiffin. Maize grains, fried on *Ghee* (Clarified butter) are a very famous local preparation. At night, the maize-eating households take maize, boiled like rice.

TABLE 32

STAPLE FOOD

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of house-holds taking rice in two principal meals and wheat in tiffin	No. of house-holds taking rice in lunch, maize or wheat in dinner and one tiffin
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	7	6
Dukpa	5	3	2
Tamang	17	9	8
Rai	11	6	5
Sherpa	9	2	4
Kami	6	2	4
Lepcha	4	2	2
Limbu	4	2	2
Sanyashi	4	1	3
Chhetri	4	2	2
Gurung	3	1	1
Newar	2	1	1
Bhujel	1	1	..
Mangar	1	..	1
Yakha	1	..	1
Brahman	1	..	1
Unspecified	1	1	..
Total	**87**	**43**	**44**

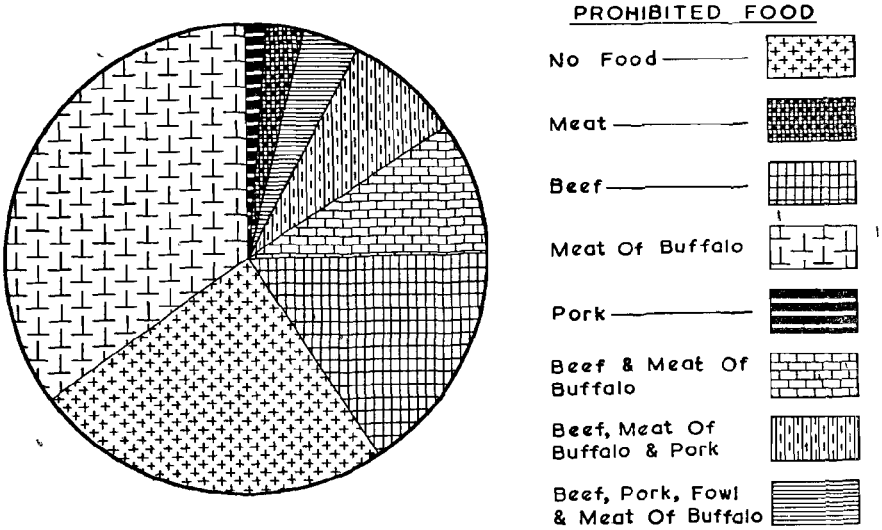
Vegetarianism and non-vegetarianism

Because of the cold climate of the region, the people take to non-vegetarian items of food. The villagers believe that meat has the property to warm up bodies and invigorate them. Eighty five families are non-vegetarian in their food habits. A Rai household with its head claiming himself to be a recluse as a follower of the *Saint Kavir* and another Chhetri household abstain from taking any non-vegetarian food.

Prohibited food vis-a-vis *social position*

As non-vegetarians, the villagers of all the communities and religious faiths relish fish, meat and eggs, which supplement their dishes with rich protein contents of the above items. The people would call it a bad day, were they forced to take vegetarian food any day for shortage of funds. Beef and other varieties of meat including that of buffaloes, goats and poultry birds as well as mutton and pork are taken by households of many communities. *Yaks* (Cows of the Tibetan stock) constitute the best beef in their taste. No general stigma or prohibition seems to be attached to beef or pork or fowl. Table 33 dealing with different items of prohibited food, among different communities, reveals that 32 families abstain

HOUSEHOLDS OBSERVING TABOOS ON FOOD



from beef, 49 families from meat of buffalo, 11 households from pork and only three families from fowl. Fowl is taken by 82 households (94.3 per cent) against 74 families (85.1 per cent) taking pork. Interestingly however, while only 36.8 per cent of the households look upon beef as a prohibited item of food, only 56.5 per cent of the households abhor meat of buffalo. The apparently anomalous position is explained by the fact that 17 beef-eating households abstain from taking the meat of buffaloes.

In dealing with the question of prohibited food from the standpoint of the concept of different communities on food it would be well to examine the attitude of individual communities. The attitude of the Bhutias, the Gurkhas and the Kiranti group may be examined in juxtaposition with that of the communities, ranking high in the social structure of the Hindus.

The Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas in general take beef and pork, exceptions being made by two families comprising one Sikkimese Bhutia and one Dukpa, heads of which are *Lamas* by profession. But, meat of buffalo is prohibited to all the Bhutia families except one Dukpa household. While scrutinising the food-habits of the Tamangs (also regarded by some scholars as Tamang Bhutias), it is found that 14 families, out of 17 Tamang households, take beef. Contrary to the practice of the Sikkimese Bhutias and of the Dukpas, to the majority of whom meat of buffalo is prohibited, ten Tamang households take the same freely. But, the beef-eating Tamang families take only the meat of oxen and not that of cows. The Sherpas, also called the Sherpa Bhutias, like their Sikkimese and Bhutanese counterparts follow the same norm in matters of prohibited items of food, as all of them take beef and pork but none takes meat of buffalo.

TABLE 33

PROHIBITED FOOD

Community	No. of households	No. of households avoiding the prohibited food of						No. of households with no prohibition	No. of vegetarian households
		Beef only	Meat of buffalo	Pork only	Beef and meat of buffalo	Meat of buffalo, beef and pork	Beef, pork, fowl and meat of buffalo		
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	..	12	..	..	1	..	..	..
Dukpa	5	..	3	..	1	..	..	1	..
Tamang	17	..	4	1	2	1	..	9	..
Rai	11	7	..	..	3	..	..	..	1
Sherpa	9	..	9	..	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	6	3	..	..	1	..	..	2	..
Lepcha	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	..
Limbu	4	2	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..	1	..	2	..
Newar	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**14**	**31**	**1**	**8**	**7**	**3**	**21**	**2**

Of the Kiranti group of families claiming to be Hindus, the Rai households constitute the numerical majority. Though beef is prohibited to all the eleven Rai families, meat of buffalo is not tabooed to seven of them. The Rais state that in canoncial obedience to the accepted custom of the Hindu social polity they eschew beef. But, they claim that their habit of taking the meat of buffalo does not contravene the customary rule of the Hindu society. As a socio-religious support to their food habit they cite ritual prescriptions sanctioning the sacrifice of buffaloes during the worship of some deities of the Hindu iconology. Informants of some other communities whisperingly confide, without however any reflection on the customs and practices of the Rais and without any intention to belittle them, that a few truants have of late started breaching the prohibitory mandate in strict privacy. With some credence given to the information and in all fairness to the Rais in general, one should clear the confusion. In view of the existence of many subgroups and dialects among the Rais and also in the face of some confusion of identity between the Rais, the Jimdars and the Khambus, it is not unlikely to come across some section of the people eating beef privately. The Limbus and the Yakhas also belong to the Kiranti group. With the exception of one Christian Limbu family, all the Yakha and the Limbu families treat beef as a prohibited food, while in the Christian Limbu family meat of buffalo is prohibited.

Next to the Bhutias and the Kiranti group of people, come the Gurkhas proper including the Chhetris, the Gurungs and the Mangars, the majority of whom declare them as Hindus. Of the four Chhetri households, one Christian family has no prohibition on food, while the remaining three households including one vegetarian family do not take beef, meat of buffalo, pork and fowl, all of which are prohibited to them. Among the Gurungs the Christian households have no prohibited food, whereas the Hindu family does not touch meat of buffalo, beef or pork. A single-membered Hindu family does not follow any restriction on food.

Among the Lepchas two households avoid the meat of buffalo, but two others do not consider any item of food to be prohibited.

One solitary Brahman household treats beef, meat of buffalo, pork and fowl as prohibited items of food. The Sanyashis return beef, meat of buffalo and pork as prohibited food.

The Kamis, assigned a somewhat inferior position in the Hindu society, present a confusing picture. While four households regard beef as a prohibited item, one of them abstains from the meat of buffalo too. But, two other households take all food. To the single Bhujel family only beef is prohibited.

To sum up, one finds that the Bhutias in general have no prohibited food except the meat of buffalo, the Kirantis are said to take all items

TABLE 34

FOOD PROHIBITED BY RELIGION

Religious groups	Total no. of households	No. of households not taking				No. of households with no prohibition	No. of vegetarian households
		Beef	Meat of buffalo	Pork	Fowl		
Buddhists	45	5	34	3	..	10	..
Hindus	33	27	12	8	3	4	2
Christians	9	..	2	..	..	7	..
Total	**87**	**32**	**48**	**11**	**3**	**21**	**2**

of food except beef (though some are alleged to take it privately), the Hindus of the Gurkhali group take all items of food except beef and meat of buffalo with some even not taking pork, the higher castes of the Hindu hierarchy like the Brahmans, the Chhetris and the Sanyashis abstain from all items of food other than that of goat, mutton and fish, while the low caste Hindus like the Bhujels, the Kamis etc., take all items of food excepting probably beef.

The topic of prohibited items of food, considered from the standpoint of religious groups, yield interesting data. Of all the religious groups in the village, the Christians are most liberal in the matter of taking food, as most of them do not have any restriction on food. Majority of the Buddhists take all items of food except the meat of buffalo, beef being allowed in most of the households. Five households (11.1 per cent) abstaining from beef observe the restriction on personal grounds. Among the Buddhists, any Sikkimese or any Bhutanese Bhutia (excepting one) and any Sherpa household would not take the meat of buffalo. Consequently, all but one Buddhist taking the meat of buffalo come from the Tamang community. Of the 33 Hindu families, four households taking beef consist of two Kami households, one single-membered Mangar family and another single-membered Newar family of a school-mistress. Beef is otherwise prohibited to all the Hindus. It is interesting that 21 Hindu families take the meat of buffalo under the impression that the usage of buffalo-sacrifice during the worship of some Hindu deities cannot clamp down any restriction on this item.

Meals, menu and standard of living

The principal meal of an average villager consists of rice, maize or millet, vegetables, meat etc., the diet in the well-off families being supplemented by eggs, milk, *Ghee* and fruits. In order to assess the nutrient value of the meals taken by various sections of the communities, the quantity and quality of food taken, the frequency of protein intake and the use of fats, edible oil and of various spices are also examined.

The rice, commonly consumed, is of the sun-dried variety. The poor and the middle class families never drain off the gruel from rice, boiled for use. Formerly among the villagers, especially the Lepchas and the Bhutias, the use of pulses and vegetables was rare. Now the people take all sorts of grains and pulses and a wide variety of vegetables, commonly found in the plains. For vegetables the households mostly depend on the produce of their kitchen-gardens throughout the year. Some vegetables like *Alu* (Potato), *Baigan* (Brinjal), *Kafi* (Cauli-flower), *Farci* (Gourd), *Lauka* (Pumpkin), tomato are also purchased by some households. Leafy vegetables occur daily in the menu of the people here. Roots and tubers of the local varieties also add to the list of vegetables in the people's menu.

Meat is a favourite item of food. Meat of goats, poultry birds, pork, fish and eggs are taken by the people, while about two-thirds of the villagers take beef or meat of buffalo. The Bhutias and the Lepchas in particular take mostly beef and pork throughout the year almost daily. The price of meat of various animals commonly sold in the village is given in the Table 35.

TABLE 35

PRICE OF MEAT

		Rs.	*Paise*
Fowl	Per kilogram of skinned meat	7	00
Goat	"	4	00
Pork	"	2	50
Beef	"	1	50
Buffalo	"	1	00
	"	1	25

Though the villagers are fond of pork more than beef, they prefer the latter to the former for its cheaper price.

Fish is almost a rare item, its scanty supply depending on imports from the plains. The local people have no liking for fish either. Some fishes, caught in the neighbouring hill streams of Rishi and Rongpo, are sometimes brought to the village and sold at prices varying from Rs. 3.00 *paise* to Rs. 4.00 *paise* per kilogram. Sometimes fishes of the dried variety are brought to the local market from far-away places like Siliguri. The people of some of the Nepali communities like fish more than the Bhutias and the Lepchas. To the village as a whole small dried fishes are more in demand than the fish of the live or fresh varieties.

Poultry birds being reared by 64 households, eggs are never in short supply. But, eggs being sold mostly for cash money, they are rarely meant for domestic consumption. An egg is sold at 0.25 *paise*. Milk and *Ghee* are rather abundant in the locality. Thirty six households rearing milch cows have ready supply of milk at home. The price of milk and *Ghee* is not very dear, milk selling at 0.50 *paise* per kilogram and a kilogram of *Ghee* at Rs. 8.00 *paise* to Rs.9.00 *paise*. But most of the villagers, raising milk and butter do not consume them at home in sufficient quantity, as necessity forces most of them to sell the products in the open market at Pedong Bazar against ready money is cash.

Though the district of Darjeeling is famous for its oranges and various other fruits, they seldom grow in the village proper or in its immediate neighbourhood. The popular fruits of the plains like mango, guava, jack-fruit, coconuts etc., are not consumed locally very commonly. Though some varieties are sometimes brought from Siliguri for sale, their prohibitive price is beyond the reach of an average householder of Upper Pedong. The villagers eat bananas, oranges and some varieties of hilly fruits like gerender. So, fruits do not constitute any item of the menu of a villager ordinarily. As regards frequency of meals, three meals a day comprising two principal meals and one tiffin are the practice of the majority. Breakfast is taken with tea and some fried food. With varying economic levels of the households, menus also differ. Thus, in the breakfast the affluent households take fried or flattened rice or biscuits with tea. The first principal meal in the morning in these households comprises rice, pulse and curry of vegetable, meat or egg with *Ghee* and salad. In the afternoon light refreshments consist of tea and puffed rice or biscuits or eggs or bread. The second principal meal in these households contains the same menu as in the principal morning meal with some variation in the preparation of the curry.

In most of the average households fried maize and tea compose the morning breakfast, the principal morning meal is constituted by rice-gruel, *Gandruk* (a kind of dried and decomposed leafy vegetable preserved over time) and chilli. A curry of meat or dried fish is cooked very occasionally to bring a change. The light refreshment at noon is made of tea and bread of wheat or maize and a vegetable curry. The third or rather the second principal meal is taken at night with rice or boiled maize or bread of maize, pulse and a vegetable curry.

In the poor families breakfast too is austere, tea being the only item. The first principal meal taken in the morning consists of gruel-rice, *Gandruk*, chilli, pulse and some leafy vegetables. The tiffin at noon comprises tea and bread of maize or buck-wheat. Bread of maize or buck-wheat and vegetable curry appear in the austere principal meal of the night. The Bhutias and the Lepchas expressive of their economic status usually take beef or pork 15 to 25 times a month.

The Table 36 will illustrate the frequency of intake of the protein diet and milk by the villagers.

TABLE 36

CONSUMPTION OF MEAT, FISH, EGGS AND MILK

Community	Total no. of house-holds	Total no. of house holds-taking meat	No. of households taking meat: 1 to 5 times a month	6 to 10 times a month	11 to 15 times a month	16 to 20 times a month	21 to 25 times a month	26 to 30 times a month	No.of house-holds taking fish 1 to 5 times a month
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	12	..	1	4	3	1	3	3
Dukpa	5	5	..	1	2	..	..	2	2
Tamang	17	15	6	6	2	..	..	1	7
Rai	11	10	8	1	..	1	..	..	3
Sherpa	9	9	3	5	1	..	..	..	1
Kami	6	6	4	2	..	..	..	..	4
Lepcha	4	4	..	1	..	2	..	1	1
Limbu	4	4	3	1	..	..	..	..	3
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Chhetri	4	3	2	..	..	..	..	1	2
Gurung	3	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	2	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**76**	**28**	**23**	**10**	**6**	**1**	**8**	**29**

Community	Total no. of house-holds taking eggs	No. of households taking eggs: 1 to 5 times a month	6 to 10 times a month	11 to 15 times a month	16 to 20 times a month	21 to 25 times a month	26 to 30 times a month	No. of house-holds owning fowls/ geese but not con-suming eggs	No. of house-holds taking milk regularly	No. of house-holds having milch cows but not con-suming milk
Sikkimese Bhutia	9	2	6	..	1	..	..	2	10	2
Dukpa	3	..	3	..	..	..	..	2	1	..
Tamang	6	3	2	..	..	..	1	7	8	1
Rai	4	2	..	2	..	..	..	4	6	1
Sherpa	6	4	2	..	..	..	..	2	8	..
Kami	3	1	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
Lepcha	3	2	..	..	..	..	1	1	4	..
Limbu	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	2	3	1
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Chhetri	3	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	4	..
Gurung	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
Newar	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Total	**45**	**17**	**20**	**3**	**1**	..	**4**	**23**	**49**	**5**

From the Table 36 it appears that of the 76 families, which can afford to have meat at least once a month, 51 households take meat upto 10 times a month and the remaining 25 households, mostly Bhutia and Lepcha, take meat more than 10 times a month. Fifteen such households take meat at least twice a day.

Though a rare appearance in the menu, fish included in the diet of one-third of the households is taken by them once or twice a month. The proportion of fish-consuming households among the Nepali communities is greater than that among the Bhutia and the Lepcha families.

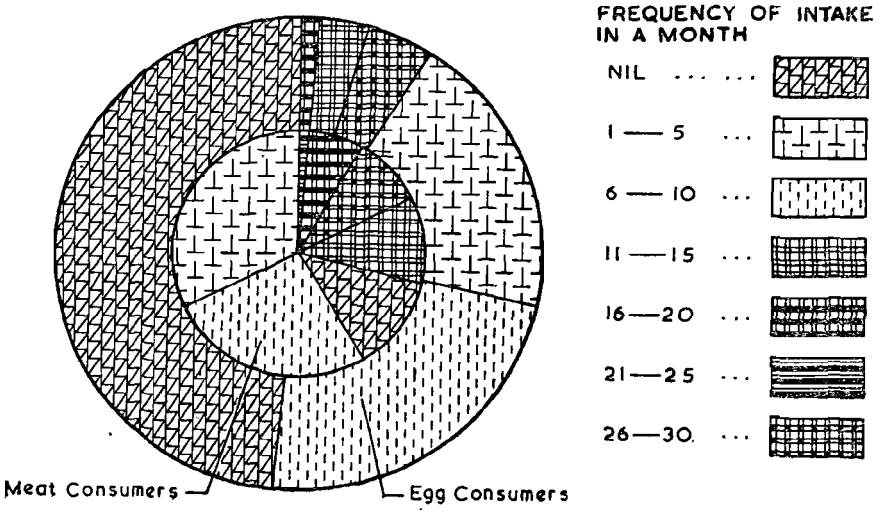
Though 52.9 per cent of the non-vegetarian households take eggs, only five households consume eggs at least once a fortnight and only 37 households take eggs every third, fourth or fifth day, some families consuming eggs not more than once a week. Only eight families can afford to take eggs more than 10 times a month. Paradoxical though the situation appears, 23 families rearing, either hens or geese, do not take eggs even though they are available at home. Compelled to sell the eggs laid by the pets, the households require the money in cash to meet certain expenses on more pressing domestic contigencies.

Milk is consumed by 55.2 per cent of the households of the village. Considered against the background of the number of milk-consuming members in a family, the economic picture acquires a new dimension. Except the fact that the young and the elderly members drink milk, no specific data relating to the quantum of milk consumed have been collected for a meaningful economic analysis. The households purchasing milk buy it in small quantities. The quality of diet of an average household outlines a bright picture otherwise, if one takes into account the frequency of daily intake of protein and milk.

Method of cooking

Though in all the households the art of cooking is almost uniform, one method essentially differs from another in the use of oil, fats or spices. The quality of diet and its nutritional value depend also in part on the use of fats, oil or spices in the preparation of food and on the menu and frequency of the intake of protein and milk. The rich families use

MONTHLY CONSUMPTION OF PROTEIN DIET



sufficient oil, fats and spices in the preparation of their dishes. The well-off families use *Ghee* in place of mustard oil in preparing non-vegetarian dishes. Middle class families cut down the use of fats, oil or spices to the bare minimum, most of them consuming on an average 50 grammes of oil in the preparation of two principal meals a day for five members on an average. As for the poor, they cook their dishes mostly by boiling the vegetables in plain water and adding in the end some salt and powdered chilli.

The Gurkhali communities are very much fond of sour preparations, one favourite item being *Gandruk* (dried and decomposed leafy vegetables preserved over time). For preparing *Gandruk*, leafy vegetables of local varieties are first husked and then put into a specially made tinned can with a porous bottom for being kept under pressure. Because of constant pressure, water would flow out of the leafy vegetables through the pores. After some days the dehydrated leaves are taken out and basked in the sun. The sun-dried leaves are then preserved. *Gandruk*, taken with rice-gruel, salt and chilli, provides an excellent sauce.

The Bhutias and the Lepchas, on the other hand, are fond of beef, pork and other hot preparations. *Khorsani* (Chilli) is an essential spice for all the dishes. To cook beef and pork, clarified butter is used in place of mustard oil. The Bhutias, the Sherpas and the Lepchas always purchase meat, whether beef or pork, in bulk. Treated with brine water and powdered turmeric, the piece is hooked and tied from the ceiling in ropes hanging over the oven. It is consumed over a long period, according to periodic requirements. Pork can be preserved in this method for three to four months and beef for about a month.

Meat is the most favourite item of food of the hilly people here. For making *Murmi*, a favourite local preparation of meat, small slices of beef, are put into dough of flour, and boiled in steam. Prepared also commercially, *Murmi* is sold by the Tibetans in Pedong Bazar. Onion *Vada* (Fry) and curried potato are also liked by the people. During their visit to the market the villagers invariably take two onion *Vadas* and a cup of tea as their tiffin. Hot and sour dishes are also liked by the people, chilli and mustard seeds being essential in cooking even the ordinary dishes. Pickles of mango, lemon and chilli add the best sauce to almost each principal meal.

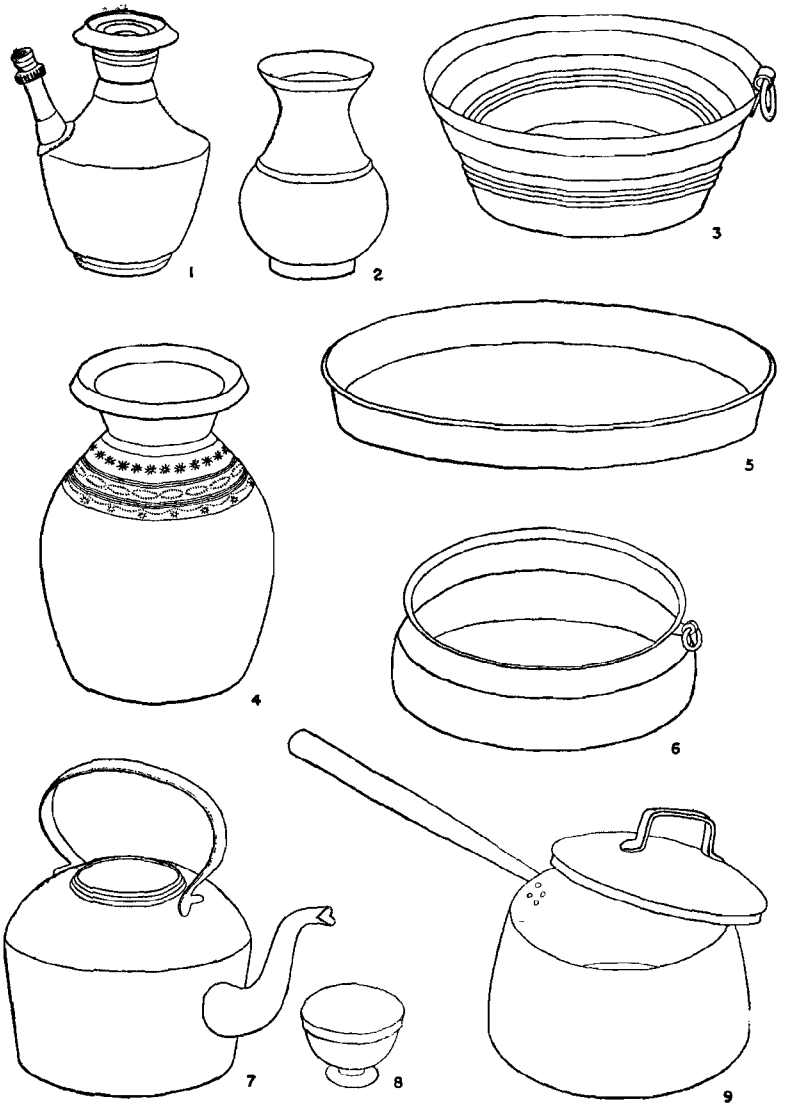
Feasts during festivals

During socio-religious ceremonies the villagers make deviations from the daily menu. Liquor prepared at home from millet is an addition to the menu, composed of rice, pulse, two or three varieties of curry, a preparation of pork or beef or fowl and any sauce or pickles. Food so prepared, even though not varied, is cooked richly in oil, spiced specially and taken in adequate quantities.

Cooking utensils

Utensils for cooking, used by an average household, are not many. An aluminium *Dekchi* (Cauldron), used to cook rice and curry, is a useful utensil for an ordinary household. Besides, an ordinary family has a *Handi* or a *Karai* (Flattened fry pan), the well-off families possessing both the items. Cooked food is kept in receptacles of different sizes and materials from bellmetal, brass and copper to aluminium and enamel or iron. The plates, on which food is served, are also made of different materials.

For storing water, empty cans of mustard oil or petroleum are widely used. Besides, *Handi*-like copper vessels, called *Kharkunda*, and small earthen pitchers, called *Gagri* or *Matia*, are used to store water. Ladles of different sizes are in use to stir food during cooking. *Jaru* of aluminium is used for pouring water, *Dwaru* made of aluminium or copper, for pulse, curry or milk and *Punium* made of iron is used for stirring rice during cooking.

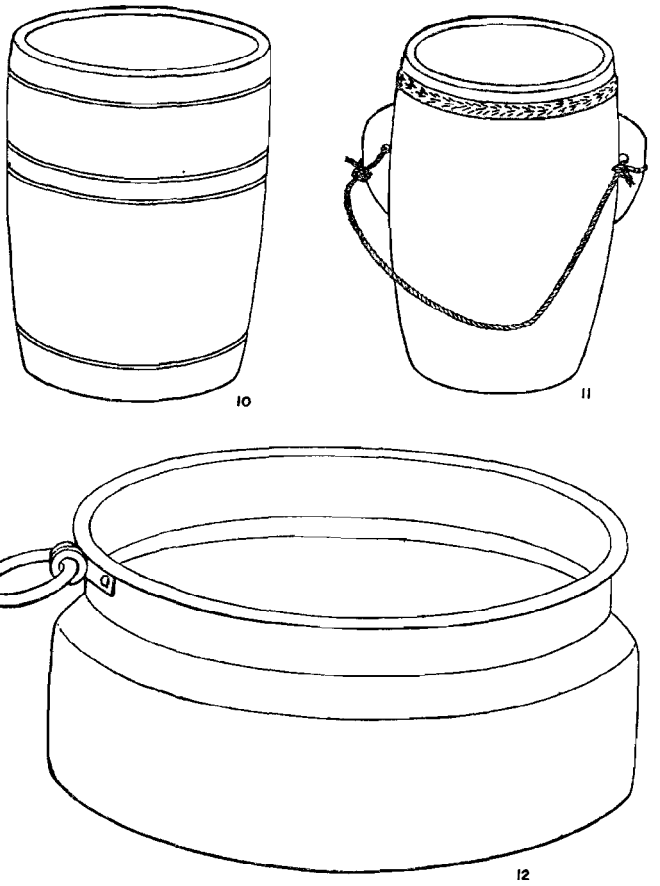


1 *Amkhuru*—made of bellmetal, height 8″, purchased from Nepal. used for storing water
2 *Lota*—made of bellmetal, height 6½″, for dinking water
3 *Pati*—made of brass, diameter 10″
4 *Matia*—made of earth, height 10″, for storing *Zer* (Country-liquor)
5 *Chuthua*—made of brass, diameter 12″, for raising *Handi*
6 *Bhandra*—made of copper, diameter 10″
7 *Hoo*—made of aluminium, diameter 12½″, for preparation of tea
8 *Katoura*—made of bellmetal, height 4″, for taking tea
9 *Saucepan*—made of aluminium, diameter 18″

10 *Pham*—made of wood, height 12″

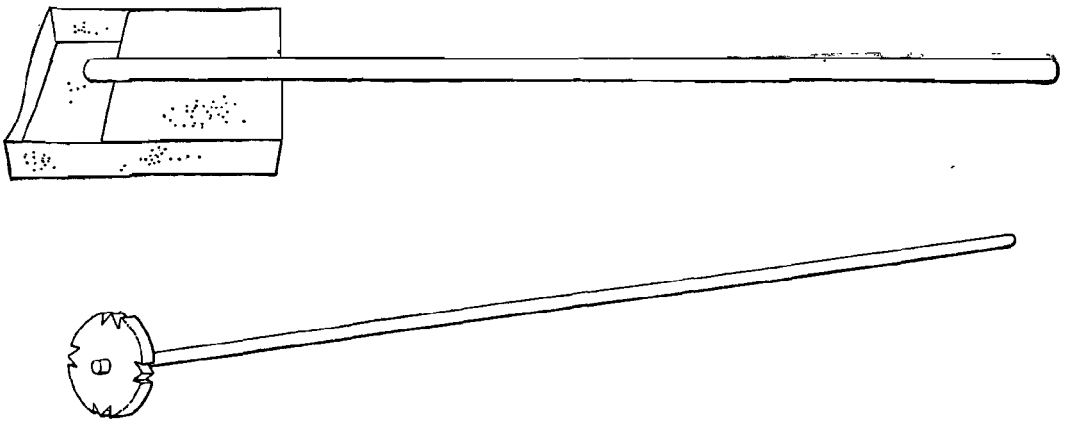
11 *Duneri*—made of wood, height 11″, for milk

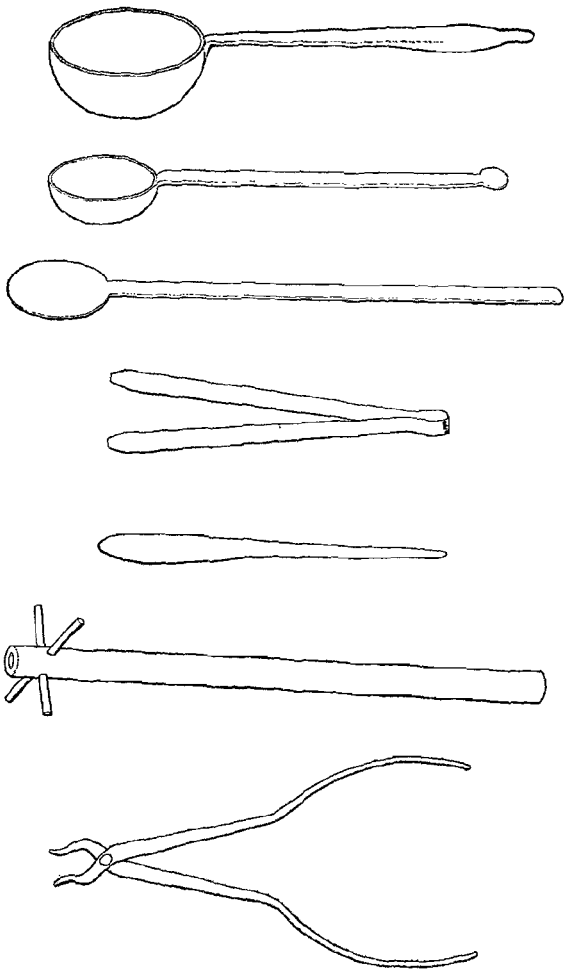
12 *Kharkunda*—made of copper, diameter 18″, for cooking rice or millet



Hondrayeng—made of iron with wooden handle, length 39″, for frying maize

Mandani—made of wood, length 40″, for stirring





Jaru—made of aluminium, length 17″, for ponring water

Dwaru—made of aluminium, length 16″, for cooking pulses

Punium—made of iron, length 18″, for shaking rice

Chimta—made of iron, length 12″, a tong

Dabilo—made of wood, length 12″, for stirring

Bahuli—made of iron, length 15″, a tong

Cooking utensils in any families of means are varied. *Handi*, *Karai* and *Dekchi* made of aluminium, different sizes of vessels made of aluminium, copper or bellmetal, dishes, tumblers and small vessels made of bellmetal, big vessels made of copper are ordinarily found in the rich family. Other utensils consist of *Pan*, saucepan etc. made of aluminium, ladles of various sizes made of bellmetal or aluminium, and porcelain tea-sets. Drums and empty cans store water for ordinary uses. *Dekchi* and *Handi* or *Karai* made of aluminium, different sizes of vessels made of aluminium, dishes, tumblers and small vessels mainly made of enamel and empty oil-cans are found in families of average means and middle income-groups.

In a poor family a *Dekchi* of aluminium, one or two vessels of aluminium, one or two dishes, tumblers and small vessels made of enamel and empty oil containers comprise the utensils in use.

TABLE 37

UTENSILS AND CONSTITUENT MATERIALS

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of house-holds using Aluminium		No. of households using *Karai* (Frypan) made of			No. of households having utensils like dish tumbler, bowl, made of			No. of households having vessels made of copper for storage of water
		Handi	*Dekchi*	Alumi-nium	Iron	Bell metal	Enamel	Bellme-tal and enamel	Brass	
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	7	11	5	..	3	7	2	1	9
Dukpa	5	2	5	3	..	..	2	2	..	3
Tamang	17	9	16	4	2	8	7	1	1	5
Rai	11	5	9	5	..	5	4	2	..	4
Sherpa	9	3	8	1	..	1	5	3	..	2
Kami	6	5	5	4	..	3	2	1	..	..
Lepcha	4	4	4	2	1	4	..	..	..	1
Limbu	4	1	3	2	2	2	2	..	..	..
Sanyashi	4	..	4	..	1	..	3	..	1	..
Chhetri	4	1	4	3	..	..	2	2	..	..
Gurung	3	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	..	2
Newar	2	..	2	1	..	2	..	..	..	2
Bhujel	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Mangar	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Yakha	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
Total	**87**	**39**	**79**	**33**	**6**	**31**	**38**	**15**	**3**	**29**

Drinks

Beverages like tea and alcoholic drink constitute the most important brewage of the villagers. Tea is taken by all the households. The tea-habit of the villagers is remarkable both in frequency of its consumption and its quantitative intake. The tea-habit of the people is different here, though the method of preparation is simple. A big kettle always boils water and tea-leaves tied in a piece of linen. Any thirsty member pours infusion of tea in a cup and adds a pinch of salt to it, dispensing sometimes with the necessity of milk even. Sugar is generally not mixed with the tea, so prepared and consumed locally by the villagers in this hilly village. A coarse variety of tea, sold at the rate of Rs.2.00 *paise* to Rs.6.00 *paise* or Rs.7.00 *paise* a kilogramme at Pedong Bazar, is purchased by the local people. That tea has substituted water is substantiated by the fact that most of the families take tea ten to fifteen times a day. Sometimes, tea replaces even food. Families of day-labourers, in case of an unemployment for a day or two, substitute their principal meals of rice and vegetables by fried maize and tea. The Bhutias and the Lepchas take salted tea. The Table 38 relates to the families taking differently prepared tea.

It appears that unlike the Bhutias and the Lepchas most of the Nepali communities take tea, conventionally prepared in the plains with milk and sugar. Those unable to afford the use of sugar take salted tea. *Bhutia tea*, though a costly preparation for the addition of butter to the brewed tea, is very much popular among the Bhutias, mostly taken by them on festive occasions ; the well-off families however, drink this type of tea daily. To prepare *Bhutia tea*, water is first boiled in the kettle with *Chinese Ball* tea, a little sodium bicarbonate and some

TABLE 38

TEA-HABIT

Community	No. of households	No. of households taking Bhutia tea	No. of households taking Salted tea	No. of households taking Tea with sugar and milk
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	5	7	1
Dukpa	5	1	3	1
Tamang	17	..	12	5
Rai	11	..	5	6
Sherpa	9	2	3	4
Kami	6	..	2	4
Lepcha	4	1	2	1
Limbu	4	..	..	4
Sanyashi	4	..	4	..
Chhetri	4	..	..	4
Gurung	3	..	..	3
Newar	2	..	..	2
Bhujel	1	..	..	1
Mangar	1	..	..	1
Yakha	1	..	..	1
Brahman	1	..	..	1
Unspecified	1	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**9**	**38**	**40**

common salt to brew the liquor. The liquor of tea, so brewed, is then poured into a *Jha*, a narrow wooden receptacle, wherein some butter is also dropped. The infusion of tea is thoroughly stirred in the *Jha* with a *Supada*, a long wooden handle. The mixture, finally ready for service, is *Bhutia tea*, said by the consumers to have excellent taste and nutritional food-value. *Zer* (Home-made liquor from millet) is another important drink of the local people. It is interesting that all but one Brahman and three Chhetri families are regular consumers of liquor. If so, few households of the village are teetotallers on account of the extremely chilly climate of the place. A bout of drinks after day's hard work is more a routine necessity than a fashionable habit. As such, all the families do usually complete all important outdoor work before evening. They do not normally receive any visitor or guest after twilight. In course of investigation visits to different households in the evening to contact the heads proved infructuous and the households looked upon an interview in the morning more convenient. Some households even remarked, "The head is heavily drunk and it is of no use in meeting him for an interrogation".

The female members are not forbidden to drink. Socially, a woman drinking liquor is not treated contemptibly. Drinking is more a part of life than an addiction. Addiction of the males in general and of the females in particular of a family depends more on their cultural attainments than on their economic resources. The females in the educated families as a rule refrain from drinking, in order to set examples of austerity to other members, especially to the children. But the number of such families in any case is very limited. The villagers, irrespective of their sexes, religion and ethnic backgrounds, take to the drinks while in their teens. The childly inquisitiveness whetted by the sight of the elderly members drinking together gradually develops into an irresistible temptation. Sometimes, the mother or some other elderly members offer one or two bouts of drinks to the young boys and girls. Teenagers gradually pick up the regular habit of drinking on attainment of their adulthood.

In Upper Pedong the drinks, apart from being an intoxicant, are a part of their daily life and an integral part of all their socio-religious rites and rituals too. Drinks also play an important role in different facets of the life-cycle of different communities. During the visit of the bridegroom's party to the bride's house, the performance of the neo-natal ceremonies and in the post-obsequial rites after burial, liquor is served to the participants.

Of all the intoxicating drinks, *Zer* brewed at home from *Kodo* (A local variety of millet), is the most popular one. After being harvested in November-December, *Kodo* is thrashed, husked and boiled in water in a pot. The boiled millets, spread ov r an open space, are dried in the sun. Two or three kilograms of

dried millet mixed with ten grammes of *Morcha* (A local variety of yeast) are put into an earthen vessel with its mouth closed with lids and placed on an oven for about two to three hours. It is then mixed with maize, wheat or jaggery from sugarcane juice and the closed vessel is heated for some time more. The earthen vessel, thoroughly sealed with grass, leaf and moist earth, is kept aside in a cool place for fifteen days or so. *Zer* is generally prepared in the winter months of December-February and preserved for use throughout the year. *Zer* is served in a tube of hollow bamboo, about two feet in length with a deep groove in the middle, mixed with hot water. A long pipe, usually made of a hollow reed, is used for sipping the *Zer*.

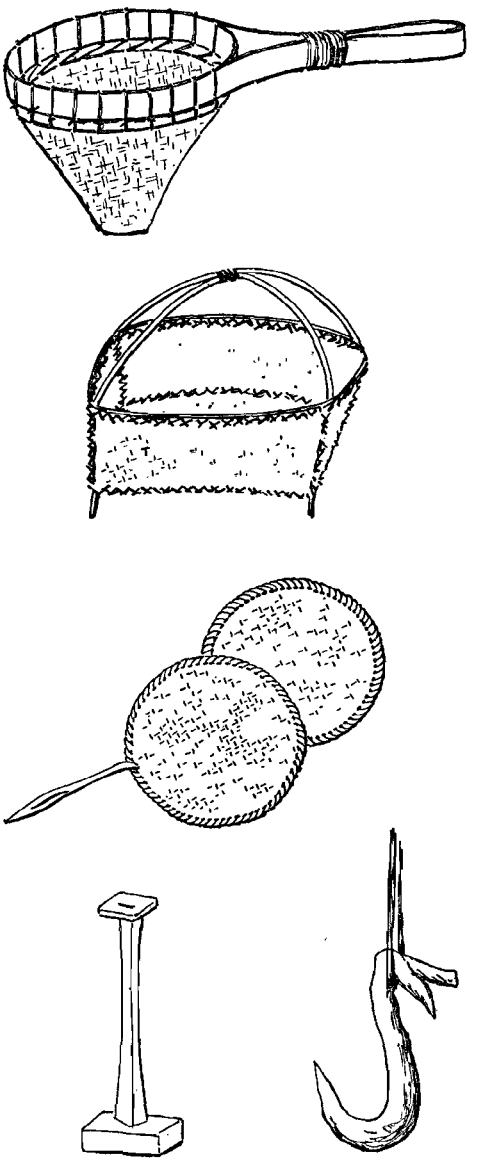
During marriage, other ceremonies and festivals, a special type of drink, known as *Rakshi*, fermented from rice at home is served.

Fire and fuel

To the Hindu and the Buddhist villagers of Upper Pedong fire appears to have a great religious sanctity. Fire is deified and at the same time anthropomorphised. Some Buddhist and Hindu women in the Brahman, the Chhetri and the Tamang households have been observed to offer a part of the cooked food first to the fire in the oven, before serving it to the members. *Yajna* (Sacrificial fire) is an essential socio-religious rite in all Buddhist rituals and in the ceremonies of some of the Hindu communities like the Brahmans, the Chhetris, the Newars etc., who are for that matter pyrolaters. The oven in the kitchen of the Rai families also occupies a pivotal position in their socio-religious complex.

Firewood which constitutes the main fuel is collected by the families from the adjoining forests against a monthly license fee of Rs.2.10 *paise* paid to the local Forest Officer. In the rainy season, which is long and protracted, the hilly alleys get too slippery to enable one to carry wood from the forest. So, before the

A FEW HOUSEHOLD ARTICLES



Chhapni—a sieve made of bamboo
Daki—a bag made of bamboo
Pelung—a bag made of bamboo and cane
A lampstand made of bamboo
Ankuse—a hook made of wood

onset of the rains, the households store reserve fuel for the rainy days. The families which cannot afford to collect fuel from the forests usually purchase them from the wood-sellers, one back-load of wood weighing 30 kilograms to 40 kilograms being priced at Rupee one to Rupees one and a half.

Besides wood, charcoal is used by some of the households. Charcoal is available from the local market at a price of Rs. 11.00 *paise* per 37 kilogrammes.

Life-cycle of the Bhutias

Phuchhaim (Pregnancy)

During the period of pregnancy there is no restriction on the diet of the Bhutias. In the olden times, when no nurse or *Dai* (Midwife) was available, some experienced woman of the village, a mother of three or four children, was called in to attend the patient at the time of delivery. But, now-a-days everybody calls in a *Dai* or the trained Health Assistant. After delivery, diet is prescribed according to the *Dai's* advice. The baby and the mother cleaned and washed, are kept in a separate room or in some corner of the living room, which is kept warm. One or the other woman of the family is asked to look after the two, to give them timely meals and keep them tidy and clean. After delivery, the mother is prescribed the diet of soup, egg, *Ghee* and milk. She is forbidden to take vegetables, salt and pepper. She is not allowed to do any domestic work for at least 21 days and sometimes for even a month. One of the female members of the family constantly watches the baby and its mother.

After the child is born, it is given a full bath. Some *Ghee* is then put into its mouth and also rubbed on its head. For two months or so, the child is regularly fed on *Ghee*. After two months, it is prescribed ground rice cooked in *Ghee*. After four months, boiled rice is prescribed to the child.

Nauran

Nauran ceremony is observed on the fourth day of child-birth. The priest (*Lama*) for the family performs the ceremony, when the child and the mother take a full bath and put on new clothes. He is welcomed with sacred smoke of *Dhoopbati* (Incense). In the ceremony *Dhoopbati* and *Neem* (Margosa) leaves are burnt and the *Lama* recites hymns, with a *Phumpa* (A jug-like utensil) containing the *Chhoo* (Holy water) in his hands. He enters the *Sutkeri* (Lying-in-room), where the child and the mother live after delivery, recipting incantations. He sprinkles holy water on the two and then all over the whole house. The house is henceforth considered pure and clean. This is called *Lapsa*. The *Lama* also gives the new-born a suitable name the same day, on the occasion of which all members of the family and the village-people offer their presents to the child and the mother. It may be in cash or it may be a cloth, called *Khada* (Scarf). After all the guests have assembled in the room at about 1 P. M. or 2 P.M., the mother sits in the room of worship, called *Chhesiam*, with the baby in her lap. In front of her there is a table, on which are placed a flower-vase, one or two dishes (*Thala*) containing rice and a small utensil containing *Janrh* (Fermented rice from which *Raksi* is distilled) and a *Daru* (Ladle). The small utensil, touched with *Ghee* on three sides, is called *Madyan*. At this stage either the *Lama* or some aged person takes out some *Janrh* in the *Daru* and recites some prayer in the name of their deity. This is called *Khelen*. Then everyone offers some present, either a *Khada* or cash money, to the baby and the mother hands it over to the old man, who blesses the person, puts the cash in the *Thala* and the *Khada* on the shoulders of the child and the mother. After the ceremony is over, the head of the family presents the *Lama* or the old man one *Khada* and some cash according to his financial capacity. Country liquor is then served to the guests. This is

considered to be an important function and money is lavishly spent to celebrate it. The *Dai* invited to dinner the same day is also offered some gift.

Den (Marriage)

Before a proposal for a marriage, consideration is given to the nature and demeanour of the boy and the girl, the background and antecedents of their parents and their families. When everything is found satisfactory, two old persons, called *Fami*, are chosen and sent to the house of the girl. The parents of the boy consult the *Lama*, stating the respective ages of the boy and the girl for the selection of an auspicious day for sending the proposal. The *Lama* fixes the day, called *Jarki*, on which the proposal is sent through the *Fami* to the girl's parents. On this occasion five rupees in cash, one bottle of country liquor and one *Khada* are sent to the girl's house. If the girl's parents agree to the proposal, the gifts are accepted by the maternal uncle of the girl, present on the occasion. The first negotiation is called *Kha Dyan*.

Na Dyan (Betrothal ceremony)

When a marriage is settled, an auspicious day is selected for *Na Dyan* (Betrothal ceremony), on which day the relations of both the sides are invited to the bride's house, the expenses of the function being borne by the parents of the boy. At the time of betrothal, the parents and the maternal uncle of the girl are seated on a raised platform, the members of the boy's party remaining standing. The ceremony is held in the *Chhesiam*. The two *Famis* stand with a *Khada* in their hands. A pig is slaughtered on the occasion. One maund of millet, one tin of biscuits, *Chinra* (Flattened rice) and a bottle of whisky are also placed there whereupon the *Famis* spread the *Khada*. Some discussion is then held between the *Famis*. Then an old person or the *Lama* takes the *Madyan* (Utensil containing *Janrh* and *Daru*) in his hands, recites a prayer and distributes the presents to all the persons. Then the date of marriage is fixed.

Marriage-ceremony

Houses of both the bride and the bridegroom are decorated on the day of marriage. Both the parties invite their kith and kin on the occasion. The bridegroom is accompanied by a brideman and the bride by a bridemaid. They are called *Faro*. When the marriage-party reaches the house of the bride, the two *Famis* and the father of the bridegroom throw one rupee coin in each of the *Madyans*, placed on both sides of the main entrance, and sprinkles some holy water from the *Madyans* on their deity. These *Madyans* are filled with holy water, a little milk and some flowers, and are covered with a *Khada*. All the guests sit at one place around the newly-wed couple and bless them with their presents.

Death

When in a Sikkimese Bhutia family some person is in the dying stage, the *Lama* is called in to recite passages from the holy book, called *Thu Day*. The dying person is told that he will see after his death certain things, of which he should not be afraid. After death of the person, the *Lama* pronounces *Fo* to him. *Fo* is a sort of declaration of death. The *Lama* then plucks up a few tufts of hair from the head of the deceased. After death, the family invites three to seven *Lamas*, according to their means to recite *Path* in the house. A new earthen pot is hung outside the house. A small bamboo glass, about a foot long and filled with water, and a bag containing *Soor* (Mixture of pulverised rice or wheat, honey and *Ghee* etc., used as a *Dhoona* or incense) are also kept at one place.

There is a custom of giving funerary meals to the deceased twice daily for a number of days. The *Lama* invokes the soul of the dead to take the meals. First, he blows a conchshell trumpet and then an earthen pot containing some fire therein is treated with *Dhoona* and

Soor. The *Lama* then calls the dead person by name to accept the meals and a little water offered to him. The foodstuff, so offered to the soul, is called *Seh.* The same time all the members of the family sit there.

Then the bereaved members go to some learned *Lama* to ascertain the *Ghee* (Time of taking out the dead body for the funeral). After the wise *Lama* hears all the details of death including its nature and the age of the deceased, he fixes the time. At the appointed hour all the persons of the village and relations of the deceased assemble and offer *Khada* or *Paisa* (Money). The dead body is then served the last meals and the procession is taken out. First, the sons or the eldest son will shoulder the bier. This is called *Ro Nah.* All the mourners then touch the bier at least once.

Sing Khee

Sing Khee is the funeral pyre with eight layers of wood for a male but for females it has nine layers. After the dead body is placed on it, it is once more offered meals and the pyre is lit first by the eldest son in one corner. Other relations then light the three other corners.

Chyon Boo

After the funeral ceremony, all the mourners come back to the house, where the *Lama* collects the clothes of the deceased and prepares an effigy of the deceased. He writes the name of the dead in a paper, which is placed on the effigy. Kept for seven days, it is regularly offered meals twice a day. On the seventh day, another ceremony, called *Ten Chyak Se* is held. At night the *Lama* takes out all the clothes and dismantles the effigy, reciting incantations. The paper with the name inscribed on it is burnt in the sacred fire and the ashes are carefully taken in a cuplike vessel made from a dough of flour and a *Chha Chha* (Mould-like impression) is made of their deity. This is either thrown into some river or dumped deep in the forest.

On the third day of death, the head of the bereaved family, out to collect the ashes, is accompanied by the *Lama.* A meal is offered to the dead and the ashes are immersed in some river. This ceremony is called *Ree Fee.*

Sing Lap

The man who cuts wood for the pyre is known as *Sing Lap.*

San Day

In the evening of the seventh day of death the *Lama* challenges the ghost, who causes the death of the person, scattering stones, and two persons dance with burning sticks of wood in their hands.

Cheu Ji Chhi

Cheu Ji Chhi is the ceremony on the fourteenth day of death, when all the relations assemble to pray. *Doopbati* is burnt and meals are offered to the deceased by placing its clothes in front.

Nee Siue-Cha Chi

Nee Siue-Cha Chi is the ceremony on the twenty first day of death, when the relations pray together.

Sheep Chu Sher Goo

Sheep Chu Sher Goo is the ceremony on the forty eighth day of death, when prayers are made, meals are offered to the deceased and small flags scribbled with prayers for the deceased are hoisted. Wealthy persons prepare as many as hundred flags, but the poor at best prepare eleven flags or twenty one flags or the like.

Sing Dhee

Sing Dhee is the date and time of death, when *Death Anniversary* is observed every year.

Lom Chey

Lom Chey is the anniversary after one year of death, when the *Lama* makes prayers.

To Day

Today is observed on the seven day of death, when the *Lama* recites incantations. All the articles used in the worship are thrown in some pond or river.

When a pregnant woman is dead, the foetus is removed from her womb. She is then burnt and the child is buried.

In case of death of a child, it is buried in the jungles.

Life-cycle of the Tamangs

Birth

Pregnancy of a woman is read from the associated symptoms, the most important of which is the cessation of the menstrual cycle. The gravid woman herself takes note of the event, keeping the elderly female members of the family informed, to preclude the possibility of an error in calculating the probable date of labour from counting of months. The restrictions observed by a pregnant Tamang women, irrespective of her social and economic status, include discontinuation of coitus from the sixth or seventh month of pregnancy. Any strenuous work involving physical labour is not allowed by the elderly members to be done by a pregnant woman in the last two months of pregnancy. But, the restrictions can be observed more by the affluent families than by the poor households, in which the pregnant women even in very advanced stages of pregnancy are under the compulsion of circumstances to earn their living as daily wage-earners in the agricultural fields or as labourers in the road-construction work.

Whenever the first symptoms of labour pain of a pregnant woman are pronounced, a separate lying-in room is allocated and arranged for the management of her labour. An elderly woman in the family or in her absence any elderly woman of the locality attends to the delivery and cuts the umbilical cord of the newborn baby with either a safety-razor blade or a sharp and thin splinter of wood.

Shortly after delivery, the mother is given a few sips of strong home-made *Raksi* or *Zer*. For the first three days no male member other than the husband of the woman is allowed an entry into the room of confinement. For the first five days the woman is prohibited from taking solid food and also chilli. The diet prescribed on the occasion consists of rice, chicken and liquor. Utmost care is taken to keep the room as warm as possible.

Name-giving ceremony and purificatory rites

On the third day after birth of a Tamang child all the relatives and friends of the family are invited to grace the name-giving ceremony of the child. The *Lama* who functions as the officiating priest for the Tamangs is called in to christen the baby after Buddhist rites. The *Lama* on consideration of the time of birth of the child gives some broad indications of the child's future and fortune. Then he recites portions of the Holy Buddhist Texts and prays for the well-being of the child. Prayers over, the *Lama* himself, chooses a name for the child announcing it loudly to the assembled guests and anointing a mark of *Ghee* on the forehead of the child. He repeats the feat thrice. The *Lama* sprinkles *Thoo* (Holy Water) on those present on the occasion. The child is fed with a few drops of *Thoo* or with the milk blessed by the *Lama*. The *Lama* hoists in the name of the child a flag inscribed with prayers from the *Holy Book*. The flag is posited to the right hand side of the house, if the newborn is a male, and to left side, if the baby is a female. The flag, so hoisted in a house, proclaims the birth of a baby therein. A feast celebrating the birth of the baby is arranged either on this occasion or subsequently according to the convenience of the household. During the feast, marking a day of great rejoicement, invited guests and visitors are served liquor. Dances and folk-songs also add to the merriment of the celebration. The guests put a *Tilak* (A round anointing mark with the tip of finger) of *Ghee*

on the forehead of the baby and offer it presents, mostly in cash. Some also bring fowl, liquor, garments for the child and numerous other presents in addition. The invitees are entertained to a sumptuous dinner in the concluding stage of the ceremony.

Marriage ceremony

Prior to the negotiations for marriage, the consent of both the bridegroom and the bride is obtained. The Tamangs have no professional match-makers in their community. The initial negotiation is made through the good gestures of friends or relatives. Visits and counter-visits by the parties of the bridegroom and the bride, headed by some senior members, are undertaken at a later stage. After negotiations are finalised, horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom are given to the *Lama*, who examines the natal position of the birth stars of both and gives his considered opinion as to how the stellar situations of the bride and the bridegroom match each other. In case the *Lama* approves the match, the date for solemnising the proposed marriage is fixed after consulting the almanac.

Payment of bride-price was formerly an important consideration for marriage in Tamang society and the amount, often not fixed, was decided on the terms dictated by the bride's party. But, now economic hardship has toned down the rigours of the customary system of payment of bride-price, though it has not eliminated the custom altogether. Customarily, a sum of rupees twelve in coins of legal tender is the minimum amount, the parents of a Tamang bridegroom have to pay to a bride's parents in addition to the bride-price, for which, however, there is no conventional rate nor any compulsion of social custom now.

Rites in the house of the bridegroom and the bride on the day of marriage

Friends and relatives of the bridegroom assemble in the bridegroom's house on the day of marriage. The *Lama* recites prayers from the *Sacred Scripts* in presence of the bridegroom and others. Prayers over, the bridegroom pays obeisance to the *Lama*, who blesses the bridegroom. The invitees are treated to a hearty feast, of which the most essential item characterising the marital ceremony is *Sagun* (Drink of any variety served on the occasion). Similar rites are also performed in the house of the bride in like manner.

After the rites, preparations for the bridal procession to start for the bride's house are made. A member of the bridegroom's party senior to the bridegroom, entrusted with the task of leading the procession to the bride's house is called *Lami*. Before the bridegroom starts, he performs obeisance to all his superior relatives and the invitees are offered *Sagun*. Dressed in traditional Nepali costumes like *Daura*, *Sural*, Nepali *Topi* or *Feta* and a silken scarf, the bridegroom accompanied by his father, brothers, sisters, uncles, other relatives and invitees as well as the *Lama* proceeds towards the bride's house in a bridal procession on foot, if the bride's village is nearby. A vehicle is hired only when the village is at a distance.

Reception to the bridegroom's party and marriage-ceremony proper

At the threshold of the bride's house, the members of the bridegroom's party are warmly received and offered *Sagun*. After some time, the bridegroom is escorted to the courtyard, where the bride, also dressed in new Nepali attires like *Fanriyo* (Sari), *Choli* (Blouse), waist-band and *Majetro*, is brought. A *Yajna* (Sacrificial fire) is performed by the *Lama*, burning *Ghee* in the presence of the kinsfolk of the bridegroom and the bride. The *Lama* reads excerpts from the *Sacred Texts*. At *Lagan* (Auspicious time for marriage) the relatives of the bride leave the marriage-booth. The *Lama* puts marks of *Tilak* on the foreheads of the couple, chanting sacred hymns all the time. The bride and the bridegroom offer respect to the

Lama who in his turn blesses the couple. At this stage the relatives of the bride come there, crack one or two jokes with the couple and bless them. The married couple bows down to all the superior relatives and accepts their blessings. A feast with chicken curry and *Chho* is given to the guests. On the day following, light refreshments and *Sagun* are served to the members of the bridegroom's party and also to others present. The bridegroom then takes the bride to his house in a procession, which *Maiti* (Bride's brother) is especially requested to lead.

On arrival home, the bridal couple is received by sisters of the bridegroom and offered *Sagun*. Then the couple and their two aides, the *Lokantay* (Brideman) and *Lokanti* (Bridemaid), arranged by the parents of the bride, are escorted to a decorated booth, where soft drinks and light refreshments are offered to the couple and the assembled guests, the bride being especially helped by sisters of the bridegroom. Formal presents, offered to the couple by the invited guests shortly after, range from *Khada* (White cotton scarf) and clothes to money in cash and ornaments. The couple acknowledges the receipt of presents by paying salutations. Songs and merriments apart, a gala feast with dainty dishes and the compulsory item of *Chho* (Fowl curry) concludes the ceremony.

The couple goes back to bride's house after three days of the marriage-feast at the bridegroom's house and carries bottles of liquor for the bride's parents. Before entering the house, the couple dismantles the marriage-booth. The bridegroom passes three nights in his father-in-law's house and returns home with his wife after a stay of three days there.

Death

A dying person of the Tamang community is surrounded by a host of relatives and friends. Water is poured down the mouth of the dying person, on whose tongue a small piece of gold is placed soon after his death. A medical practitioner is called in to confirm the death. After death is certified by a doctor, a white shroud is spread over the dead body to cover it and a *Dyio* (Lamp) lit with *Ghee* or mustard oil, a vessel containing cooked rice and curry are placed near the dead body.

The *Lama* who serves the Tamangs comes on being informed. He recites prayers from the religious texts and blesses the deceased. At his behest the person of the deceased, bathed in hot water, is smeared with scented oil all over. The *Lama* then consults the almanac to find out the most auspicious time to take the dead body to the cemetery. Some persons go out to reconnoitre the crematorium, where they arrange the funeral pyre in advance. Meanwhile, a wooden coffin is prepared at home by the carpenter. The dead body is then placed in the coffin in a sitting posture.

Funeral procession

The *Lama* leads the funeral procession, the dead body in the coffin being carried by the pall-bearing sons or brothers of the deceased closely following the *Lama*, and other mourners trekking behind. A member of the funeral party blows a conchshell horn at the head of the funeral procession. The *Lama* carries with him Sacred Texts, a *Dhyangro* (Drum) and a *Goja*, *Jhyumtas* (Brass cymbals), a conchshell horn, a *Gyelling*, a *Dilbu*, *Dorjey* or a portrait of Lord Buddha and articles for *Nawam*.

The members of the bereaved family carry with them few yards of white cloth, a *Dhaia* (Flag) and an egg.

Funerary rites in the crematorium

Just after the dead body reaches the crematorium, the *Lama* performs the necessary rites and rituals before the dead body is put on the funeral pyre. Seated near the pyre with all the articles brought to the crematorium, the *Lama* recites prayers and hymns from the *Sacred Texts*. The bereaved members sit near the *Lama*, encircling the funeral pyre, on which the *Lama* sprinkles *Holy Water*. Before the

dead body is placed on the pyre, an egg and some cooked rice is put into the mouth of the deceased. After the observance of all the rites, the *Lama* blesses the deceased muttering the prayer, 'Let his soul rest in peace'. The *Lama*, who decides the hour when the dead body is to be placed on the pyre, scatters some loose earth upon the dead body on the pyre and offers some copper coins to the earth as the price. At the ultimate hour the *Lama* sprinkles *Holy Water* on the funeral pyre and instructs the eldest son of the deceased to set it on fire.

Period of mourning and restrictions

The Tamangs observe a period of mourning for three days, during which the members of the family of the deceased and other persons with consanguineous relationship on both sides upto one generation do not take non-vegetarian food and wear leather shoes either. During the period of mourning the sons and the brothers of the deceased do not shave their beards and moustaches nor do they have any hair-cut. On the last day of the period of mourning, however, the male members shave their heads, beards and moustaches.

Purificatory rites

The day for the observance of the purificatory rites is fixed by the *Lama* after consulting the almanac. On the day, so fixed, a number of *Lamas* attends the purificatory rites, their number depending on the financial position of the family. The *Lamas* are treated with food and drinks and paid Rs. 4.00 *paise* per head. For the whole day and night the *Lamas* read texts from the *Sacred Books* and perform a series of rites and rituals. All the time they pray for the peace and tranquility of the departed soul. The ceremony concludes with a feast, which is, however, not a compulsory formality.

Life-cycle of the Sherpas

Pregnancy of a woman is determined from the abrupt stoppage of her monthly course. The Sherpas count the period of pregnancy from the day of the last intercourse. The pregnant woman keeps record of the event with the position of the moon in the sky and counts the advancement of pregnancy with lunar position. Conception in a bright fortnight is supposed to augur the birth of a son, but a daughter is born, if pregnancy occurs in a dark fortnight. Cohabitation with a pregnant woman is allowed upto the sixth month of her pregnancy. At a later stage the husband and the pregnant woman sleep in separate beds, as the foetal child is believed to be mobile in the womb from the seventh month onwards. If a pregnant woman feels a strong urge for coitus in the advanced stages, she restrains herself from such an act by restricted dietary prescriptions, such as acid preparations, bitter vegetables and hot food. She also keeps an areca-nut in her mouth. Poverty does not allow the Sherpa women to take the desired rest in their pregnancy. They have to work strenuously in different arduous pursuits even in advanced stages, though strain is considered by one and all to be harmful to the pregnant woman and to the foetus. It is a common practice for a pregnant woman to deny herself all ante-natal care and to do all domestic work of light nature till confinement. Light work is believed by the Sherpa womenfolk to ensure smooth delivery of the child.

With the onset of labour pain, a pregnant woman is removed to a labour-room, improvised in the hut by enclosing a portion of the verandah or by partitioning the bedroom by screens. Usually elderly members of the family or of the same community are called in to take care of the prospective mother. The woman attending the mother is known as *Se-ar-sey*. In preparing the lying-in room care is taken to make it as warm as possible by erecting small ovens in one corner of the room. Both the mother and the new-born baby are bathed in hot water shortly after labour. The *Se-ar-sey* herself cuts the umbilical cord of the baby with a very sharp splinter of bamboo. In rich

families the umbilical cord is placed on a golden plate, whereas in poor families it is placed on a piece of wood. The mother is offered strong *Zer*, matured for a month. The strong liquor served to the mother in her confinement is believed to have medicinal properties and is as such therapeutically useful. The mother is prescribed for the first few days *Zer* and chicken soup, cooked in butter. During the first three days of confinement the members of the family and their consanguineous relations are considered ceremonially impure for all socio-religious rituals and ceremonies. They are also not permitted to visit the *Gumpa* in this impure state.

Name-giving ceremony and purificatory rites

Three days after the birth of a Sherpa baby, a meeting of the elderly members of the community, relatives and kinsmen of the new-born child is held with the *Lama*, whose entrusted job is to find a suitable name for the baby. A name is selected out of the seven predetermined names for babies born on any day of the week. Thus *Dawa* is the name of one born on Monday, *Mingma* is that of one born on Tuesday, one born on Wednesday is named *Lhagba*, *Pharba* is one born on Thursday, one born on Friday is *Passang*, *Pemba* is one born on Saturday, and *Nyima* is one born on Sunday. On the fourth day after birth of the baby, the mother and the child are seated on a wheel drawn on the ground by the *Lama*, who reads out the name of the mother to the child and puts *Tilak* on the child's forehead and thereafter blesses the child, anouncing the name chosen for him. The rite is repeated thrice. The *Lama* hoists a flag in the name of the baby to the right side of the house in case of a boy and to the left side of the house in case of a girl as a welcome gesture. The position of the birth-flag of the baby indicates its sex. Then the assembled *Lamas* perform a *Yajna* by burning twigs of the wood-apple tree and *Ghee*.

The ceremony concludes after the *Lama* sprinkles *Thoo* (Holy Water), the Nepalese version of which is *Gaut*. Plain water, milk, cardamom, clove, camphor and different kinds of medicines from the Himalayas and the plains, make the *Thoo*, which is sprinkled over the mother and the child from a *Kalas* (Earthen container) near the site of the sacrificial fire. *Thoo* is also sprinkled on the clothes, utensils etc., of the house and then distributed among all present on the occasion.

However elaborate and pompous the name-giving ceremony may be among the Sherpas, the names of persons are not at all varied. The option of all the persons being negated by the name suggested by the birth-day of the person, several persons of the namesake in the same village sometimes create confusion in identification. To make the identity distinct, words like senior and junior are prefixed or affixed to the name.

Feast celebrating the birth of the baby

A feast is arranged either on the occasion of the name-giving ceremony on the fourth day or on any other day following, according to the convenience of the family. On the scheduled day the parents of the new-born baby invite the friends and the kinsfolk, requesting them to hoist the flag for the baby and to participate in the ceremonial drinks-party. The invitees bring presents of fowls, *Ghee* and spices for the baby. Some also bring *Zer*, while some others offer presents in cash. The guests are entertained with rice, meat and wine. All the visitors put *Tilak* on the forehead of the baby and celebrate the occasion by hoisting the flag. As the mother is deemed to be restored to her state of ceremonial purity, she is allowed to touch the household utensils which she has so long been forbidden to handle in the period of her defilement. The *Lama*, present on the occasion, distributes *Thoo* to all and sundry. Folksongs sung by the village-women heighten the festive mood. Sometimes the *Mandal* of the village or the *Adhyaksha* of the *Gram Panchayat* is exclusively invited to a dinner on

a different day, when garments are presented by him to the baby.

The *Se-ar-sey* is invited separately any other day, when she is given *Fanriyo*, *Cholo*, and *Majetro* and five rupees in cash. The mother expresses her gratitude by bowing down to the *Se-ar-sey* at the time the latter takes leave.

When the baby grows three years old, its maternal uncle (mother's brother) personally cuts its hair with a pair of scissors. He himself feeds the baby with rice and other food prepared on the occasion and blesses it.

Marriage

Primary selection of a girl is made first by the Sherpa boy who views a girl without her knowledge. If approved he communicates his choice to his parents. The parents of the boy summon two *Kolias* (Go-betweens) to their residence. The *Kolias* play a decisive role in negotiating the marriage. The *Kolias*, though not related to the two negotiating parties by kinship, are, however, Sherpas. The parents of the boy confer with the *Kolias* about the pros and cons of the marriage.

Formal proposal

As desired by the parents of the prospective bridegroom, the two *Kolias* visit the house of the girl with two bottles of *Rakshi*, presented to the girl's parents by the boy's parents. At the the girl's house the *Kolias* broach the subject to the parents of the girl, after presenting them the liquor on behalf of the boy's father. The parents of the girl enquire of the *Kolias* about the status of the boy's family, antecedents of the boy and the landed area owned by the family. If the girl's parents are satisfied with the required information and the proposed match, they accept the *Rakshi*. The acceptance of the gift signifies the assent of the girl's parents to the proposed offer.

The *Kolias* on return to the boy's family to communicate to the boy's father the success of their mission are sumptuously entertained with rice, fowl curry and other delicacies.

Negotiation for betrothal

A few days later, the two *Kolias* revisit the house of the girl to finalise the date for the betrothal ceremony. They carry two bottles of *Rakshi* this time too. Preliminary negotiation is made by the *Kolias* on behalf of the parents of the boy.

Magna (Betrothal)

Perhaps the important phase before marriage is opened on the day of visit of the boy's parents, the two *Kolias* and other members of the boy's family to the bride's house with two bottles *Rakshi* and nine *Pathis* (A *Pathi* weighs four kilogrammes in local measure of weight) of *Zer*. On this occasion too the close relatives of the girl are requested by her parents to be present. Initially the members of both the parties informally chat among themselves after a formal introduction. The bride and the bridegroom, dressed in new clothes, are then formally introduced to each other. The girl is offered small presents, mostly in cash, by her relatives. The bride pays her respect to all the senior and elderly people. The bridegroom also follows her suite.

To conclude the meeting, the gir and the boy each is offered a *Gyampa* (Hollow bamboo tube) of liquor, especially prepared from millet and sweetened with sugar. The boy sips the liquor first, followed by the girl and later by all other person presents. Songs and dances are arranged in honour of the invitees, who participate lastly in a hearty dinner. *Churukma Tapka* is formal gift of liquor. On any subsequent date four bottles of wine and thirty six *Pathis* of *Zer* are presented by the bridegroom's family to the bride's household through the two *Kolia* messengers.

Marriage procession

In the morning of the day of marriage the *Lama* performs some rites and rituals in the

bridegroom's house, reciting prayers and hymns from the *Sacred Texts* and offering oblation of *Ghee* to the sacrificial fire of burning sandalwood. The *Lama* blesses the bridegroom, when the latter pays his respect to the former. Similar rites are performed in the bride's house at the simultaneous hour.

With *Tilak* of sandalwood-paste anointed on their foreheads, the members of the bridegroom's family wear white *Khadas*. At the time the bridegroom leaves for the bride's house, his sisters and other relatives wish him good luck and present *Khadas* to him. The bridegroom bows down in reverence and proceeds in a group towards the bride's house with his parents, the *Kolias*, the *Lama*, other relatives and friends. The processionists in accompaniment of musical instruments like *Gyaling* (Trumpet) and *Jhyampta* (Cymbal), also carry *Khalus* (Swords) with them and the bridegroom taking with him a metallic *Pumba* (Small pitcher) of *Darchi* (Liquor flavoured with various aromatic spices).

On arrival at the bride's village, the members of the bridegroom's party, received by some representative of the bride's family, are offered liquor. The processionists sing and dance there for some time. It is commonly believed that the bridegroom and his party are made to halt on their way to the bride's house deliberately for the purpose of affording some allowance of time to the bride's family to enable it to make the final preparation for the marriage ceremony. In the bride's house the members of the bridegroom's party are accorded a *bon accueil* by the bride's family. Then they move round the bride's house thrice and enter into the house. First served a bounteous supply of indigenous liquor and then entertained to light refreshments, the members of the bridegroom's party witness the performance of folk-songs, folk-dances and instrumental music. The villagers dance with swords gaily on the occasion. And an important part of entertainment, the dance is organised to curb the malevolent influence of spirits and ghosts.

Marriage ceremony

The bride and the bridegroom, brought to the courtyard or to the available open space within the house, face the *Lama* of the bridegroom's party, both standing side by side. The instrumentalists send forth high-pitched notes of their music all the time. Bride-price as such being unknown to the Sherpa social system, no payment is made by the bridegroom to the bride's father. Instead, the bridegroom offers about twelve metres of cloth and Rs. 1.50 *paise* to the bride's mother as present in recognition of the fact that the bride was borne in her womb for ten months or so, that she was carried on her mother's back for ten years, given the clothes ten times and also reared up in her infancy on breast-milk. The presents are offered to the bride's mother in the presence of a person, selected from among the guests to preside over the function. The bride's maternal uncle (mother's brother) is presented one metre of cloth and a bottle of *Rakshi*.

At the proper *Lagan* (Auspicious moment) the bridegroom presents to the bride the *Pumba*, held by him till then. While both of them hold the *Pumba* in their hands, the *Lama* puts *Tilak* of *Ghee* on their foreheads thrice. During the anointment of the *Tilak* for the third time, someone from behind knocks their heads together. Soon after, the bride is formally handed over to the bridegroom by her father and the couple bows down to pay respect to all the senior relatives present on the occasion to be blessed by them in turn. Liquor is served freely to all the invitees who are entertained to a sumptuous feast.

Bridegroom's return home

The formalities of marriage over, the parents of the bride bid adieu to the couple. In the return journey the musicians lead the bridal procession and the bridegroom follows the

bride, singing and dancing. Near the house, he moves round it thrice with the bride, before entry within. To welcome the couple, *Tilak* is anointed on their foreheads and the couple then bows down and performs obeisance to the relatives, who have not visited the bride's house. The sisters of the bridegroom then embrace the couple and wish them best of luck. The bridegroom pays some small amount of money in cash to the well-wishers in return. The invitees then wish the couple good luck and present them *Khadas*. The bride serves *Torma* (A sweet preparation from rice) to all the guests and relatives, who relish it because it is served by the bride herself. Those, who dance with swords, are presented a big pot of *Zer* and other edibles. The couple is then offered boiled rice and other items of food including meat, the food being served in one plate. The bride first feeds the bridegroom who in his turn reciprocates.

After the ceremony, everybody takes leave of the couple. Three days after, both the bride and the bridegroom go to the bride's parents with presents of *Zer*. They stay in the bride's house for three days and return to the bridegroom's house on the fourth day.

Death

Soon after the death of a Sherpa, all his friends, and near relatives are informed of the mishap. The *Lama* is also summoned. After consulting the Tibetan almanac, the *Lama* suggests the most auspicious time for cremation of the dead body. In the face of any suitable auspicious hour not indicated by the almanac, a dead body has to be kept as long as a week and even sometimes more. The *Lamas* apply some indigenous aroma to the corpse to avoid its putrefaction.

The *Lama* comes to the house of the deceased with sacred books and musical instruments. From the dead body brought to the verandah or the courtyard all apparels are taken off and the bare corpse, bathed in *Thoo* by the *Lama*, is draped in a piece of white, new cloth. One hundred and eight candles are lighted on four sides of the dead body and the *Lama* chants verses from the scriptures. Cooked food, offered to the dead body, is placed on one side by the relatives, as instructed by the *Lama*. The relatives and friends of the deceased pay their last homage to the departed soul by offering white *Khada* to the dead body and praying for his peace. The corpse is then seated inside a wooden coffin, called *Kharkula*, specially made for the purpose by a carpenter. The *Lama* suggests the direction in which the dead body is to be carried.

Meanwhile an advance party goes to the crematorium to prepare the funeral pyre. If the deceased is an adult, a pyre with nine layers of wood is raised. While for minors seven layers are prescribed for the pyre.

The coffin is carried in a bier by the relatives on their shoulders. A person, blowing conch-shell, leads the funeral procession. The *Lama* plays on instruments like *Jhyampta*, *Gyailing* etc., closely on the heels of the funeral bier. At the crematorium the funeral bier is placed beside the pyre. The *Lama* recites prayers from the sacred books there and prays for the peace of the departed soul once more. The friends and relatives, not present in the house of the deceased, visit the crematorium to pay their last respect to the deceased and offer *Khadas* to it. After the rites are observed, the dead body carried by sons or other relatives of the deceased is moved round the funeral pyre thrice and finally placed upon it. The eldest son of the deceased offers twenty or thirty *paise* in coins to the pyre in a bid to purchase the land, where the pyre is made. The birth-name of the deceased is uttered in negotiating the purchase in the following manner :

"I, the son of M, purchase from Mother Earth this area of land for N (Birth-name of M) and pay the paltry amount as it price".

At the propitious moment, the *Lama* proceeds to the pyre and cuts off the pig-tail of

the corpse, sprinkles *Thoo* upon the pyre and finally blesses the deceased. The pyre is lit in the fifth layer.

After cremation, the *Lama* sprinkles *Thoo* on all the participants in the funeral procession and thus ceremonially purifies them. The mourners come back to the house of the deceased where they are served liquor and food.

Period of mourning

The period of mourning for the Sherpas lasts for twenty days, during which the members of the bereaved family including the brothers, sons and nephews of the deceased are prohibited from taking salt, chilli and mustard oil. They are also forbidden to take any non-vegetarian dishes during the period of mourning.

Ghewa (Purificatory ceremony)

The purificatory ceremony, known as *Ghewa*, is observed on the twenticth day after cremation. On this occasion the *Lamas* arc called in the number of *Lamas* depending on the economic status of the household. All the relatives and friends of the deceased, especially those who attended the cremation, are invited to be present at *Ghewa*. The *Lama* chants prayers for the peace of the departed soul throughout. Then in everybody's presence the sons of the deceased hoist a flag inscribed with quotations in Tibetan from *Holy Texts* in memory of the departed soul. Thousands of candles are lit. While some of the invitees bring wine, some others help the bereaved family with money in cash to defray the expenses of the *Ghewa* ceremony. The ceremony concludes after the invitees are entertained to a ceremonial feast.

Life-cycle of the Rais

Type of marriage

Among the Rais, two types of marriage are in practice. One is *Mangni Bia* (Marriage by negotiation) and the other is *Choria Bia* (Marriage by elopement).

Mangni Bia (Marriage by negotiation)

The parents or uncles and in some cases, the friends and relatives of a boy of marriageable age in the family look for a suitable match. On receipt of preliminary information of a marriageable girl in any family, two persons, often some friends or relatives, known as *Kong Pi*, are entrusted by the boy's family with the responsibility of initiating the preliminary negotiation with the parents of the bride. Negotiations finalised, the date of the marriage ceremony is fixed by the *Bijua* (Priest of the Rais) against payment of remuneration.

Marriage ceremony

The friends and relatives of the bridegroom, who come to his house in the morning of the day of marriage, are well treated with *Zer*. Songs and dances mark the festive spirit of the occasion. Similar celebrations take place in the house of the bride too.

On the eve of the start of the marriage procession in the afternoon, the bridegroom pays his respect to his parents and other superior relatives.

Dressed in new clothes, the bridegroom is accompained by his parents. uncles, brothers and sisters, relatives, friends and the two go-between *Kong Pis*. It may be mentioned here that the bride's party also entrusts two persons from among their friends and relatives to conduct the negotiations. The two go-betweens of the Rais, designated as *Rai Pa* and *Pheng Ma* respectively, conduct the negotiation on behalf of the bride's party.

As the marriage-procession approaches the bride's house, the members of the bridegroom's party, received by the *Rai Pa* and the *Pheng Ma*, are treated to liquor and some light refreshments, songs and dances being the additional attractions. The invitees and relatives from both sides assemble in the courtyard.

Ma Tug Ma (Presents offercd by the bridegroom to the mother-in-law)

In the presence of the assembled guests the bridegroom pays his respect to the bride's mother with the present of a piece of ham and a bottle of *Zer*. The offering made by the bridegroom to his mother-in-law is known as *Ma Tug Ma*. *In Mangni Bia*, however, this formality is not obligatory, provided the bride's mother does not demand it in course of the preliminary stages of negotiation as a condition of marriage. In some cases, *Ma Tug Ma* is offered to the bride's mother at the time of negotiation itself.

Besides the items mentioned, one bowl of brass, *Saimundi* (Present) of one rupee, and a *Wabub* (A container of hollow pumpkin) filled with *Zer* are also given.

Chan Chin (Giving over the bride to bridegroom)

At the proper *Lagan* at night the *Rai Pa* beats the brass bowl (presented by the bridegroom on the occasion), while the *Pheng Ma* pours *Zer* on three stones, which make the cones of the oven. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the oven represents the main deity of the Rais. The *Pheng Ma* utters the following words :

On this day the girl, named X, daughter of Y, is made over to Z, son of M, and from this day onwards he would be the sole custodian of her joy and sorrow.

After the incantation, the bride's father hands over his daughter to the bridegroom. During the observance of the ceremony, songs and dances are performed near the marriage-booth.

Dhok Bhet (Formal introduction of the bridegroom)

The bride's sisters lead the bridegroom to introduce himself to the relations of the bride's family. The bridegroom pays a nominal amount in cash, while paying his regards to the members of the bride's family. The bride also joins her husband in paying her respect to the superiors.

Nuptial feast

The marriage ceremony concludes with nuptial feasts in honour of the invitees and guests. In well-off families, fowl curry is the principal item in the menu and in average families, pork forms the main item. Liquor is served freely. The bride and the bridegroom dine together. The bridegroom first refuses to take any food. The sisters of the bride crack jokes with him and pursuade him to eat.

On the day following the marriage ceremony, the party of the bridegroom returns home along with the bride. On return home, the couple is warmly received by the relatives and friends of the bridegroom. All the members are readily served liquor and some light refreshments. Later, the friends and kins of the bridegroom who could not participate in the marriage ceremony proper, comc to see the bride and offer her presents, mostly in cash. Lastly, the invitees are entertained to a grand feast.

Dulan (Bride's visit to her parents)

Three or five days after the marriage ceremony, the couple visits the house of the bride's father with few relatives of the bridegroom and with the present of a piece of ham and a *Wabub* of *Zer*. The bridegroom pays his regards to his parents-in-law. Three nights are spent there and the bridegroom returns home with his wife.

Choria Bia (Marriage by elopement)

Choria Bia is said to be still in practice among the Rais. This type of marriage takes place, when the two partners cannot be united by *Mangni Bia* at the recalcitrance of the parents of either of the parties or of both or on account of some other practical difficulty. In such a marriage the boy and the girl spend

several nights together either in the former's house or in some other place.

But, *Choria Bia* is socially sanctioned only after the couple meet the mother of the bride with the *Ma Tug Ma* of the requisite articles on any day convenient to the couple. Offering *Ma Tug Ma* to the mother of the bride, the couple pays their regards to her. A mother-in-law by custom cannot refuse *Ma Tug Ma*, even in case of marriage by elopement.

Divorce

Divorce, though socially sanctioned among the Rais, is practised rather sparingly. The norm of the Rai society accepts it negatively. According to social usage, the persons claiming divorce has to pay a sum of sixty one rupees to the opposite party. Practised though for a fairly long period, very few Rais were in the past or are at present able to pay a large sum of money, owing to their poor economic status.

Death

In case of death impending in a Rai household, some water is instantly poured into the mouth of the dying man. Friends and relatives of the family rush to the house and console the members of the bereaved family. Some would go to different places to inform the relatives of the deceased of the tragedy, while some others would go out for preparing the wooden bier for carriage of the dead body to the burial ground. The dead body, surrounded by immediate relatives, lies in one corner of the room. Visitors including co-villagers and friends come in streams to pay their homage to the deceased for the last time ; but a person, not belonging to the same ethnic group, is forbidden to touch the dead body.

Funeral procession

The dead body is taken out of the house and placed on the bier in the courtyard. Four persons, usually sons or brothers of the deceased, carry the dead body on their shoulders and move thrice in the courtyard before leaving for the burial ground. One person, going ahead of the dead body, blows a conchshell and is followed by the funeral procession consisting of sons, brothers, nephews and other near relatives and friends, carrying fried rice, few copper coins, a cock and some camphor with them.

Rites in the burial ground

At the burial ground the dead body is lowered down from the shoulders and placed on the ground. A copper coin is put in the mouth of the deceased and some camphor placed on the coin is ignited with fire. Now, a person belonging to a diffcrent community can touch the dead body.

Selection of the site for burial

The selection of the site for burial of the dead body is done in a novel way. The son of the deceased lifts the cock in one hand and dashes it against the ground. The particular spot, where the cock dies, is selected for burial.

Rites connected with the burial

The site being selected, the next rite is to prepare the grave, in digging which the first stroke of axe is given by the eldest son of the deceased. The grave is dug with a staircase made on one side, mostly on the side of the legs. The popular belief goes that the soul of the deceased comes out of its confinement in the grave along the staircase. A small hole is, therefore, left in the grave to serve as an outlet for the deceased. After the grave is dug, the dead body is laid down to rest there, with some cooked rice or parched rice and the dead cock left therein as food for the dead person. The dead body is then covered with earth and stones, care being taken to leave a hole in the grave.

Rites on the day of burial

The Rais do not perform any elaborate rites and rituals pertaining to death. Even the belongings of the deceased person, such as his beddings and garments, are not usually thrown away. The members of the funeral procession do not take any bath after burial of the dead. Death does not make a person unclean, according to the Rais. The bereaved brother or any other relative of the deceased shaves the hair, beard, moustache and eyebrows of all sons of the deceased.

Period of mourning

The period of mourning among the Rais varies from three to five days, during which the members of the bereaved family do not use salt or mustard oil in cooking their food. They are also prohibited from anointing their bodies or heads with mustard oil and from taking any non-vegetarian food. During the period of mourning the eldest son of the deceased visits the burial ground daily to offer some cooked food to the deceased, before taking his food.

Purificatory ceremony

Purificatory ceremony takes place on either the third or the fifth day after burial. No rites are performed on this occasion, neither are the services of the priest called for. Non-vegetarian food is cooked on the day of the purificatory ceremony. Invitees are entertained to a hearty dinner, though the feast is not compulsory nor necessary. The sons of the deceased give small amounts of money to the nephews and nieces of the deceased.

Beliefs and practices connected with death

The pantheon of the Rais attributes the highest position to the benevolent spirits of the ancestors, round which the ceremonies and festivals of the Rais revolve. But, the spirits of all the deceased ancestors, the Rais hold, are not always benevolent and the souls of some members are believed to degenerate into devils after death. Hence the first rite of the Rais, after the death of a member of their community, who is not a minor or a child, is to ascertain whether or not the spirit of the deceased has turned into a benevolent spirit. In case it does, it is annually worshipped as an ancestral spirit. In case it becomes devilish, it is not given the status of an ancestral spirit. Hence, after burial of the dead body, the *Bijua* is called in to ascertain if the deceased is to be given the revered status of an ancestral spirit or not. A person, dying of an accident, leprosy, ulcer or wounds, is believed to turn into a devil after death. Every Rai earnestly prays for a natural death to attain the esteemed status of an ancestral spirit after death. It is believed that if the son of a deceased person happens to touch an animal, say a dog or a cat, during the period of mourning, the soul of the dead man becomes a devil. The sons of the deceased are, therefore, confined in a room, lest they should touch an animal.

Life-cycle of the Kamis

The initiative for marriage of a Kami boy of marriageable age is taken by his parents, who generally request their friends and relatives to look for a suitable bride for their son. They act on the information received about a girl of marriageable age and establish contacts with her family. The boy in some cases gets a look of the girl without her knowledge. In case he chooses the girl, he communicates his choice to his parents through some of his friends or relatives.

Mangnu Din (Asking for the hand of the girl)

Once the father of the boy comes to know of his son's choice or once he gets suitable information about a girl and is assured that the girl's father would accept his proposal, the boy's father pays a visit to the girl's house any day with two bottles of liquor and requests the girl's father for the hands of the girl. On such a request, the girl's father consults his relatives,

before he gives his assent to the proposed marriage. In case of his acceptance of the proposal, he does not hesitate to receive two bottles of liquor as token of establishment of marital relationship between the two families.

Sodeni (Formal negotiation)

After the acceptance of the proposal for marriage by the girl's father, a day is fixed for *Sodeni* (Formal negotiation). On the appointed day the boy's father revisits the girl's house with a bottle of liquor. One or two close relations may accompany him. There in the presence of the boy's father and some other friends and relatives the terms of marriage, such as the amount of bride-price, the number of guests to be invited on the occasion of marriage by the girl's father, the quantity of liquor to be served, the articles of present and the apparels to be given by the boy's father, are finalised. A date for the formal presentation of all the items of presents, settled by the party of the boy and that of the girl, is also finalised. The parties themselves consult the almanac and select an auspicious date for the purpose. The members of the boy's party are entertained to light refreshments or to a dinner and served liquor.

Rit Bujhano (Presents offered to the girl's family by the boy's household)

This obligatory prelude to the final marriage ceremony is so important that a marriage may not for some reason or other materialise even after the performance of the *Sodeni*. But marriage is irrevocable after *Rit Bujhano* which is but the other name for betrothal.

On this occasion the boy accompanied by his father, father's brothers, mother's brothers, brothers, other relatives and friends visits the house of the girl with the settled amount of bride-price, a goat, a fowl, about one or two bottles of wine and a *Khukri*.

The party is accorded a warm reception by the relatives of the girl and treated to light refreshments and liquor. Then in the presence of the relatives and friends of both the parties, the boy's father or his uncle makes over the bride-price, the goat, the rice and the liquor to the girl's father. The bride is asked to come and sit face to face with the bridegroom ; one or two words are also exchanged between the two. The friends of both the bridegroom and the bride exchange jokes with them. An interesting rite is then performed in the presence of the bride-elect by the bridegroom-elect. He sacrifices the fowl brought by him with the help of the *Khukri* before the girl. This rite has an implied moral teaching. If the girl after her marriage ever plays truant and loses her chastity, her husband is supposed to chop off his wife's head as in the case of the fowl. *Rit Bujhano* concludes in a dinner arranged for the guests and invitees in their honour.

In case the girl does not like her partner in their first meeting during *Rit Bujhano*, the girl starts talking like a chatter-box to the ultimate annoyance of the boy who, disgusted with the girl, seeks the marriage to break off. He goes back with all the articles brought by him. But such an eventuality is very rare.

Bia (Wedding ceremony)

In the morning of the day of the marriage ceremony the *Thakur* (Priest) comes to the house of the bridegroom and offers *Puja* (Offerings) to the deity *Satya Narayana* to invoke His blessings. Then he worships the planets and appeases the malefic ones, if any. To the *Yajna* (Fire of burning cinders of small twigs of the wood-apple trees) *Ghee* is offered. The bridegroom pays his respect to the *Thakur* and receives his blessings for a happy and peaceful life. The priest is then served with good food. Similar rites are performed in like manners in the house of the bride.

Prior to the start of the wedding procession, the bridegroom after paying his respect to all the elderly relatives receives their bless-

ings. Just as he pays his regards to his mother, she feeds her son with her own milk. This is a subtle suggestion to the son not to forget that mother's milk has nurtured him. The mother blesses her son by sprinkling flowers on his head.

The wedding procession

The wedding procession includes the bridegroom, his father, father's brothers, mother's brothers, grand-father, brothers, other relatives and friends. The members of the wedding procession carry with them ornaments of gold and silver, garlands of flowers and clothes for the bride.

The bridegroom wears a white *Daora,* a *Sural* and also a headgear. As the wedding procession is on the move, the women of the bridegroom's family sing Nepali folksongs.

Reception to the bridegroom's party

The bridegroom's party is given a traditional reception by the female members of the bride's household with a pitcherful of water showered on the members of the party. The members are also ceremonially received with lighted lamps in hand by the female members of the bride's household and are offered seats and served liquor and light refreshments.

Marriage ceremony

At the proper *Lagan* the bride's father carries her on his shoulder and brings her in front of the bridegroom. A degraded Brahman priest utters chantings and incantations in Nepali. In the presence of all, the father of the bride makes over his daughter to the bridegroom, who puts marks of vermilion on the partings of the bride's hair. The priest then performs the *Yajna* and the couple, led by a spinster with a pitcherful of water, moves seven times round the sacrificial fire. The spinster is followed by the bride and the bride by the bridegroom. The marriage ceremony being over, the bride is required to change her dress and wear the clothes and ornaments, presented to her by the bridegroom's party.

The invitees and guests are then entertained to a dinner. Sometimes, dishes are served before the marriage ceremony, in case it is due to take place at night. The couple are served food in the last. Both the couple and the parents of the bride fast for the whole day and take food only after the conclusion of the marriage ceremony.

The day following, the couple in the company of all the members of the bridegroom's party starts from the bridegroom's house, where friends and relatives of the bridegroom's household come to see the couple and offer them presents, mostly in cash. Nuptial feasts are arranged and the invitees are entertained.

On the third day after marriage, the bride comes back to her father's house with her husband to spend three nights, after which the couple returns home.

Death

In case of an impending death in a Kami household, some rose-water is poured into the mouth of the dying person. A medical practitioner is called in to confirm the death. The friends and relatives are informed of the bereavement.

A carpenter of the Lepcha and the Bhutia communities and a resident of the village is asked to prepare a coffin for the dead body against the payment of four or five rupees. The dead body is brought to the courtyard, bathed in water and after being draped in a new white cloth laid down in the coffin.

The sons, brothers, uncles, father and all other near relatives and friends of the deceased join the funeral procession, the coffin being carried by the sons of the deceased on their shoulders. The funeral procession is led by a

person, blowing conchshell, and followed first by the pall-bearers and next by members of the funeral procession, every members of the procession uttering in one voice the name of *Ramá* (Hero in the Indian Epic of the *Ramayana*).

At the crematorium the funeral pyre is made, after the dead body is brought there. A copper coin is placed on the mouth of the deceased; a little quantity of camphor, placed on the copper coin, is burnt. The dead body is laid on its back on the pyre with legs towards the south. The relatives come near the pyre one by one to offer some earth to the dead body. The eldest son of the deceased sets fire to the mouth of the deceased; but before doing so, he moves thrice round the corpse. A white cloth is ignited and placed on the breast of the corpse. The eldest son throws a coin of one *paisa* to the fire as the price for the land, where the funeral rite is performed. The deceased is believed to have no more claim on any earthly object henceforward.

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ECONOMY

Introduction

To a commoner, the economic life in the villages of West Bengal is alike. This statement is not true in respect of all the rural areas in West Bengal always. The variations are not wide all the time and even when so, it is because the ecological factors of resources, motivations and powers to achieve the purpose are not alike in all the places. Upper Pedong, the frontier-guard village in the State of West Bengal in the remote corner of the district of Darjeeling watching Sikkim in the border, strikes a note of variation, when one proceeds to analyse its economic life. Life in the hills is colourful from the point of material traits like dress and food, but it is not so from the point of livelihood. Occupations are variegated with the sheet-anchor of economy being entrenched in agriculture, construction and plantation, but the way the bread is earned is not as colourful as the verdant foliage of the Himalayas or as simple as in the plains. If it is hard to eke out the existence of life there in the hill-village, the drudgery is not immutably stamped on the cheeks and worries furrowed on the foreheads of the working men and women. The burden of life is lifted atop the village in the protectorate of the Himalayas with a cheery mind, refreshed now and then by a hearty smile or a full-throated song. Without further digression to make the matter of fact analysis mellow into a lyrical note, it is proposed to examine the economy of the village and the people with the detachment of an analytical annalist.

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF THE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

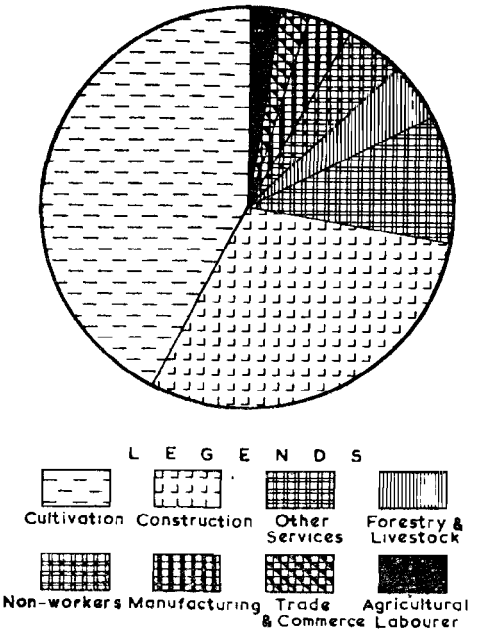


TABLE 39

INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF THE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

Community	No. of house-holds	No. of households with heads engaged in: Culti-vation	Agricultural labourer	Forestry and livestock	Manu-facturing	Trade and commerce	Construc-tion	Other services	No work
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	8	..	..	1	..	2	2	..
Dukpa	5	..	..	..	..	1	2	1	1
Tamang	17	5	1	..	..	..	11	..	..
Rai	11	6	..	1	..	..	3	1	..
Sherpa	9	6	..	..	..	..	3	..	..
Kami	6	4	..	1	..	..	1	..	..
Lepcha	4	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	1
Limbu	4	1	..	..	1	..	1	1	..
Sanyashi	4	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	1
Newar	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Total	**87**	**37**	**2**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**26**	**9**	**4**

The Table 39 on the Industrial Classification of the primary occupations of the heads of the households conveys a rough idea not only of the economic pursuits of the households in Upper Pedong but also of the main pivots of the economy of the village.

As many as 39 heads of households (44.8 per cent) depend, directly or indirectly, on agriculture, about 55.2 per cent of the heads of households depending on non-agricultural avocations. In its face value the table underplays the importance of agriculture, as it does not take into account the households with agriculture as the subsidiary means of occupation. Of the non-agricultural households, as many as 29.9 per cent or nearly one-third of the households of the village are dependent on construction connected with road-building. It is also a pointer to the urban influence on the village in as much as nine households (a little over 10.3 per cent) are dependent on other services connected mostly with hospitals and schools.

Economic resources

Land and livestock constitute the twin important economic resources of the people, even though the hilly land of Upper Pedong is not as fertile or as suitable for cultivation as that in the plains. An average hillman being land-hungry, a plot of land is deemed always more precious than any other valuable asset. Next to land, livestock constitutes another economic resource to the landless households.

Land

In the village of Upper Pedong with its economy partly agriculture-oriented, land by

itself provides the singlemost important source of livelihood to the people a very important resource too for both the village and the villagers.

As Upper Pedong is a segment of Pedong *Khasmahal Mouza* (J. L. No. 6) and as the investigation does not concern the whole of the *Mouza*, no detailed figures on land-use relating to the *Mouza* as a whole are available. The *Mouza* comprises an areas of 1408.03 acres, of which a large area consists of forests extending over the top of the hill. Land, owned by 87 households of Upper Pedong, measures 194.54 acres. The Table 40 shows the pattern of utilisation of land owned by the households.

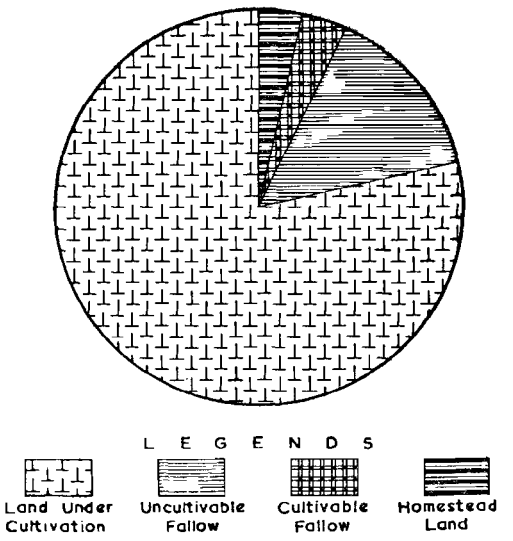
TABLE 40

LAND-UTILISATION

Use of land	Acres	Percentage	Inside the village (in acres)	Outside the village (in acres)
Homestead land	7.70	3.8	6.90	0.80
Land under cultivation	155.90	78.6	133.20	22.70
Cultivable fallow	6.77	3.4	5.27	1.50
Uncultivable fallow	28.17	14.2	22.17	6.00
Total	**198.54**	**100.00**	**167.54**	**31.00**

Locally known as *Sukha Khet*, the gravelly land unsuitable for cultivation remains fallow. Considering that the percentage calculations relate to a part of the *Mouza,* the area of fallow land is quite large. The proportion of the area of uncultivable waste of the whole *Mouza* to its total area may be all the more disquieting. The area of uncultivable waste is large not only in the present village but also in the neighbouring region. No less striking is the fact that a part of the land owned by the villagers is allowed to remain as cultivable fallow. This is because the landowners can hardly afford to undertake the initial cost involved in bringing the cultivable fallow under the plough. Again, out of a total of 198.54 acres of land in the ownership of the households of Upper Pedong, about 15.6 per cent of the landed area lie outside the village.

LAND-UTILSATION



Size and ownership of landholdings

The area of land in the ownership of individual households in the village is an important aspect of the relative economic ranking of the families. The Table 41 shows the area of land in the ownership of individual households.

About 52.9 per cent of the total households are landowners, whatever the area of their land. Even among the landowner households the position is not uniformly satisfactory among all the communities. All the Bhujel and the Yakha families, about 84.6 per cent of the Sikkimese Bhutia, 63.6 per cent of the Rai, 66.7 per cent of the Sherpa, 66.7 per cent of the Kami and 50.0 per cent of the Lepcha households are landed, while 40.0 per cent of the Dukpa, 29.4 per cent of the Tamang, 50.0 per cent each of the Limbu, Chhetri and the Newar families but none of the Gurung households are landowners. The Sanyashi,

Gurung, Mangar and Brahman households and one solitary family of unspecified community are landless. While 76.1 per cent of the landowner households own land upto five acres, the households with land upto two acres form the single largest group (34.8 per cent) of the landed families. Eleven households each with five acres or more of land own 108.64 acres constituting 54.7 per cent of the total landed area in the ownership of the villagers.

TABLE 41

LANDOWNERSHIP AND THE AREA OF LAND OWNED

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of land-owner house-holds	No. of households owning land of the area (in acres)									
			Upto 1.0	1.1 to 2.0	2.1 to 3.0	3.1 to 4.0	4.1 to 5.0	5.1 to 6.0	6.1 to 7.0	7.1 to 8.0	8.1 to 10.0	10.1 and above
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	11	..	3	1	2	3	..	1	1	..	..
Dukpa	5	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	17	5	..	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Rai	11	7	..	1	2	1	..	..	1	..	..	2
Sherpa	9	6	..	3	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
Kami	6	4	..	3	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	4	2	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Limbu	4	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**41**	..	**16**	**7**	**6**	**4**	**2**	**3**	**2**	..	**4**

Land under cultivation

About 78.5 per cent of the landed area owned by the villagers being under cultivation, only the land under the plough rather than the total owned land will testify if the village-economy is agriculture-oriented or not. The Table 42 relates to the area and distribution of the owned land under cultivation.

Of the total area of owned land under cultivation, 47.1 per cent are in the ownership of 11 households constituting 25.0 per cent of the households owning tilled land, each household owning land above five acres. Again, it appears that two-thirds of the households own land with an area of three acres or below, while 33.3 of the households own more than three acres of land each. About 52.9 per cent of the landed area in the village comprise five acres or below, the remaining 47.1 per cent of the holdings measuring more than five acres. About 35.5 per cent of the landed area are above seven acres. The unequal distribution of the holdings among the various households is manifested in the table itself. About 81.2 per cent of the households own about 52.9 per cent of the total landed area in the village. The inequality is all the more

tapering towards the households with lower brackets of land acreage, as only 11.4 per cent of the households own 35.5 per cent of the total landed area in the village. Though 47.7 per cent of the households have an average landed area of 1.62 acres, the table upgrades the average area of owned land for the village as a whole to 3.54 acres.

TABLE 42

AREA OF OWN LAND UNDER CULTIVATION

Area of own land (in acres)	No. of households owning land under cultivation	Percentage	Owned land under cultivation (in acres)	Percentage	Average area of own land under cultivation per household (in acres)
0.1-1.0	Nil	..	..	..	..
1.1-2.0	21	47.7	34.21	21.9	1.62
2.1-3.0	8	18.2	20.99	13.5	2.62
3.1-4.0	4	9.1	13.80	8.9	3.45
4.1-5.0	3	6.8	13.45	8.6	4.48
5.1-6.0	1	2.3	5.48	3.5	5.48
6.1-7.0	2	4.5	12.65	8.1	6.32
7.1-8.0	3	6.8	22.25	14.3	7.41
8.1-9.0	..	..	..	..	..
9.1-10.0	1	2.3	10.00	6.4	10.00
10.1 and above	1	2.3	23.00	14.8	23.07
Total	**44**	**100.00**	**155.90**	**100.00**	**3.54**

TABLE 43

AREA AND DISTRIBUTION OF LAND

Community	Total no. of households	No. of land-owner households	Total area of own land under cultivation in acres	Percentage	Average area of own land per household in acres
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	11	38.45	24.7	3.50
Dukpa	5	2	2.80	1.8	1.40
Tamang	17	5	14.20	9.1	2.84
Rai	11	7	29.80	19.1	4.25
Sherpa	9	6	14.12	9.0	2.35
Kami	6	4	7.89	5.1	1.97
Lepcha	4	2	4.50	2.9	2.25
Limbu	4	2	25.52	16.4	12.76
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	2	8.02	5.1	4.01
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	1	7.15	4.6	7.15
Bhujel	1	1	1.50	1.0	1.50
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	1.95	1.2	1.95
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**44**	**155.90**	**100.0**	**3.54**

The problem of size and distribution of land from the standpoint of different communities in the village is focussed in the Table 43.

About 50 6 per cent of the households with own land under cultivation do not represent all the communities. No household of the Sanyashi, Gurung, Mangar, Brahman or the unspecified community owns any land under cultivation. Again, eleven Bhutia, seven Rai and two Limbu households constituting about 43.2 per cent of the landowning households own land, covering 60.1 per cent of the total area of owned land under cultivation. Nine households including seven Rai and two Limbu families (constituting about 10.3 per cent of the total number of households, 24.5 per cent of all the landed households and 60.0 per cent of the total households of these two communities) own land accounting for 35.5 per cent of the total area in the ownership of all the households. Individually, the Sikkimese Bhutia, the Rai and the Limbu landowner households have in their ownership quite a large proportion of the total area of owned land. If to the landed Rai and Limbu families are added the single Newar and the two Chhetri households, it changes the entire picture. About 13.8 per cent of the households own over 45.2 per cent of the total landed area under cultivation at the disposal of the villagers. Even within the ambit of the village, there is considerable inequality in the ownership of land under cultivation among different communities. Against this background egalitarianism remains a distant vision, and the unhappy lot of the landless households accounting for about a half of the total number of families in the lofty Himalayan village of Upper Pedong becomes too self-evident for either description or analysis.

Again, the average area of owned land seems to be the highest among the Limbus because of a single Limbu household alone owning 29 acres of land. Among the Newars, next to the Limbus, the average area of owned land is 7.15 acres. The average area of land is also high among the Rais, the Chhetris and the Sikkimese Bhutias.

Manner of acquisition of owned land

After a discussion about the size, ownership and distribution of land, the most relevant topic relates to the manner of acquisition of land by the households. The Table 44 would explain how the landowner families in the village have acquired the land, now owned by them.

TABLE 44

MANNER OF ACQUISITION OF LAND

Nature of acquisition of land	No. of house-holds	Percen-tage	Area of land in acres	Percen-tage
Entirely ancestral	17	36.9	77.80	39.2
Partly ancestral and partly purchased	5	10.9	29.16 (Ancestral) 21.94 (Purchased)	14.7 11.0
Partly ancestral and partly received by inheritance of father-in-law's land	1	2.2	5.00 (Ancestral) 5.50 (Inheritance)	2.5 2.8
Entirely purchased	20	43.5	43.92	22.1
Entirely received from other sources*	3	6.5	15.22	7.7
Total	**46**	**100.0**	**198.54**	**100.0**

*NOTE : Of the three households with 14.22 acres of land received from other sources, two households have 3.94 acres (25.9 per cent) of land owned by inheritance from father-in-law and sister's husband.—Editor

It appears that 54.3 per cent of the landowning households have not added even the smallest strip of land to their landed acquisition, ancestral or inherited, and that their landed area explains 61.2 per cent of the total area in the ownership of all the households. It is indeed interesting that out of 25 households with some land purchased in the lifetime of

their heads, 20 families, landless before, had started from a scratch and have now become landed. The purchase of land by so many landless households is a sure index of popular demand for agricultural land, if not an exact pointer to the economic growth and prosperity of the village. Of the households acquiring land in some other ways, one household has received the landed property from the Government of West Bengal as an incentive and a reward, for the head of this household stood first in the Agricultural Exhibition at Pedong.

Loss or disposal of land

Notwithstanding economic hardships of individualistic strain, the majority of the landholders have somehow managed to keep their inherited landed area intact. In recent years only three landed households have disposed of a part of their land. A Bhutia household has sold three acres of land to another Bhutia, a Rai household has sold half an acre of land, while a Newar household has sold 0.20 acre of land. Again, one Limbu household has mortgaged a part of his land to a person in the adjoining *Mouza*, a Yakha household of the same village, for Rs. 115·00 *paise* eight years ago to defray the expenses incurred for his son's medical treatment.

The question about the persons from whom the households in the village have purchased their land may appear quite logical and relevant in the context of the present discussion. Some villagers have purchased land from the fathers of the present heads of the households, the detailed case studies of which are not available. In some other cases, the villagers have purchased land from the residents of the adjoining villages. In such cases, the latter find it difficult to cultivate the land on the higher altitude of Upper Pedong. In some cases the sellers of land have left the village altogether and settled in some other place for greater advantage.

Subdivision of holdings

It is indeed a grim reality that holdings shrink in size as they change hands from father to son and ultimately become uneconomic from the business point of investment and financial or economic returns. It is interesting to examine the question as to how the ancestral land of 23 households has changed its size and area from the Table 45.

TABLE 45

CHANGE IN THE AREA OF LAND

Serial no.	Area (in acres)	Community of the landowner	Landed area in acres during lifetime of the father	Remarks
1	1.50	Rai	2.00	0.50 acres sold
2	2.00	Sikkimese Bhutia	6.00	Partition
3	2.50	Rai	5.00	Partition
4	2.50	Rai	5.00	Partition
5	3.00	Sikkimese Bhutia	6.00	3.00 acres sold
6	3.00	Lepcha	3.00	No change
7	3.44	Chhetri	10.32	Partition
8	3.70	Sikkimese Bhutia	7.40	Partition
9	3.70	Ditto	7.40	Partition
10	4.00	Rai	6.00	Partition
11	4.00	Kami	4.00	No change
12	4.20	Sikkimese Bhutia	2.16	Inherited the whole of the ancestral property and purchased 2.04 acres
13	5.00	Ditto	10.00	Partition
14	5.00	Ditto	10.00	Partition
15	6.00	Lepcha	6.00	No change
16	6.33	Rai	6.33	No change
17	6.40	Sikkimese Bhutia	4.00	Inherited the whole of the ancestral property and purchased 2.40 acres
18	6.88	Chhetri	10.32	Inherited two-thirds of the ancestral property
19	7.50	Sikkimese Bhutia	4.00	Inherited the whole of the ancestral property and purchased 3.50 acres

TABLE 45—*contd.*

Serial no.	Area (in acres)	Community of the landowner	Landed area in acres during lifetime of the father	Remarks
20	8.00	Newar	8.20	Inherited the whole of the ancestral property and sold 0.20 acres
21	10.50	Rai	7.14	Inherited 5.00 acres of ancestral property, 5.50 acres being the share of wife
22	11.25	Tamang	11.25	No change
23	29.00	Limbu	16.00	Inherited the whole of the ancestral property and purchased 13.00 acres

Heads of 23 households, out of 43 landowner households in the village, inherited some landed area from their fathers. In the case of eleven households of this class, the landed paternal property has been subdivided on succession from father to son, while in the remaining 12 cases, the size of the ancestral land has remained unaffected even after succession. The reason, why in 12 cases the ancestral land has not been subdivided at all is not one and the same for all the households. In eight families either the heads of households or some other members happen to be the sole heirs to their ancestral land. Three other families still live jointly with conjoint responsibilities of property, especially concerning land. In the case of one family, the other claimants to the ancestral land are since deceased.

On comparison of the total landed area of the household with that during the lifetime of the father of the present head of the houschold, the total landed area at present seems to have shrunk in size in the case of only 13 households. While in three cases shrinkage in the present landed area has resulted from disposal of a part of the paternal land by sale, the same shrinkage in area of land has consequenced from the subdivision of the paternal holdings on succession in the remaining ten households.

In five families in which the present landed area is bigger than that of the fathers of the heads of households, the accretion has been effected by addition of some land to the undivided paternal landed property by purchase. In another household, the wife who happens to be the only issue of her deceased father succeeded to her father's property and added to the patrimonial land of her husband to enlarge it in acreage. The size of the paternal landed area in five remaining households has been unchanged.

System of land-tenure

The Table 46 shows the system of land-tenure, as found in the village.

TABLE 46

LAND-TENURE

Nature of tenure	Total no. of households
Owner-cultivator	36
Owner-cultivator-*cum*-rentier	7
Sharecropper on *Pakhuria* system	27
Rentier-*cum*-share-cropper	1
Total	**71**

NOTE : The rentier household, a Lepcha landowner owning six acres of land in Sakyong, a neighbouring village, farmed out the entire landed area to a resident of the same village which he had left on account of a series of deaths of a number of members in succession in the household. On immigration to the present village as a landless agriculturist, the Lepcha household became a recipient of 1.55 acres of land from a Sikkimese Bhutia co-villager on *Pakhuria* system.—Editor

Owner-cultivator

Sole owners and proprietors of land; the owner-cultivators take part in cultivation directly and indirectly. They do not farm out any portion of land to others on crop-share

basis. The Table 47 shows the community-wise distribution of the owner-cultivators.

TABLE 47

OWNER-CULTIVATORS AND THEIR LAND

Community	Total no. of owner-cultivators	Total owned land under present cultivator (in acres)	Average area of owned land under present cultivator (in acres)
Sikkimese Bhutia	9	27.90	3.10
Dukpa	2	2.80	1.40
Tamang	4	6.30	1.58
Rai	6	23.30	3.88
Sherpa	6	14.12	2.35
Kami	4	7.89	1.99
Lepcha	1	1.50	1.50
Limbu	1	2.45	2.45
Chhetri	1	2.54	2.54
Bhujel	1	1.50	1.50
Yakha	1	1.90	1.90
Total	**36**	**92.25**	**2.58**

A comparison of the table with that showing distribution of ownership of land under cultivation will first bring out the absence of eight owners from the field, when the question of owned land under personal cultivation comes up for discussion. Thus, 7.75 acres of land owned by eight households, comprising two Sikkimese Bhutias, one Limbu, one Chhetri and one Bhujel, are outside the purview of personal cultivation, as the landowners do not cultivate their land themselves nor do they get it cultivated under personal supervision. Though the total area of land under personal cultivation assigns to the Rai a position only second to the Sikkimese Bhutias on the score of the average area of land per household the Rais rank first, closely followed by the Sikkimese Bhutias. The Limbus otherwise in an enviable position with an average area of 12.76 acres of owned cultivated land per household are not actually so, when seen in the context of average area of owned land under personal cultivation. Here, one Limbu stands apart with a poor average of 2.45 acres of owned land under personal cultivation because of the absence of another Limbu landowner with 24.02 acres of owned land from the field on account of his not being an exclusive owner-cultivator.

Owner-cultivator-cum-*rentier*

In this category of land-tenure are included the owners of land who have given out a portion of their land to others on crop-share basis, locally known as *Pakhuria*. There are seven owner-cultivator-*cum*-rentiers in the village. To this may be added another Lepcha household, also a rentier-*cum*-sharecropper. There are thus eight households which have farmed out the cultivated land to others on crop-share basis. The Table 48 would show the distribution of land of these eight households.

About 44.3 per cent of the total cultivable land owned by eight households have been farmed out to the sharecroppers. It is rather striking that the occupation of six of the eight households giving out their land to others on crop-share basis is cultivation. In the case of three of the six households the heads do not cultivate the land themselves, but get it cultivated by hired labour. The heads of the rest of the three households happen to be the only working members with none to assist them in cultivation. Hence, they have farmed out a portion of their land to sharecroppers.

It is a unique feature of the village that the households in giving out their land to others on crop-share basis have to allot to the sharecroppers in most cases a plot of homestead land also. It appears that 20 of the 21 sharecropper households have been allotted homestead land by their landowners.

In giving out land to the sharecroppers, the landowner households have not been guided solely by ethnic considerations. Thus, four sharecropper households comprising one Sikkimese Bhutia, one Rai, one Lepcha and one Limbu received land on crop-share from owners belonging to their own communities.

TABLE 48

OWNER-CULTIVATOR-*CUM*-RENTIER

Community of the land-owner household	Occupation of the head of the land-owner household	Total area of cultivated land (in acres) in ownership	No. of house holds to which land given on crop-share basis	Total area of cultivated land given on crop-share (in acres)	Area of land given out to a crop sharer		Community of the household receiving the land	Occupation of the household receiving land on crop-share	Place of residence of the household receiving the land on crop-share	Duration of share-cropping by the household in years	Reasons for farming out the land in entirety or in part to a crop-sharer
					Homestead (in acres)	Cultivated land (in acres)					
Sikkimese Bhutia	Cultivation	7.20	2	1.95	0.05	0.45	Sikkimese Bhutia	Carpenter		15	The head, an old retired army officer, being the only adult male in the family
					0.05	1.50	Lepcha	Do		6	
	Do	3.35	3	1.70	0.05	0.15	Dukpa	Other services (*Lama*)		10	The head, an old man of 70 years, has only his son-in-law to help him
					0.05	0.60	Rai	Road labourer		12	
					0.05	0.95	Kami	Do		8	
Tamang	Do	7.90	2	1.25	0.05	0.70	Chhetri	Do		½	The head, an old lady of 73 years, farms out a part of her land on crop-share basis and supervises cultivation of the rest
					0.05	0.55	Gurung	Tea-vendor		14	
Rai	Service	6.50	1	3.50	..	3.50	Rai	Cultivation	Newang (3 kilometres)	2	Head engaged in service and cultivates a part of his land in off-time
Lepcha	Carpenter	3.00	1	3.00	0.20	3.00	Lepcha	Do	Sakyong (3 kilometres)	6	After a series of deaths in the family the head left his ancestral home farming out his land
Limbu	Cultivation	23.07	8	13.50	0.05	0.40	Dukpa	Road labourer		1	A large part of the land (23.07 acres) under cultivation and only two adult males to cultivate
					0.05	0.50	Tamang	Mason		40	
					0.08	4.50	Do	Sharecropper		40	
					0.05	0.50	Do	Do		40	
					0.05	0.50	Do	Mason		40	
					0.05	0.25	Limbu	Road labourer		3	
					0.05	3.60	Sanyashi	Sharecropper		45	
					0.05	3.25	Do	Do		45	
Chhetri	Do	5.48	1	0.95	0.05	0.95	Limbu	Other services		½	Only one adult male
Newar	Do	7.15	3	2.35	0.05	0.45	Tamang	Road labourer		12	Do
					0.05	0.95	Do	Mason		¼	
					0.05	0.95	Do	Sharecropper		18	
Total	..	**63.65**	**21**	..	**1.18**	**28.20**	..	..	..	..	

NOTE : Place of residence of the sharecroppers resjding in Upper Pedong is not mentioned—Editor

Again, 19 sharecropper households live in Upper Pedong along with their landowners. Only two sharecropper households live outside the village. The residence of the overwhelming majority of the sharecroppers in the same village has been accomplished by the desire of the landowners that the sharecropper households should live close to them, so that the close contact with the sharecroppers may enable them to exercise effective control over them. Furthermore, 12 sharecropper households have been cultivating the land on crop-share basis for 10 years or more, while four households have been cultivating the land on crop-share basis for three years or more. In course of the last five years, as many as six households received some land on crop-share basis.

Sharecropper

Of the 87 households in the village, as many as 28 are sharecroppers. Of them again, 27 families are exclusively sharecroppers having no land of their own. But, one Lepcha sharecropper household owns a plot of land in his native village Sakyong; but he has given it to others on crop-share basis. It appears from the foregoing discussion that the main emphasis has been on the landowners subletting their land to sharecroppers. The Table 49 would clearly show the exact position of the sharecropper households *vis-a-vis* the landowner households of the village.

The majority of the sharecropper households in the village belong to the Tamang community with 26.6 per cent of the total area of the sharecropped land in their possession. The average area of sharecropped land is indeed very small for majority of the sharecropper households, the average area of land received on crop-share being less than 0.50 acre in the case of twelve sharecropper households. All the sharecropper households have received one holding each on crop-share basis. If 30 households have received 30 holdings owned by 12 households comprising six households of Upper Pedong and six others living outside, the indisputable conclusion not only leads to the fragmentation of landholdings but also throws an important light on how a small number of landowners holds sway over a larger number of landless households and thereby become an economically dominant power-group because of the effective utilisation of the potentialities and resources of a landowner for quite a long period in most cases. Even otherwise, the beneficiaries have gained some means of livelihood, however insignificant, because of the small size of the landholdings cultivated on crop-share basis. Besides, quite some persons have been elevated to the rank of cultivators from the nondescript economic status of day-labourers. It is significant that ethnic considerations have not influenced the landowner households to allot their holdings to the crop-sharers. Thus only in four, out of 30 dealings, the landowners have given land to persons of the same community, while in the remaining 26 cases, land for share-cropping has been allotted to persons of different communities.

Again, 13 sharecropper households have been sharecropping the land for more than 10 years, six households have enjoyed the privileges of a sharecropper for more than five years but less than ten years. Eleven sharecropper households have, however, received land on crop-share basis in course of the last five years.

Price

The price of land, so far as the present village is concerned, varies inversely with elevation. Pedong Bazar, the central area of Pedong *Khas Mahal* is situated just below the village under survey at an elevation of approximately 5000 feet. Hence, land for cultivation in the lower elevation of the village near Pedong Bazar is relatively more costly than at higher altitudes, first because of its greater fertility and secondly because of its nearness to Pedong Bazar. Currently the price of land in the lower altitude

varied between Rs.1500·00 *paise* to Rs.2500·00 *paise* per acre according to fertility of the land, while the price of an acre of land in higher altitudes (over 6000 feet) varied between Rs. 750·00 *paise* and Rs.1000·00 *paise*.

Livestock

Next to land, livestock provides an important resource for the economy of a village, especially dependent on agriculture. Quite some house-

TABLE 49

SHARE-CROPPERS AND SHARE-CROPPED LAND

Community of the sharecropper household	Area of cultivated land received on crop-share in acres	Community of the landowner from whom land received on crop-share	Distance of the residence of the owner from the present village in kilometeres	Occupation of the landowner from whom the land received on crop-share	No. of years for which the land received on crop-share
Sikkimese Bhutia	0.45	Sikkimese Bhutia		Cultivation	15
Dukpa	0.15	Do		Do	10
Do	0.40	Limbu		..	1
Do	0.50	Do		..	40
	1.00	Sikkimese Bhutia	3	Non-worker	3
	2.00	Rai	3	Teacher	8
Tamang	0.50	Limbu		Cultivation	40
Do	4.40	Do		Do	40
Do	0.50	Do		Do	40
Do	0.45	Newar		Do	12
Do	0.95	Do		Do	½
Do	0.95	Do		Do	18
Do	0.25	Sikkimese Bhutia	48	Govt. Service	3
Do	0.45	Do	Do	Do	10
Do	0.45	Do	Do	Do	22
Rai	0.60	Do		Cultivation	12
Do	0.45	Do	48	Govt. Service	½
Do	0.45	Chhetri	3	Cultivation	1
Sherpa	1.65	Not known	24	Teacher	4
Do	1.40	Sherpa	6	Plantation worker	6
Do	1.90	Do	6	Do	½
Kami	0.95	Sikkimese Bhutia		Cultivation	8
Lepcha	1.50	Do		Do	6
Limbu	0.25	Limbu		Do	3
Do	0.95	Chhetri		Do	½
Sanyashi	3.60	Limbu		Do	45
Do	3.25	Do		Do	45
Chhetri	0.70	Tamang		Do	½
Gurung	0.55	Do		Do	14
Do	1.90	Not known	24	Teacher	13
Total	**33.50**	Do	..	..	..

NOTE : Distance of the place of residence of the landowner from Upper Pedong is not stated, where the landowner is a resident of the village under survey—Editor

holds in the village own some livestock or other, as will be evident from the discussion following.

Milch cattle

Only 36 households explaining 41.4 per cent of the total households of Upper Pedong own 55 milch cattle. The Sikkimese Bhutia and the Sherpa cattle-owning households, together accounting for 44.4 per cent of the households owning milch cattle, have in their ownership 54.4 per cent of the total number of milch cattle. Owners of one milch cow and two milch cows respectively constitute 55.6 per cent and 36.1 per cent of the total number of milch cow-owner families. The Tamangs constitute 25.0 per cent of the houscholds each with one milch cow, whereas the Sikkimese Bhutias comprise 38.5 per cent of the households with two milch cows each. The Table 50 following will present the detailed data.

The position of the Sherpas, the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Rais and the Chhetris is on the whole satisfactory, as 88.9 per cent of the Sherpa households, 61.5 per cent of the Sikkimese Bhutia households, 75.0 per cent of the Chhetri households and 54.5 per cent of the Rai households possess at least one milch cow each. Contrarily, the Lepchas, the Sanyashis, the Kamis, the Dukpas and the Tamangs fare just the reverse.

Of the 36 households with milch cattle, 83.3 per cent sell either milk or milk products. The bulk of the milk is supplied to the members of the staff of the local Health Centre and the School, the police personnel in the Police Outpost and also to the households residing in Pedong Bazar. A kilogram of milk is found to sell at 0.50 *paise*. Some households also sell curd, butter and *Ghee*, prepared at home.

TABLE 50

MILCH CATTLE

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households possessing			Total no. of households with milch cows	Total no. of milch cows	No. of households selling milk or milk products	Quantity of milk sold per day (in kilograms)
		One milch cow	Two milch cows	Three milch cows				
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	2	5	1	8	15	7	10.500
Dukpa	5	..	1	..	1	2	1	3.000
Tamang	17	5	..	..	5	5	4	4.250
Rai	11	4	2	..	6	8	5	7.000
Sherpa	9	3	3	2	8	15	8	12.000
Kami	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	4	1	1	..	2	3	2	2.500
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	2	1	..	3	4	3	3.500
Gurung	3	1	..	..	1	1	..	..
Newar	2	1	..	..	1	1	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	1	1	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**20**	**13**	**3**	**36**	**55**	**30**	**42.750**

Butter is sold at Rs.8·00 *paise* per kilogram and *Ghee* at Rs.10·00 *paise* to Rs.11·00 *paise* per kilogram.

Draught cattle

The importance of draught bullocks in a village with people depending on agriculture lies in the motive-power provided by the animals for some of the agricultural operations, mainly ploughing. That 45 draught cattle in the village are owned by only 29.9 per cent of the households is explained by the fact that all the households even with the land under cultivation, not to speak of the landless share-croppers, do not have the animals supplying the driving motive power behind the plough or the harrow or any such agricultural implement in working which one may require supply of some extraneous power. Even among the households owning draught cattle, the distribution of the animal power is not equal, as 66.7 per cent of the total number of draught cattle are in the ownership of 57.8 per cent of the owner households.

The Table 51 will be elucidative about the distribution of draught cattle among the households.

The absence of an adequate number of draught cattle in all the households and particularly in the households of the cultivators or landed proprietors does not put up a *prima facie* case of agriculture as the mainstay of the village economy. But on consideration of the fact that paddy is not cultivated by the households even on a limited scale within the village and that reciprocal aid in agriculture is the customary practice of the people, one under stands why shortage of draught cattle does not pose any problem at all. The cultivation of maize, one of the most important crops in the list of agricultural produce in the village, requires one or at most two ploughings, for which draught

TABLE 51

DRAUGHT CATTLE

Community	No. of total households	Total no. of households owning draught bullocks	No. of households possessing			Total no. of draught bullocks
			One draught bullock	Two draught bullocks	Three draught bullocks	
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	2	1	1	..	3
Dukpa	5	5	..	1	..	2
Tamang	17	3	1	1	1	6
Rai	11	5	..	5	..	10
Sherpa	9	7	5	1	1	10
Kami	6	3	2	1	..	4
Lepcha	4	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	4	1	..	1	..	2
Sanyashi	4	2	..	2	..	4
Chhetri	4	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	3	1	..	1	..	2
Newar	2	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	1	.	2
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	.	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..		..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	.	..
Total	**87**	**26**	**9**	**15**		**45**

bullocks are needed. The necessity is met mostly by the draught bullocks in the village itself and partly by those of other segments of Pedong *Khas Mahal*. The Sherpas are numerically the most dominant group among the households of the village owning draught bullocks. The Rais, the Sherpas and the Tamangs together have the lion's share of the total number of draught bullocks in the ownership of all households of the village. Individually, however, a Tamang and a Sherpa have each three draught bullocks. Though 20 cultivating households

TABLE 52

DRAUGHT BULLOCK AND LAND UNDER CULTIVATION

Area of land in acres under cultivation	Number of households having			No. of households with no draught bullock	Total no. of draught bullocks	Total no. of households
	One draught bullock	Two draught bullocks	Three draught bullocks			
Upto 1	..	1	..	20	2	21
2	5	5	2	15	21	27
3	2	3	..	2	8	7
4	1	3	..	2	7	6
5	1	1	..	4	3	6
6	..	..	..	1	..	1
7	..	..	..	2	..	2
8	..	..	..	..	..	..
9	..	..	..	..	..	..
10 or more	..	2	..	..	4	2
Total	**9**	**15**	**2**	**46**	**45**	**72**

TABLE 53

CALVES AND COWS NOT GIVING MILK

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households owning calves and cows not giving milk	No. of households possessing				Total no. of cows/ calves
			One cow/ calf	Two cows/ calves	Three cows/ calves	Five cows/ calves	
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	10	3	5	2	..	19
Dukpa	5	2	..	1	1	..	5
Tamang	17	12	12	..	..	..	12
Rai	11	10	4	6	..	..	16
Sherpa	9	8	4	2	2	..	14
Kami	6	5	3	2	..	..	7
Lepcha	4	1	..	1	..	..	2
Limbu	4	4	3	..	..	1	8
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	3	2	1	..	..	4
Gurung	3	1	1	..	..	..	1
Newar	2	1	1	..	..	..	1
Bhujel	1	1	1	..	..	..	1
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**58**	**34**	**18**	**5**	**1**	**90**

own one draught bullock or more, only six of them (about 21.4 per cent of the share-cropper families) are share-croppers. But all the households owning draught bullock are landed, whether or not they are cultivators or rentiers.

It is indeed revealing, as founded in the Table 52, that all the landed households with some land under cultivation as owner-cultivators, crop-sharers or rentiers do not have any draught bullock. The land is ploughed by hired bullocks. Only 36.1 per cent of the households with land under cultivation have draught bullocks. None of the households with five to nine acres of land under cultivation has any draught bullock.

Calves and cows not giving milk

Calves and young cows, even though a temporary liability for the time being, are no doubt a resource of the future and an asset too. The Table 53 provides the details.

Pigs, goats and sheep

Besides the animals of the bovine species, pigs, goats and sheep also constitute important items of livestock in the village. The Table 54 will represent the pattern of their ownership and distribution.

Only 42.5 per cent of the total households of the village, represented by the Sikkimese Bhutia, the Dukpa, the Tamang, the Rai and the Sherpa families, mainly rear pigs. None of the communities with higher social ranking, namely the Brahmans, the Chhetris, the Sanyashis, the Gurungs, and the Mangars, rears pigs. Again, only 21.8 per cent of the households rear goats and only 3.4 per cent of the households of the village rear sheep.

Fowls

About 73.6 per cent of the households of Upper Pedong rear fowls. Each family has four fowls on an average. The single Brahman and three Chhetri (Hindu) households do not possess any fowl, a prohibited item to all of them. The Chhetri household, because he is a Christian convert, rears fowls. Table 55 shows the distribution of fowls by ownership among various communities of the village.

In addition, two households having six ducks consist of one Sherpa household with two ducks and one Chhetri household with four ducks.

Rearing of livestock in share

The practice of rearing livestock in share is prevalent in the village. One Limbu household has received a milch cow in share from a Sherpa household. Five heifers have been received in share by four households. One Limbu household has received one heifer from one Chhetri household, two Kamis have received two heifers from two Sikkimese Bhutia households and one Dukpa has received two heifers in all, one from a Limbu household and another from a Brahman. One Sherpa household has received in share a pair of draught bullocks from another household of his own community. Six goats have been given in share to one Rai household by one Chhetri household. One Limbu household has received four goats in share from a Sherpa household and one goat has been likewise received by one Dukpa household from another Dukpa. One Dukpa household has received a pig in share from a Limbu. If a milch cow is reared in share, the rearer gets the first calf for ever and the milk for the entire period till delivery of another calf on which contingency the milch cow is returned to the owner. The terms of rearing goats or pigs lay down that the rearer would get half the number of kids or piglets, born during the period of rearing. The practice of rearing livestock in share is resorted as a temporary measure during the illness or absence of any person owning the goats or pigs.

Market for livestock

To purchase or sell cattle, pigs or fowls, the villagers visit the *Hat* at Algarah. Besides, the

villagers also purchase cattle and pigs from the adjoining villages on prior information that some villager intends to sell some livestock. A milch cow with an yield of one kilogram of

TABLE 54

PIGS, GOATS AND SHEEP

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households owning pigs	No. of households owning		Total no. of pigs	No. of households owning goats	No. of households owning	
			One pig	Two pigs			One goat	Two goats
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	10	5	5	15	..	..	..
Dukpa	5	4	2	2	6	2	1	1
Tamang	17	4	3	1	5	4	1	3
Rai	11	6	4	2	8	2	..	1
Sherpa	9	5	5	..	5	2	..	..
Kami	6	2	2	..	2	1	..	1
Lepcha	4	3	3	..	3	1	..	..
Limbu	4	1	1	..	1	1	..	..
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	..	..	..	..	3	2	..
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..	2	..	2
Newar	2	1	1	..	1	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	1	..	1	1	..	1
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**37**	**27**	**10**	**47**	**19**	**4**	**9**

Community	No. of households owning			Total no. of goats	No. of households owning sheep	No. of households owning		Total no. of sheep
	Three goats	Six goats	Eight goats			One sheep	Three sheep	
Sikkimese Bhutia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Dukpa	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..
Tamang	..	..	..	7	1	1	..	1
Rai	..	1	..	8	1	..	1	3
Sherpa	..	1	1	14	1	1	..	1
Kami	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	1	..	..	3	..	..	..	..
Limbu	1	..	..	3	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	1	..	..	5	..	..	..	..
Gurung	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..
Newar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**3**	**2**	**1**	**51**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**5**

milk sells at a price ranging between Rs.200.00 *paise* to Rs.300.00*paise* on an average. A pair of draught bullocks is generally sold at a price of Rs.500.00 *paise*. A young pig fetches a handsome price varying between Rs.15.00 *paise* to Rs.100.00 *paise*.

TABLE 55

FOWLS

Community	Total no. of house holds	No. of house holds owning fowl	No. of households possessing						
			One fowl	Two fowls	Three fowls	Four fowls	Five fowls	Six fowls	Seven fowls
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	11	..	1	2	2	1	4	..
Dukpa	5	4	..	1	..	1	1	1	..
Tamang	17	15	5	2	1	..	2	..	2
Rai	11	8	..	3	..	..	1	2	1
Sherpa	9	8	..	1	1	2	..	2	..
Kami	6	4	..	1	..	..	2	..	..
Lepcha	4	3	..	1	1	1	..	..	..
Limbu	4	4	..	2	..	..	..	..	1
Sanyashi	4	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	3	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**64**	**7**	**13**	**6**	**7**	**7**	**10**	**4**

Community	No. of households possessing							Total no. of fowls
	Eight fowls	Twelve fowls	Thirteen fowls	Fourteen fowls	Fifteen fowls	Eighteen fowls	Twenty fowls	
Sikkimese Bhutia	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	57
Dukpa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17
Tamang	..	1	..	..	..	1	1	86
Rai	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	38
Sherpa	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	46
Kami	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	25
Lepcha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
Limbu	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	26
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Chhetri	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	14
Gurung	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Newar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Bhujel	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**2**	**2**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**335**

Veterinary health

For treatment of diseases of the cattle, the villagers avail themselves of the expert medical guidance at a small Veterinary Dispensary in the village supervised by a qualified Veterinary Field Assistant under the administrative control of a Veterinary Surgeon of the local Block Development Office at Algarah. The Veterinary Surgeon undertakes frequent visits to the Dispensary to treat only such urgent cases as are referred to him. The Dispensary, equipped with various surgical and hospital appliances and stuffed with modern medicines becomes an operation theatre for the ailing livestock meriting the application of the surgical knife to provide the surest remedy. To attend serious cases requiring an urgent attention of the expert, the Veterinary Surgeon mostly and the Veterinary Field Assistant sometimes tour the affected village and advise the affected households with the diseased livestock.

For treatment of minor diseases, however, herbal medicines known to the villagers are relied upon, especially by the Bhutias and the Lepchas.

During the period of survey a Sheep-Breeding Station was being constructed by the Department of Animal Husbandry, Government of West Bengal with a programme for cross-fertilising sheep of better breed and genus.

Labour

Next to land and livestock, human labour is another important constitutent of the economic resource of the village, apt to be useful to an economy dependent on cultivation.

Labour-force and working force

If persons in the working age-group of 15 to 59 constitute the potential labour-force and the actual working force is constituted by persons engaged in some productive economic pursuit or other, the Table 56 will present useful data on the potential labour-force of the village and the manner and pattern of its utilisation.

The ratio of the male working force to the potential labour-force of the same sex exceeds unity, because of the addition of child-labour and old workers to the working labour-force of the working age-group. In case of the females, the working force bears to the potential labour-force of the fair sex a ratio, far short of unity, because the rates of participation of the male and female labour in productive economic pursuits are widely disparate. To the actual working force the total male population contributes 52.2 per cent of the working labour, 56.9 per cent of the workers of the working age-group being males.

On a resume, it is observed that among the Bhutias, on account of social prestige and

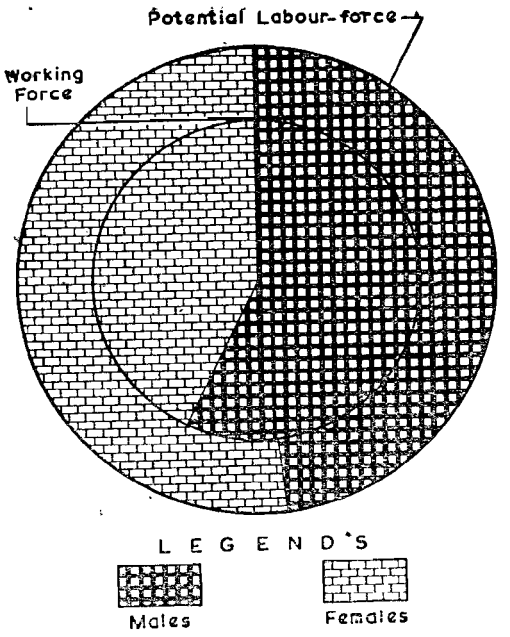
TABLE 56

POTENTIAL LABOUR-FORCE AND WORKING FORCE

	Males		Females		Total	
Category	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Potential labour-force	104	48.1	112	51.9	216	100.0
Working force	107(95)	57.5	79(72)	42.5	186(167)	100.0
Utilisation of the labour potential	..	102.9(81.3)	..	70.5(91.1)	..	86.1(77.3)

Note : Where there is any figure within bracket beside another figure, the figure within the bracket indicates the working force in the working age-group and that without bracket indicates the working force composed of workers in the working age-group and also child-labour—Editor.

UTILISATION OF POTENTIAL LABOUR



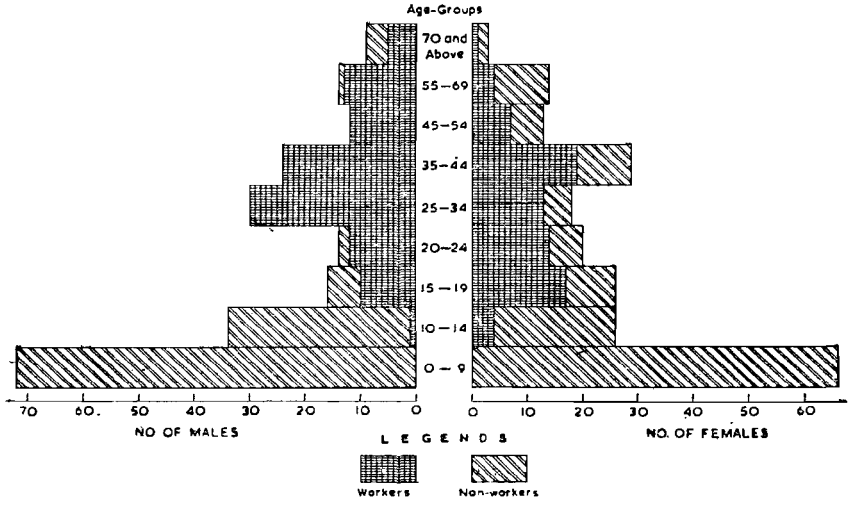
esteem coupled with socio-economic security, the Sikkimese Bhutia women are not forced by necessity to enrol themselves as members of the working force. Again, among the Chhetris and the Sanyashis, the participation-rate of the females in the working force is far low, compared to that of others among the rest of the Nepali communities. Here also social status acts as an inhibition.

Classification of workers and non-workers

According to the Standard Industrial Classification adopted in 1961 Census to categorise the broad sector of productive economic activities of the working people, the population of the village has been classified as workers and non-workers. A person engaged in some productive economic activity and pursuing an occupation but not solely helping in household duties has been treated as a worker and any person who is not a worker has been categorised as a non-worker. The Table 57 relates to the economic status of the villagers of Upper Pedong.

More than 50.0 per cent of the working force of the village belongs to the age-group (15-34) and 89.8 per cent of the working population belongs to the age-group (15-59). Infants and children in the age-group (0-14) and aged persons of 60 years and above do not figure significantly as workers. The fact that only 2.7 per cent of the workers come from the age-group (0-14) is suggestive of the employment of child-labour, even though on a limited scale.

WORKERS AND NON-WORKERS



Even though the children are spared the sweaty toil of a full-time worker earning a livelihood, the old men do not appear to be as contented a lot as the children, for 7.5 per cent of the workers belong to the age-group of 60 years and above, 11 workers being aged even 70 years old. Even if so, workers of the old age-group are not altogether deprived of the milk of human kindness, as they are invariably found to be entrusted with light work under the supervision of not-too-hard taskmasters.

Of the males in the age-group (15-34), 86.7 per cent are workers and 68.9 per cent of the females in the same age-group also swell the ranks of the working class. About 77.4 per cent of the total population in the age-group (15-34) being workers, very few children get the tender care and affection of their mothers and sisters or other female relations.

Of the total population in the village, workers (47.3 per cent) are outnumbered by non-workers (57.7 per cent). Of the total male population, 47.5 per cent are workers, female non-workers constituting 63.3 per cent of the total female population.

Children belonging to the age-group (0-14) account for about 75.9 per cent of the non-workers. About 19.5 per cent of the non-workers belong to the working age-group (15-59). Male non-workers of the working age-group (15-59) constituting 8.6 per cent of the male population of the same age-group, 13 male non-workers of the working age-group remain as idle labour with the potential resources of their human

TABLE 57

ECONOMIC STATUS (AGE-GROUP AND SEX WISE)

Age group	Worker				Non-worker				Total population			
	Males	Females	Total	Percentage	Males	Females	Total	Percentage	Males	Females	Total	Percentage
0—4	..	..	..	..	33	30	63	24.8	33	30	63	13.3
5—9	..	..	..	..	39	36	75	29.5	39	36	75	17.1
10—14	1	4	5	2.7	33	22	55	21.6	34	26	60	14.6
Total	**1**	**4**	**5**	**2.7**	**105**	**88**	**193**	**75.9**	**106**	**92**	**198**	**45.0**
15—19	10	17	27	14.5	6	9	15	5.9	16	26	42	9.6
20—24	12	14	26	14.0	2	6	8	3.1	14	20	34	7.7
25—29	16	8	24	12.9	..	2	2	0.8	16	10	26	5.9
30—34	14	5	19	10.2	..	3	3	1.2	14	8	22	5.0
Total	**52**	**44**	**96**	**51.6**	**8**	**20**	**28**	**11.0**	**60**	**64**	**124**	**28.2**
35—39	13	15	28	15.1	..	5	5	2.0	13	20	33	7.5
40—44	11	4	15	8.1	..	5	5	2.0	11	9	20	4.5
45—49	7	4	11	5.9	..	3	3	1.2	7	7	14	3.2
50—54	5	3	8	4.3	..	3	3	1.2	5	6	11	2.5
55—59	7	2	9	4.8	1	4	5	2.0	8	6	14	3.2
Total	**43**	**28**	**71**	**38.2**	**1**	**20**	**21**	**8.4**	**44**	**48**	**92**	**20.9**
60—64	5	1	6	3.2	..	4	4	1.6	5	5	10	2.3
65—69	1	1	2	1.1	..	2	2	0.8	1	3	4	0.9
70 and above	5	1	6	3.2	4	2	6	2.3	9	3	12	2.7
Total	**11**	**3**	**14**	**7.5**	**4**	**8**	**12**	**4.7**	**15**	**11**	**26**	**5.9**
Grand Total	**107**	**79**	**186**	**100.0**	**118**	**136**	**254**	**100.0**	**225**	**215**	**440**	**100.0**

TABLE 58

WORKERS AND NON-WORKERS

Community	Age-group	Males			Females			Total		
		Worker	Non-worker	Total	Worker	Non-worker	Total	Worker	Non-worker	Total
Bhutia (including the Sikkimese and the Dukpas)	0—14	..	18	18	..	14	14	..	32	32
	15—34	9	2	11	4	6	10	13	8	21
	35—59	12	..	12	6	7	13	18	7	25
	60 above	3	1	4	..	2	2	3	3	6
	Total	**24**	**21**	**45**	**10**	**29**	**39**	**34**	**50**	**84**
	Percentage	*53.3*	*46.7*	*100.00*	*25.6*	*74.4*	*100.00*	*40.5*	*59.5*	*100.00*
Tamang	0—14	..	20	20	..	13	13	..	33	33
	15—34	9	1	10	10	3	13	19	4	23
	35—59	7	1	8	6	5	11	13	6	19
	60 above	2	..	2	1	1	2	3	1	4
	Total	**18**	**22**	**40**	**17**	**22**	**39**	**35**	**44**	**79**
	Percentage	*45.0*	*55.0*	*100.00*	*43.6*	*56.4*	*100.00*	*44.3*	*55.7*	*100.00*
Rai	0—14	..	13	13	1	14	15	1	27	28
	15—34	13	..	13	17	2	19	30	2	32
	35—59	4	..	4	4	..	4	8	..	8
	60 above	..	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	3
	Total	**17**	**14**	**31**	**23**	**17**	**40**	**40**	**31**	**71**
	Percentage	*54.8*	*45.2*	*100.00*	*57.5*	*42.5*	*100.00*	*56.3*	*43.7*	*100.00*
Sherpa	0—14	1	18	19	2	9	11	3	27	30
	15—34	10	1	11	5	..	5	15	1	16
	35—59	3	..	3	5	..	5	8	..	8
	60 above	2	..	2	1	1	2	3	1	4
	Total	**16**	**19**	**35**	**13**	**10**	**23**	**29**	**29**	**58**
	Percentage	*45.7*	*54.3*	*100.00*	*56.5*	*43.5*	*100.00*	*50.0*	*50.0*	*100.00*
Kami	0—14	..	9	9	..	6	6	..	15	15
	15—34	3	1	4	2	..	2	5	1	6
	35—59	5	..	5	1	2	3	6	2	8
	60 above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	**8**	**10**	**18**	**3**	**8**	**11**	**11**	**18**	**29**
	Percentage	*44.4*	*55.6*	*100.00*	*27.3*	*72.7*	*100.00*	*37.9*	*62.1*	*100.00*
Lepcha	0—14	..	5	5	..	7	7	..	12	12
	15—34	1	3	4	2	1	3	3	4	7
	35—59	1	..	1	..	2	2	1	2	3
	60 above	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	1
	Total	**3**	**8**	**11**	**2**	**10**	**12**	**5**	**18**	**23**
	Percentage	*27.3*	*72.7*	*100.00*	*16.7*	*83.3*	*100.00*	*27.8*	*72.2*	*100.00*
Limbu	0—14	..	8	8	..	6	6	..	14	14
	15—34	3	..	3	3	2	5	6	2	8
	35—59	2	..	2	..	1	1	2	1	3
	60 above	1	1	2	..	2	2	1	3	4
	Total	**6**	**9**	**15**	**3**	**11**	**14**	**9**	**20**	**29**
	Percentage	*40.0*	*60.0*	*100.00*	*21.4*	*78.6*	*100.00*	*31.0*	*69.0*	*100.00*
Sanyashi	0—14	..	1	1	..	4	4	..	5	5
	15—34	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	1	1
	35—59	2	..	2	1	1	2	3	1	4
	60 above	1	..	1	..	1	1	1	1	2
	Total	**3**	**1**	**4**	**1**	**7**	**8**	**4**	**8**	**12**
	Percentage	*75.0*	*25.0*	*100.00*	*12.5*	*87.5*	*100.00*	*33.3*	*66.7*	*100.00*

TABLE 58—*contd.*

Community	Age-group	Males			Females			Total		
		Worker	Non-worker	Total	Worker	Non-worker	Total	Worker	Non-worker	Total
Chhetri	0—14	..	7	7	..	6	6	..	13	13
	15—34	..	..	..	..	2	2	..	2	2
	35—59	3	..	3	1	1	2	4	1	5
	60 above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	**3**	**7**	**10**	**1**	**9**	**10**	**4**	**16**	**20**
	Percentage	*30.0*	*70.0*	*100.00*	*10.0*	*90.0*	*100.00*	*20.0*	*80.0*	*100.00*
Gurung	0—14	..	3	3	1	1	2	1	4	5
	15—34	1	..	1	..	1	1	1	1	2
	35—59	1	..	1	2	..	2	1	2	3
	60 above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	**2**	**3**	**5**	**3**	**2**	**5**	**3**	**7**	**10**
	Percentage	*40.0*	*60.0*	*100.00*	*60.0*	*40.0*	*100.00*	*30.0*	*70.0*	*100.00*
Newar	0—14	..	1	1	..	1	1	..	2	2
	15—34	2	..	2	..	..	..	2	..	2
	35—59	..	..	..	1	1	2	..	2	2
	60 above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	**2**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**4**	**6**
	Percentage	*66.7*	*33.3*	*100.00*	*33.3*	*66.7*	*100.00*	*33.3*	*66.7*	*100.00*
Bhujel	0—14	..	1	1	..	3	3	..	4	4
	15—34	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	1	1
	35—59	1	..	1	1	..	1	2	..	2
	60 above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**4**	**5**	**2**	**5**	**7**
	Percentage	*50.0*	*50.0*	*100.00*	*20.0*	*80.0*	*100.00*	*28.6*	*71.4*	*100.00*
Mangar	0—14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	15—34	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	35—59	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60 above	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	1
	Total	**1**	..	**1**	..	..	..	**1**	..	**1**
	Percentage	*100.00*	..	*100.00*	..	..	..	*100.00*	..	*100.00*
Yakha	0—14	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	15—34	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	35—59	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	1
	60 above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	**1**	..	**1**	..	..	..	**1**	..	**1**
	Percentage	*100.00*	..	*100.00*	..	..	..	*100.00*	..	*100.00*
Brahmin	0—14	..	..	..	..	2	2	..	2	2
	15—34	1	..	1	..	1	1	1	1	2
	35—59	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60 above	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	1
	Total	**1**	**1**	**2**	..	**3**	**3**	**1**	**4**	**5**
	Percentage	*50.0*	*50.0*	*100.00*	..	*100.00*	*100.00*	*20.0*	*80.0*	*100.00*
Unspecified	0—14	..	..	..	..	3	3	..	3	3
	15—34	1	..	1	..	1	1	1	1	2
	35—59	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60 above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	**1**	..	**1**	..	**4**	**4**	**1**	**4**	**5**
	Percentage	*100.00*	..	*100.00*	..	*100.00*	*100.00*	*20.0*	*80.0*	*100.00*

labour remaining unutilised. From the point of participation of womenfolk in the working force it is observed that 42.5 per cent of the total workers are females. Again 89.1 per cent of the menfolk above 14 years of age are adult workers, corresponding figure for the working females being 61.0 per cent. All this is a pointer that in the economic activity the females as co-partners of the males have fared well but as competitors have yet to run a long race to catch up with the working menfolk in pace. The Table 58 dissects the participation-rate of both the sexes in the economic activities further, according to the communities of the villagers with age-group also as the focus.

Yet, the pace of the females among some of the communities of Upper Pedong cannot but attain for them a status of equality with the working male partners and one has to accept it as an impressive record, well attested by observed facts and analysed figures. While 45.0 per cent of the Tamang and 45.7 per cent of the Sherpa males are workers. 43.6 per cent of the Tamang females and 56.5 per cent of the Sherpa females are reciprocally effective working partners of the males in their economic life. The Sherpa women, like their Rai compatriots, have beaten the record of the males pertaining to participation-rate. The achievment is no mean feat and is a very strong point to suggest the budding aspiration of the women of the village in making a leap forward in the world of work.

Occupational structure

Occupation of a person indicates a particular type of economic activity or the specific job of the person for major part of the year. Yet the classification of 186 workers of the village according to their specific occupations does not turn to be an easy task, as majority of the workers of the village are engaged in several economic activities, instead of a single pursuit. Sixty five persons are simultaneously engaged in economic activities like day-labour, agricultural labour, share-cropping and collection of fuel from the forest. As in a number of cases no single occupation is returned to specify the main or the primary occupation of an individual, the onus has been placed on the respondent to return the primary occupation of the workers in a household.

Primary occupation

The Table 59 relates to the primary occupation of the male and the female workers of the village Upper Pedong. The picture of balanced distribution of workers in the agricultural and non-agricultural sector emerges. Thus, 50.54 per cent of the workers are engaged in agricultural sector, while the rest have non-agricultural pursuits. Owner, cultivators constitute the largest single group of workers in the village followed by daily wage-earner labourers employed in construction and repair of roads. Agricultural and road-building activities provide the workers the major sources of livelihood. An overall majority of the workers are engaged in those two pursuits. Though any sector of work other than agriculture and construction seems to play a rather insignificant role in the economy of the village, other activities pursued by a numerical minority appear to assume an importance of their own against the perspective of a tiny hill village in northernmost border of West Bengal and 25 kilometres away from the nearest town. It is a patent fact that occupations here are quite diverse representing all but one Industrial Classification of the workers.

That the females are equal partners of the males is exemplified even by the owner-cultivators, who represent more or less equally both the sexes. It appears that so far as owner-cultivators are concerned, the males and the females are evenly balanced; in the case of occupation of the share-croppers, the females outnumber the males.

In the Industrial Category of construction, however, the balance is tilted in favour of the male workers. If occupational details are

TABLE 59

WORKERS AND OCCUPATION

Industrial category	Occupation	No. of males in the age-group					No. of females in the age-group					No. of persons in the age-group					Per-centage
		0-14	15-34	35-59	60+	Total	0-14	15-34	35-59	60+	Total	0-14	15-34	35-59	60+	Total	
Cultivation	Owner-cultivator	..	13	19	4	36	..	21	12	3	36	..	34	31	7	72	38.71
	Sharecropper	..	2	3	1	6	1	6	4	..	11	1	8	7	1	17	9.14
Agricultural labourer	Agricultural labourer	..	1	1	..	2	..	..	3	..	3	..	1	4	..	5	2.69
Total of agricultural workers		..	*16*	*23*	*5*	*44*	*1*	*27*	*19*	*3*	*50*	*1*	*43*	*42*	*8*	*94*	*50.54*
Livestock, forestry and plantation	Labourer engaged in Sheep Breeding Station	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	0.54
	Cinchona plantation labourer	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	1	0.54
	Forest labourer	..	..	1	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	1.07
	Woodcutter-*cum*-seller	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	0.54
Household industry	Distiller-*cum*-seller of liquor	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	1	0.54
Manufacturing other than household industry	Carpenter	..	2	1	2	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	2	5	2.69
Construction	Road labourer	1	21	10	..	32	3	16	6	..	25	4	37	16	..	57	30.65
	Labour supervisor *(Baider)*	..	2	1	1	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	1	4	2.15
	Contractor (Road-construction)	..	2	..	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	1	3	1.61
	Khalasi	..	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	2	1.07
	Mason	..	2	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	..	3	1.61
Trade and commerce	Vendor of tea	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	1	0.54
	Hawker of parched rice	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	0.54
Other services	School teacher	..	2	1	..	3	..	..	1	..	1	..	2	2	..	4	2.15
	General Duty Assistant in a Health Centre	..	1	2	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	3	1.61
	Priest	..	1	2	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	3	1.61
Total of non-agricultural workers		*1*	*36*	*20*	*6*	*63*	*3*	*17*	*9*	..	*29*	*4*	*53*	*29*	*6*	*92*	*49.46*
Grand total		**1**	**52**	**43**	**11**	**107**	**4**	**44**	**28**	**3**	**79**	**5**	**96**	**71**	**14**	**186**	**100.00**

TABLE 60

PRIMARY OCCUPATION

Community	Total no. of house-holds	Total no. of workers	Owner culti-vator	Share-cropper	Agri-cultural labour	Labour in Sheep Breed-ing Station	Plan-tation labour	Forest labour	Wood-cutter-*cum*-seller	Manu-fac-turer-*cum*-seller of liquor
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	25	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Dukpa	5	9	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	17	35	6	5	2	..	..	..	..	..
Rai	11	40	24	4	..	1	..	..	..	..
Sherpa	9	29	10	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Kami	6	11	5	1	1	..	..	1	..	..
Lepcha	4	5	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	4	9	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	4	4	..	2	1	..	..	..	1	..
Chhetri	4	4	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	3	5	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Yakha	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**186**	**72**	**17**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**

Community	Car-penter	Road labour	Lab-our super-visor	Road con-tractor	*Khalasi*	Mason	Vendor of tea	Hawker of parched rice	School teacher	General Duty Assis-tant in Health Centre	Priest
Sikkimese Bhutia	3	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
Dukpa	..	4	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Tamang	..	14	2	3	..	3	..	..	..	..	..
Rai	..	9	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Sherpa	..	16	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Limbu	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Newar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..
Bhujel	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Total	**5**	**57**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**4**	**3**	**3**

analysed, the reverse trend of a greater proportion of the male workers engaged in this economic sector is observed. This is not tinted with any bias or prejudice against the fair sex. For reasons more technical than sociological or psychological, activities connected with construction, maintenance and repair of roads attract unskilled persons from both the male and the female labour-force of the village for employment on daily wage-rate. But, certain other jobs in constructional work related to roads require either technical or supervisory skill, not found among the village women according to the requirement of the employers for skilled hands. Therefore, the males fill the vacuum without any competition from the fair sex.

It might be interesting if the occupational structure of the various communities is described at some length. The Table 60 presents the details.

Secondary occupation

One single occupation is returned by a large number of workers but not by all. About 34.9 per cent of the workers also pursue secondary occupations in addition to their primary occupation to earn some extra money subsidarily to supplement their income from the primary occupations. The Table 61 shows the secondary occupations of some of the workers in addition to their primary occupations.

TABLE 61

SECONDARY OCCUPATION

Primary occupation	Total no. of workers	No. of workers with secondary occupation	No. of workers with secondary occupation in					
			Owner cultivation	Share-cropping	Agricultural labour	Carpentry	Labour in road construction	Masonry
Owner-cultivator	72	22	..	..	..	1	20	1
Sharecropper	17	5	..	..	..	..	5	..
Agricultural labour	5	4	..	2	..	..	2	..
Labour in Sheep-Breeding Station	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plantation labour	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Forest labour	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wood-cutter-*cum*-seller	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Manufacturer-*cum*-seller of liquor	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Carpenter	5	4	..	2	2	..	..	..
Road labour	57	20	5	10	5	..	..	..
Labour supervisor	4	3	2	..	..	1	..	..
Road-contractor	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Khalasi	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mason	3	3	..	3	..	..	..	..
Vendor of tea	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Hawker of parched rice	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
School teacher	4	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
General Duty Assistant (Health Centre)	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Priest	3	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Total	**186**	**65**	**9**	**18**	**7**	**2**	**28**	**1**

It is interesting to note that 30.0 per cent of the workers with their primary occupations in cultivation and 33.0 per cent of the workers with primary occupations in the agricultural sector and 37.0 per cent of the workers with primary occupations in the non-agricultural sector pursue secondary occupations subsidiary to their primary means of livelihood. Of the workers with secondary occupations, 41.5 per cent are connected with cultivation, 52.3 per cent are secondarily connected with agricultural sector and 47.7 per cent work in non-agricultural sectors. Again, 44.6 per cent of the workers with subsidiary occupations earn their subsidiary income from activities related to construction and 93.5 per cent of the workers with subsidiary occupation in non-agricultural sector earn their secondary income from constructional work. The sex-ratio of 250 females per thousand males among the workers with secondary occupations establish that 16.5 per cent of the female workers and 48.5 per cent of the male workers pursue secondary occupations. Obviously, the participation-rate of the males in the pursuit of secondary occupations is higher than that of females, because of the latter's preoccupation with their domestic work.

While none of the workers in the spheres of forestry or plantation has any secondary occupation, 66.7 per cent of the workers connected with manufacturing household industries, 37.7 per cent of the workers in constructional jobs, cent per cent traders and 20.0 per cent of the workers in other services including service-holders, professionals and white-collar job-holders have secondary callings in addition to their primary work. It is further observed that while 84.6 per cent of the workers with secondary occupations but primarily associated with constructional activities look to agricultural sector for secondary employment, 90.3 per cent of the workers with secondary occupation but primarily engaged in the agricultural sector find constructional activities on roads as a potential secondary source of remunerative employment. Again, of the workers having subsidiary occupations, about 43.1 per cent are road-labourers and about 27.7 per cent are sharecroppers.

Though the economy of the village and for that matter, the occupational structure of the workers are not very much diversified, one should not miss the fact that agricultural sector is not the only prop for the village-economy. The employment opportunities, though not very large, are at least assured in constructional work. The agricultural unemployment does not distress the workers of Upper Pedong who have moorings in the agricultural sector. In the lean months of agricultural activities the villagers, instead of resigning hopelessly to a vacant future and a state of frustrating indolence and inaction, rush as wage-earners to the roads being built or repaired. Thus a good number of workers in the village is dependent partly on agriculture and partly on construction for their livelihood. In such a context, agriculture and construction, playing complimentary roles in the village-economy, set the village labour-force on a reversible trafficking track. The programme and season of work for the two sectors are also found to be phased to suit each other's convenience and matched by a spirit of reciprocity. Thus in the monsoons when agricultural activities reach a feverish pitch, constructional activities are temporarily suspended to enable the workers to go back to the fields. After sowing and transplantation are over towards the end of the monsoons, road-building work resumes to attain its crescendo only after harvesting.

Mobility of workers from their traditional occupation

Any change in the occupation of a community, characterising its traditional profession or pursuit, is a big leap forward though, most communities of the village do not know exactly what occupation is traditional for the community. The Rais, the Limbus, the Yakhas, the

Tamangs, the Sherpas, the Gurungs, the Mangars and the Chhetris refer somewhat casually to cultivation as their traditional occupation. As none of the communities has ceased to pursue cultivation, there has not been any deviation from the traditional occupation.

Again, the Lepchas and the Bhutias believe shifting cultivation to once have been their traditional occupation.

Occupational mobility

To delineate the economic profile of Upper Pedong, it is as much necessary to know the changes in the occupational structure of the villagers as it is to know their occupations. It will be important to bear in mind that any change in the economy of the village cannot be read and explained without reference to the changes in the occupational pattern. Any change, as such, may be interpreted as both a cause and an effect. While an idea of the nature of occupational changes gives an insight into the shifts in emphasis of individual households or communities from one occupation to another because of personal factors or economic motivations, it also enables one to know the different factors influencing the village-economy by enrichment or denudation, by entry of extraneous money from outside or flight of inside capital to places outside. Besides, urbanisation, industrialisation and improved communications being very important agencies of change, it is no less significant to analyse the mobility of occupation in the light of factors potential enough to activate the changing process. One's occupation is also a good indicator of one's position in the village-society and of the people's scale of values in finding out the exact yardstick to assign particular households, particular ranks in the stratified social structure of the village. Mobility of occupation has been studied with reference to the occupations traditionally followed by the communities before immigration here and also with reference to the occupations followed by households for several generations past. But here again the question has been one of technological change rather than an occupational shift, if one takes into account the fact that the two communities now pursue terraced cultivation.

In Upper Pedong the Kamis or the Viswakarmas are a functional community, blacksmithy being the traditional occupation of the artisan caste. But, none of the six Kami households practises the traditional occupation of blacksmithy. The heads of two households could not learn their traditional occupation from their blacksmith fathers on account of the latter's premature death. In two other households blacksmithy is said to have been given up after the death of the grandfathers of the two heads of households. The cessation prompted by economic factors and unprofitability of the craft in Nepal are adduced as the guiding factors. But when questioned why the two households did not take up the craft after immigration to the present village, the two respondent heads admitted their total ignorance of the techniques of the craft. The two other remaining households are said to have given up the craft two generations ago for reasons not known to the present heads. It thus appears that agriculture is being pursued by the cultivating households of communities said to be traditionally associated with agriculture to earn their livelihood. In no case, inducement for any change has come from any extraneous source. For the artisan Kamis, however, economic factors explain the shift in only two cases but that too happened long ago.

Mobility of workers from the occupation of the father

The mobility of occupation with reference to the father's occupation has been analysed first on the basis of the occupations of the heads of households and then on the basis of the occupations of the other working members in the family.

The study of occupational shifts has the serious limitation in so far as it is based on the occupations pursued by the persons at the time of investigation in the field. The persons retired from service pose special problems, as some of them are found engaged in altogether different occupations. The second limitation is that the comparison being made with reference to the primary occupation of the workers, there are numerous marginal cases where subsidiary occupations are no less important than the primary ones.

TABLE 62

FATHER'S OCCUPATION *VIS-A-VIS* OCCUPATION OF THE HEAD

Industrial category	Occupation	No. of heads of households in each occupation	No. of heads of households with fathers engaged in: Cultivation: Owner-cultivator	Cultivation: Share cropper	Cultivation: Agricultural labourer	Livestock, forestry & plantation: Plantation labourer	Livestock, forestry & plantation: Forest labourer	Manufacturing: Carpenter	Manufacturing: Black smithy	Construction: Labour supervisor	Construction: Contractor of road construction	Construction: Masonry
Cultivator	Owner-cultivator	31	12	2	..	3	2	..	2	1	..	..
	Sharecropper	6	..	2	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Agricultural labour	Agricultural labour	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Livestock, forestry and plantation	Labourer engaged in Sheep Breeding Station	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Forest labour	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Woodcutter	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Manufacturing other than household industry	Carpenter	3	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Construction	Road labourer	18	2	1	4	3	2	..	..	..	..	2
	Labour supervisor	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
	Contractor of road construction	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
	Khalasi	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Mason	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Trade and commerce	Tea-seller	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	Hawkr of rice and parched rice	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other services	Teacher	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	General Duty Assistant (Health Centre)	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Priest	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total		**83**	**18**	**5**	**7**	**7**	**5**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**6**

TABLE 62—*contd.*

Industrial category	No. of heads of households with fathers engaged in												
	Trade and commerce	Other services											
	Trade of pony	Day-labour	Domestic service	Singer	Priesthood	Service in army	Service in police	Teaching	Hospital dressing	Cook in hospital	Pharmacist	Trade Registrar	Non-worker
Cultivator	1	1	..	..	1	2	2	1	..	..	..	1	..
	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Agricultural labour	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Livestock, forestry and plantation	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Manufacturing other than household industry	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Construction	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Trade and commerce	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other services	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..
Total	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	1	**8**	**1**	**1**	**4**	**4**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**1**

Note : The table above deals with heads of 83, out of 87 households, as the remaining four are non-workers.—Editor.

As it appears, 23 heads of households constituting 27.7 per cent of the 83 heads of households have stepped into their father's shoes in the pursuit of their occupations. In other words, sons of 12 cultivators, two share-croppers, one agricultural labourer, one carpenter, one contractor of road-construction, three masons and three priests have shown some persistence in adhering to their paternal avocations. The spirit of persistence is most conspicuous in the non-agricultural sector wherein 70.5 per cent of the heads of households are still following the pursuits of their fathers, whose occupations were related to the non-agricultural sector.

To put two and two together, only 29.5 per cent of the present heads of households, now engaged in the non-agricultural sectors, have broken off the agricultural callings of their fathers. Of the heads of households working in the agricultural sector, 43.6 per cent are still following the agricultural pursuits of their fathers, whereas 56.4 per cent have severed their ties with the non-agricultural occupations of their fathers in order to work in the agricultural sector. On a resume, it becomes evident that the natural swing is towards the agricultural sphere inasmuch as a large proportion of heads of households has shown their inclination more towards agriculture than towards non-agricultural pursuits in sharp contrast to their fathers.

On further enquiry into the occupational details of the present heads of households, the probe yields interesting results. Of the heads of 30 households whose fathers were engaged in the agricultural sector, only 56.7 per cent are still following the agricultural occupations of their fathers. As a result of the cessation of agricultural activities by the heads of 13 households, the sons of six owner-cultivators have either lost their land or dissociated themselves from the onerous exertions of the owner-cultivator, son of one share-cropper has become a road-labourer on fixed wage and of the sons of six agricultural labourers, five have opted to join the wage-earning labour-troupe in forestry and road-construction and one has changed into a petty trader. While none of the twelve heads of households, whose fathers were engaged in activities associated with livestock, forestry and plantation, has maintained any vestige of their fathers' occupations, 58.3 per cent have switched over to agriculture either as owner-cultivators or as share-croppers, the rest having joined the labour-force, being employed in the construction of roads.

Of the heads of three households, fathers of whom were artisans, only one carpenter has not budged an inch from his father's profession. But, sons of two blacksmiths have become owner-cultivators.

From construction which has been the broad sphere of occupation of the fathers of ten heads of households the shift has been the least marked. Heads of eight households have stuck to constructional activities of their fathers, though the heads of four families have changed the specific occupation. Of the heads of two households who have changed their fathers' occupation, one has become an owner-cultivator and another a petty trader. Son of a trader who has become an owner-cultivator does not merit any special treatment.

It thus appears that of the 31 heads of households who are now owner-cultivators, about 38.7 per cent have stuck to the occupations of their fathers, while the remaining 61.3 per cent are new entrants in the field of cultivation. Of the six heads working as share-croppers, two-thirds have not followed the avocations of their fathers. The occupations of 24 heads of households comprising 18 road-labourers, three teachers and the three General Duty Assistants in the Health Centre are different from those of their fathers. But, three priests, however, pursued the occupations of their fathers.

An analysis of the occupations of the fathers of the heads of households reveals that the sons of two-thirds of the owner-cultivators have retained their paternal occupations, the rest having already shifted from cultivation. The sons of a couple of sharecroppers have improved their status from sharecroppers to owner-cultivators, while those of three others have left share-cropping altogether. It is remarkable that sons of the majority of the agricultural labourers have switched over to other economic pursuits. The sons of all the plantation and forest labourers, have ceased to pursue their paternal occupations. About half of them are now owner-cultivators and

the other half have changed over to road-building activities in the capacity of road-labourers. The son of a carpenter has taken up his hereditary traditional occupation, but the sons of two blacksmiths have given up the occupation of their fathers. The son of a labour-supervisor has taken up cultivation, while the sons of two road-contractors have now turned supervisors of labour. Sons of three masons have taken up their fathers' trade, but the sons of three others have left it. It is worthy of notice that sons of all the eight day-labourers have taken up occupations different from those of their fathers. The son of a domestic servant is now a labourer in the Sheep-Breeding Station under the Government of West Bengal, while the son of a beggar is now a road-labourer. Though the sons of three priests have not left priesthood, the son of another priest has taken up cultivation. Sons of two of the ex-army personnel are now cultivators, son of one is a carpenter and another is a teacher, while the sons of two persons who had worked in the Police Department of the Government of West Bengal are now cultivators. The son of a teacher has replaced the pen by the plough, that of a hospital-dresser is now a *Khalasi* and that of a cook in a Health Centre is now a General Duty Assistant in the same Health Centre. Son of one of the pharmacists is now a road-labourer and that of another is a General Duty Assistant in the Health Centre. Son of a Trade Registrar is now in cultivation and that of a non-worker is now a teacher.

From the foregoing discussion it need not be gainsaid that in the context of the rural economy of Upper Pedong the mobility in the occupation of the heads of the households with reference to that of their fathers seems to be rather striking in the span of a generation. In order to highlight the specific nature of the relative shift of occupation within one generation, the details of occupational mobility of the heads of households, recast anew for further interpretations, are provided in Table 63.

TABLE 63

OCCUPATIONAL SHIFTS IN A GENERATION

Industrial category	No. of heads of households, fathers having been engaged in various industrial categories	Percentage	No. of heads of households engaged in various industrial categories	Percentage
Cultivation	23	27.7	37	44.6
Agricultural labour	7	8.4	2	2.4
Agricultural sector	*30*	*36.1*	*39*	*47.0*
Livestock, forestry and plantation	12	14.5	4	4.8
Manufacturing	3	3.6	3	3.6
Construction	10	12.1	26	31.3
Trade and commerce	1	1.2	2	2.4
Other services	26	31.3	9	10.9
Non-agricultural sector	*52*	*62.7*	*44*	*53.0*
Non-worker	*1*	*1.2*	..	..
Total	**83**	**100.0**	**83**	**100.0**

Several interesting features emanate from the analysis. First, the ratio of workers in the agricultural sector to those in the non-agricultural sector on the basis of the occupations of the fathers of the present heads of households appears to be 1 : 1.8, whereas the ratio of the workers in the two sectors on the basis of the occupations of the present heads of households is found to be 1 : 1.1. The variation in the ratios reflects the enrichment of the agricultural sector in the occupational arena of the sons against the perspective of the past occupations of their fathers. Secondly, of the 30 households with fathers of the present heads engaged in the agricultural sector, heads of 17 households are still associated with the agricultural sector, while the sons of the heads of 13 families have switched over to jobs in the non-agricultural sector. Of the remaining 53 households with fathers of the heads engaged in non-agricultural sectors, as many as 31 heads still persist in the non-agricultural pursuits, whereas heads of 22 households have dissociated themselves from the occupations of their fathers by crossing over to the agricultural sector.

One's attention is thus rivetted to the fact that so far as the occupations of the heads of households with reference to those of their fathers are concerned, a shift has taken place from the non-agricultural to the agricultural sector. The shift is explained by the polarisation to agriculture of the sons of persons, mostly engaged in plantation, forestry and other services, and also of persons of advanced age who after immigration to this village have purchased some land for their own personal cultivation.

Likewise, the shift in the importance of various occupations in the non-agricultural sector is equally impressive. The participation-rate of the heads of households, now engaged in livestock, forestry and plantation, has declined considerably with reference to that of their fathers, as in the case of the heads of households engaged in other services. Contrarily, the participation-rate of the heads of households, now engaged in construction, has recorded a sharp rise in contrast to that of the fathers of some other heads of households pursuing the same vocation. From the present occupations of the heads of households, one can discern the greater pull of cultivation and construction than any other vocation in weaning persons away from other occupations, because cultivation as an old, seasoned sector of the village-economy is capable of yielding fruitful returns and construction is impregnated with high potentialities of employment augmented by the developmental activities of the Government in execution of the Five Year Plans.

Mobility of occupation of working members other than the heads from their fathers'

Occupations of 27 male working members have been taken into account, details about the occupations of the fathers of other working members are not available. The Table 64 shows the occupational mobility of the 27 male working members other than the heads of households. The variance observed from a comparative analysis of the occupations of the male working members and those of their fathers prompts one not to miss the spirit of immobility actuating the majority of the working males not to beat a retreat from the trodden tracks of their fathers. Only 44.4 per cent of the workers are somewhat more venturesome in changing over to new occupations, different from their fathers'. But, the heads of households mark out a sharp contrast to this trend, as observed earlier. The relatively greater persistence of the male working members to stick to their fathers' callings is explained by the fact that among the teenager male workers the majority have taken to their fathers' occupations in a rather leisurely way at the threshold of their careers. But, in any case the present occupations of the working males instead of being a finale in their professional career are, in fact, transitional phases in

TABLE 64

OCCUPATIONAL SHIFTS OF THE WORKING MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLDS

Occupation of the male working member other than the head of the household	*No. of male working members engaged in the occupation	No. of male working members whose fathers were or are								
		Owner cultivator	Share-cropper	Agricultural labourer	Plantation labourer	Carpenter	Contractor of road	Road labourer	Teacher	Army personnel
Owner-cultivator	7	5	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Share-cropper	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Agricultural labourer	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Carpenter	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
Labour supervisor	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Contractor of road	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Road-labourer	12	3	2	..	2	1	..	4	..	..
Teacher	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Total	27	9	2	1	2	3	3	5	1	1

*Details of the occupations of fathers of the working members being not available, they have not been considered here.—Editor

their life ready to carve out a career of their own choice.

While the son of a road-contractor and the male ward of an army-personnel are now owner-cultivators, the son of a road-labourer has become a share-cropper and the son of an owner-cultivator is now a supervisor of labour. A trend at the same time is marked among persons in almost all walks of life to send their sons to join the gang of road-labourers, the families being urged by the economic motivation to earn ready money in cash from the wage-earning jobs. While liquidity preference has its genesis in the monetised character of the regional rural economy wherein any turnover or economic transaction is essentially accomplished by money in cash, it also makes the village-economy thoroughly open to the influence of cash-nexus, the dominant economic force. Sons of three owner-cultivators, two share-croppers, two plantation labourers and one carpenter earn their fixed wages by selling their physical labour in road-construction.

Occupational mobility of the female working members from those of their fathers

The Table 65 shows the extent of the mobility of occupation of the female working members, mostly unmarried and living with their parents. Of the female working members, 73.7 per cent are pursuing their fathers' occupations, whereas only five working female members follow new occupations, different from their fathers'. Even in the case of these five members, the occupational changes are more forced than opted because of the ineligibility of the females, heightened by disabilities of sex, for the particular occupations pursued by their fathers but not by them. If the daughters of one mason and one supervisor of labour have joined the ranks of road-labourers, the daughters of one armyman and one dresser in the Health Centre have taken to cultivation under personal supervision. The daughter of a priest is now a manufacturer-*cum*-seller of indigenous country-liquor. The reasons for the deviations are obviously found in the unsuitabi-

lity of the incumbents for the occupations of their fathers on account of different sex, dearth of skill and aptitude and finally the question of personal also.

Occupational mobility seeding from migration

As migration from one place to another often unsettles the settled life of a person

TABLE 65

OCCUPATIONAL SHIFTS OF THE FEMALE WORKING MEMBERS *VIS-A-VIS* THIER FATHERS

Occupation of the female worker	No. of female workers	No. of female members whose fathers were or are: Owner-cultivators	Road-labourers	Labour supervisor	Masons	Priests	Army personnel	Dressers in Health Centre
Owner-cultivator	12	10	..	..	..	..	1	1
Road-labourer	6	..	4	1	1	..	..	..
Distiller of liquor	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Total	**19**	**10**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**

TABLE 66

SHIFTS IN OCCUPATION BEFORE AND AFTER MIGRATION

Occupation before immigration	No. of heads of households immigrants in the present generation	Number of heads of households whose occupation after migration to this village are: Owner-cultivator	Sharecropping	Labourer in Sheep Breeding Station	Forest labour	Wood cutter	Carpenter	Road labour	Supervisor of labour	Contractor of road	Hawker of rice and parched rice	Priest	Teacher	General Duty Assistant (Health Centre)
Owner-cultivator	4	1	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Agricultural labourer	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plantation labourer	12	5	1	1	..	..	..	3	1	1	..	..	..	..
Forest labourer	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Carpenter	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Milk-vendor	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Porter	3	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Road-labourer	6	..	..	..	1	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	1
Priest	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Service in army	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Teaching	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
General Duty Assistant (Health Centre)	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Non-worker	5	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	1
Total	**41**	**10**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**3**	**13**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**3**

and his household, one may visualise how great the effect of migration may at times be on occupational structure of a group of households on the move. Because any change in the habitat, whether forced or otherwise, also uproots a household from its occupational moorings, forcing it to seek new openings in a changed environ, it is imperative to examine the occupations of the heads of 41 households, immigrant to the village in the present generation in course of last 40 years, before and after their immigration. Widowed heads of seven households have been kept out of the purview of the present discussion, as they had entered the village as married wives with no occupational background of their own.

The Table 66 focalises the mobility of occupation of the heads of houeholds after migration to the present village from the pursuit before migration. Of the 41 households, immigrant in the present generation (excluding the seven widowed heads of households), heads of five families were non-workers. Heads of 36 households pursued definite occupations before immigration. Except five persons comprising a cultivator, a carpenter, a priest, a teacher and a General Duty Assistant in a Health Centre (all the five before immigration had the same occupations as are now being pursued), 31 heads have taken up altogether different occupations after immigration. Majority of the immigrants are now engaged either in construction of roads or agriculture. Of the immigrant households, heads of 10 families are owner-cultivators against four before. None of the heads of 16 households, now engaged in road-building activities, was ever employed as such. But the most significant feature of immigration is that a perceptible shift from occupations related to plantation and day-labour to household cultivation and road-labour is evident.

Occupational mobility of the heads of households in their lifetime

In assessing the mobility of occupation with reference to the former one, if any, the mobility of occupations resulting from immi-

TABLE 67

SHIFTS IN OCCUPATION IN LIFETIME

Present occupation of the head of the household	Previous occupation of the head of the household	Reason for leaving previous occupation
Owner-cultivator	Transportation of goods on ponies	Death of ponies
Ditto	*Subehdar* in Army	Retirement
Ditto	*Havildar* in Army	Ditto
Ditto	*Sepoy* in Army	Discharged
Ditto	Service in Coal Depot	Service terminated
Ditto	*Havildar* Clerk in Army	Resignation
Ditto	Owner of *Pan* and *Bidi* shop	Monetary loss
Share-cropper	Plantation labourer	Not stated
Road-labourer	Owner of *Pan* shop	Monetary loss
Ditto	Plantation labourer	Lured by better wages paid to road-labourers
Ditto	Carpenter	Not profitable
Ditto	Agricultural labourer	Lured by better wages paid to road-labourers
Labour supervisor	Superintendent of Local Co-operative Bank	Discharged
Ditto	Acting Sergeant in Air Force	Ditto
General Duty Assistant	Driver of Railway Locomotive	Ill health
Ditto	Fruit-seller	Greater security

gration of the heads and their households into the village have been left out of the scope of the present dissertation, as it has already been attended to. The heads of households who even after immigration pursued their old occupation before taking up their present vocation have been taken into account.

The Table 67 relates to the mobility of occupation of the heads of households with reference to their former occupations. Heads of 16 households have changed their occupations in their lifetime and in almost all cases the change has been real and pronounced. If the ex-army personnel have now taken up cultivation, it is because they have both the money to invest on land and the physical strength to stand the strain of personal supervision of cultivation. That construction of roads has thrown a challenge and also a temptation to six persons to motivate them even to risk an occupational change proves indisputably the great demand for labour here and a greater demand of the people for liquid money earned through wages. The steady call of the roads for employment to the members of the potential labour-force, showing thereby very bright prospects of activities related to construction in easing the unemployment situation, has not missed to deliver the goods to the people.

Preferential behaviour-pattern in the choice of careers for the young

To see how far the nation-wide developmental activities and the constitutional guarantees for egalitarian principles safeguarding opportunities of careers as open to all have produced any change in the mental world of the villagers of Upper Pedong is a challenging task. If one's personal ambition about one's career remains unrealised, one would consequentially desire its full consummation in posterity. Otherwise, one projects one's personal dreams into one's own offsprings to see the fulfilment of one's stunted desires. The preference, though subjective in nature and often individualistic in character, is best revealed when one is asked during any investigation of the present kind an objective question as to what kind of work one would like one's young son or daughter to do in future in the case of choice of his or her career. The question is not unrealistic even in the context of the rural scene of Upper Pedong. When the horizons of the village have croised the hills to release its residents from the prisons of a closeted life through new roads and improved means of communication, one may reasonably expect that the minds of the villagers have also been set free from the fetters of tradition and immobility to enjoy the newly-acquired scope for a more free exercise of their volitions and motivations on account of the inroads of leavening ideas and fresh opportunities.

The response of the villagers has provided the basis of the Table 68 showing the subjective preference of the heads of the households for the future careers of their sons or daughters. To prepare the table, the sons or daughters have been classified into three categories, *viz.*, (i) those attending no schools, (ii) those attending schools and (iii) those attending colleges. The occupations of the heads of households have been correlated to those of the issues opted by the respondent heads.

Out of 87 households, 21 families have not expressed their preference for any career of their sons. Of them, heads of six households do not have any issue, heads of eight households are not married, heads of five households have no male issue and in two households the sons are already employed.

The local people appear to have a rather vague idea about the nature of occupation to be pursued by their offsprings in future. As a result, the term *General Service* becomes parenthetical with any occupation of fixed income, the lisping idea suggesting such occupations to bear an element of status as also an assurance

of security. The budding aspirations of the villagers for fixed income is evident from the fact that in 42 households (87.5 per cent), out of 56 respondent families, the heads desire their sons to be in *General Service*. Interestingly, however, only three of them as employees with fixed incomes are somewhat faintly aware of what *General Service* indicates.

TABLE 68

OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Occupation of the head of the household	No. of heads showing their preference for the career of their sons or daughters	Sons and daughters for which career chosen		No. of heads desiring their sons and daughters as						
		Status	Number	Cultivators	Contractors	Teachers	Defence personnel	Engineers	*Memsahib*	General service-holders
Cultivator	25	Not attending school	8	3	..	1	..	1	1	2
		Attending school	16	..	..	..	3	..	..	13
		Engaged in cultivation	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Share-cropper	2	Not attending school	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
		Attending school	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Carpenter	1	Attending school	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Mason	1	Attending school	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Contractor of road-construction	1	Attending school	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Labour supervisor	2	Attending school	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Road-labourer	14	Not attending school	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
		Attending school	8	..	..	1	..	..	..	7
Khalasi	1	Not attending school	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Hawker of rice	1	Attending school	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Teacher	2	Attending school	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
		Attending college	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Priest	1	Not attending school	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
General Duty Assistant (Health Centre)	3	Attending school	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Non-worker	2	Not attending school	1	..	.	..	..	..	..	1
		Attending school	1	.	.	..	..	..	..	1
Total	**56**		**56**	**4**	**1**	**3**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**42**

One's interest, once evoked by a mere cursory glance at the table, further enlivens on scrutiny of the same. One then gets an insight into the village society of Upper Pedong, where cultivation seems to have no enchantment for at least a section among the cultivators. Of the respondent heads of 25 households, also cultivators themselves, only three (12.0 per cent) do like their sons also to pursue the agricultural occupations because ownership of landholdings of optimum economic size along with other assets. But, the other cultivators are irresistibly tempted by a variety of pursuits in the choice of an occupation for their wards. If so, the reasons are not all economic for the queer estrangement of some of the cultivating households from the vocation of cultivation, as economic reasons alone fail to explain why 16 owner-cultivator heads of households curiously choose *General Service* as the future career of their sons. The rest of the six cultivator heads of households, instead of being so explicit in their opinion, sedately wish their issues to choose professions assuring a steady flow of income and promising an upgraded social status and prestige-rank in the village-society. The social factor seems to hold the key without which one fails to reconcile the lure of professions like teaching, engineering and trading to the socio-economic aspirations of five humble cultivators of Upper Pedong. In one case, however, there is neither any economic base for nor any strong support of reality behind the vaulted ambition of the head of one farmer household for the future career of his daughter, whom he wishes to be a *Memsahib* (A polished lady of the sophisticated society) under the spell of western ways of life. It is striking indeed that the swing of imagination with a backwash to cultivation has its genesis in the house of a teacher. The ambitious aspirants have expressed preferences for occupations in multidirectional spheres. One teacher fondly dreams of an engineer's career for his son and cannot stand the idea of his son stepping in his shoes. If two teachers in Upper Pedong do not want the tradition of the Socrates in the teaching profession to be perpetually continued by their sons, one should not infer a total void in the aspiration of the people for the pedagogue's profession. There still remain a cultivator, a road-labourer and a priest desiring their sons to teach in their little village school, while the unlettered fathers would be gleefully proud that 'one small head could carry all he knew'. Even though the gods and the godlings of the village have not failed to keep alive the faith of the devotees and the villagers have not turned ungodly, one village-priest wants his son to change over to a better profession on a more lucrative economic base than his. This humanly ambition cannot be sublimated by religious callings or stifled by ministerial service alone. Life in the army with 'bullets, blood, boquets and ribboned wreaths' has fascinated three cultivators in the choice of the future careers of their sons. Road-construction remains so potential a source of lucre that one contractor does not countenance any idea of his son breaking off the bonds and entering some new arena of economic activity for his livelihood.

The nebulous *General Service* with its nature and scope not quite clearly defined by the respondent families, which are neither aware of nor assured by its obscure economic potentialities, nevertheless casts its magic spell on share-croppers, carpenters, masons, road-labourers, labour-supervisors, *Khalasis*, pedlars and workers in Health Centre and induces them to look upon *General Service* as the storehouse of omnifarious occupations for their sons.

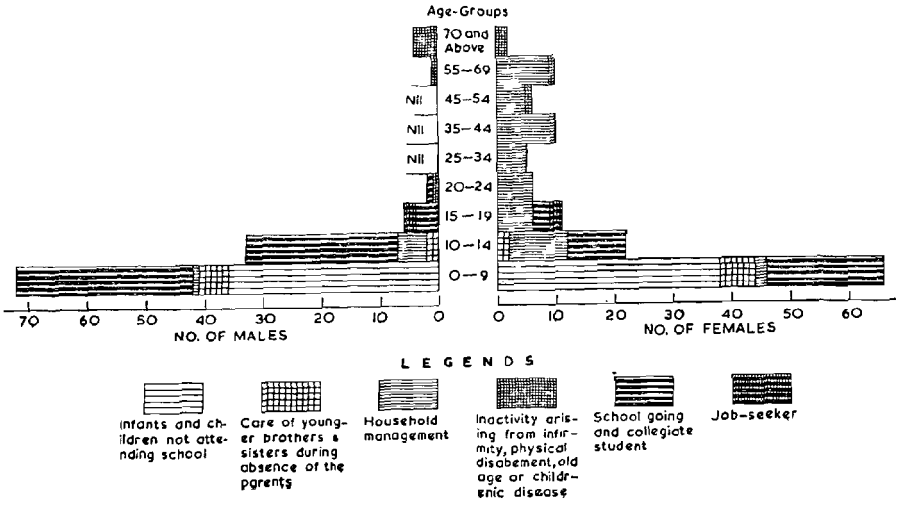
The projected perspective of mobility of the future occupation of the progeny assumes a gainful meaning and acquires a new dimension as well as an unexplored direction of original approach, whether or not the parental planning for the career of their sons is realistic and the upbringing of the wards is capable of fulfilling the latent ambition of the guardians. When one examines critically the nature of

education, imparted to the sons and daughters for whom the future careers are so meticulously planned and dreamt, one is shocked by the futility of the day-dreams of the heads of 18 households, not getting their wards educated even in a school yet desiring their entry into a utopian *General Service* and other esteemed professions like teaching and technocracy. A realistic appraisal of the feasibility of the projected occupational mobility of the wards is only instrumental in detecting cracks in the monumental edifice born of the innocent fancy of some lotus-eaters in the unruffled haven of the rugged hills where the twin occupations of cultivation and road-construction allow the body to live humbly and the mind to dream loftily disregard in utter of the prickly thorns of reality, adversity and opposition to blow up the vision and nip the dream in its bud. And the reality, rules supreme dictating the verdict to be written on the wall that it behoves the educated only to reap the harvest and enjoy the fruits of the toil of the simple people of the hills.

Non-workers

There are 186 workers against 254 non-workers in the village. The Table 69 would show the distribution of non-workers according to their age, sex and nature of activity. Among the non-workers predominating (77.7 per cent) the general population, the females outnumber the males. Of the male non-workers, two persons in the working age-group, incapacitated by their physical infirmiry and disablement, are a real drag on the economy of the village. Five students in the working age-group are not a waste for the village-economy. Instead, they add to the potential human resource, now in the building stage. Two youths, on the look-out for employment, are only temporary liabilities. The female non-workers of the working age-group are not entirely without any worth. They do not participate in any economic activity, but they manage the household most usefully. Even among the non-workers, about 85.4 per cent do some fruitful, if not remunerative, work in the households as housewives. Most of the infants and children without any activity belong to the age-group of 0-9 and are nurslings, while the children entrusted with the task of looking after the babies in absence of mothers belong to the age-group of 5-14.

NON-WORKERS OF DIFFERENT CATEGORIES



UPPER PEDONG

TABLE 69

NON-WORKERS

Category	Sex	No. of non-workers in the age-group of 0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39
Infants and children not attending schools	Male	31	5	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Female	29	9	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	60	14	..	..	..	..	..	..
Caretakers of younger brothers and sisters during absence of the parents	Male	..	5	2	..	..	..	..	..
	Female	..	6	2	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	..	11	4	..	..	..	..	..
Housewives	Male	..	1	5	..	..	..	..	..
	Female	..	2	10	6	6	2	3	5
	Total	..	3	15	6	6	2	3	5
Invalids due to inactivity arising from infirmity, physical disablement, old age or chronic disease	Male	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
	Female	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Total	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
School-going pupils and collegiate students	Male	2	28	26	4	1	..	..	..
	Female	1	19	10	3	..	..	..	..
	Total	3	47	36	7	1	..	..	..
Job-seekers	Male	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
	Female	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
	Total	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..
	Male	**33**	**39**	**33**	**6**	**2**	..	..	..
	Female	**30**	**36**	**22**	**9**	**6**	**2**	**3**	**5**
Total	**Total**	**63**	**75**	**55**	**15**	**8**	**2**	**3**	**5**

Category	Sex	No. of non-workers in the age-group of 40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70+	No. of non-workers
Infants and children not attending schools	Male	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	36
	Female	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	38
	Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	74
Caretakers of younger brothers and sisters during absence of the parents	Male	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
	Female	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
	Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Housewives	Male	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6
	Female	5	2	3	4	4	1	..	53
	Total	5	2	3	4	4	1	..	59
Invalids due to inactivity arising from infirmity, physical disablement, old age or chronic disease	Male	..	..	..	1	..	..	4	6
	Female	..	1	..	..	..	1	2	4
	Total	..	1	..	1	..	1	6	10
School-going pupils and collegiate students	Male	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	61
	Female	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	33
	Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	94
Job-seekers	Male	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
	Female	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
	Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
	Male	..	..	..	1	..	..	4	**118**
	Female	**5**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**4**	**2**	**2**	**136**
Total	**Total**	**5**	**3**	**3**	**5**	**4**	**2**	**6**	**254**

One has reasons to take note of a good proportion of the non-workers (37.0 per cent) comprising students alone, of whom the males account for 51.7 per cent of the male non-workers. Only 24.3 per cent of the female non-workers are students.

In the context of ample opportunities for employment, readily made available by road-building activities, unemployment of any able-bodied person is apt to be an uncommon feature. Yet, a Kami young man of 16 years of age with education upto Class IV and one Lepcha male of 17 years of age with education upto Class VII remain unemployed. As both are looking for white-collar jobs, their unemployment has been caused by personal factors of choice of jobs.

Hidden contact and hidden investment

Though not current residents of the village now, 25 persons have yet live ties with the village not by virtue of birth or association only, but by their humble contribution, sometimes direct and sometimes indirect, to the socio-economic growth of the village. If they live away now from their households and the village, they have to do so on account of some exigencies of life. But, even inspite of their separation, they are a part of the village-polity with their entity rooted inmutably in the village-life. Their ties with the village, very much real and alive, are not succoured by their nostalgic thoughts of childhood association. From 19 households (21.8 per cent) of Upper Pedong 25 members have been found to live away. The Table 70 will give an outline of the background of the far-away members and also an idea about the nature of their ties with their parent households in the village of Upper Pedong. No less important will be the contribution of their economic role, to be deciphered from the table under reference.

The non-resident members cover only 10 communities of the village. Even among the households of the communities concerned, only a few households are involved. The maximum number of families with the maximum number of non-resident members happens to comprise four Rai and four Tamang households from which six Rais and five Tamangs respectively stay outside the village-bounds. As to the kinship of the 25 non-resident members with the heads of their respective parent households it is observed that 15 persons are sons, three are husbands, three are brothers, one is the daughter and another is the husband of the sister. Two more persons, a male and a female, are the step-children of the present head of another household.

The motivation of the members staying outside deserves scrutiny. That economic reason is an important motivation is borne out by the fact that 22 members out of 25 stay away on grounds of service. Educational grounds explain the absenteeism of two members, one a student of a Higher Secondary School in Kalimpong and another an undergraduate student in the science stream of a college in Darjeeling. Vocational training accounts for one female member, now undergoing training in nursing in Nepal. The economic motivations of the 22 absentee members in service also brings forth the interesting question of occupational mobility. Father's occupation of 16 non-resident members could be ascertained. Sons of two owner-cultivators are in army and those of the rest are in the Police Force, all of them being secessionists from their fathers' occupations. Again, one armed policeman and two persons working in the army are all sons of ex-army personnel. The father of a person working in a Hospital is a trader, whose second son now employed in a shop has not, however, deviated from the occupation of his own. The son of an agricultural labourer, now in transport service and employed as a bus-driver, has struck him off from his father's agricultural pursuit. Of the three sons of a hospital-worker, two are in the army and one is in the armed police, all having been entrants in new

occupations. If the son of a domestic servant is now a bus-driver and that of a carpenter is employed in the army, one is faced with the question of occupational mobility. None of the occupations of the non-residents has been forced on them out of lack of choice. Instead, the occupations have been the deliberate choice, being pursued voluntarily in keeping with a carefully planned career. Police department and the armed constabulary have employed seven persons. Seven more non-resident persons are in the army. Transport absorbs three workers, the cuisine has attracted one person and domestic service has employed three others. One person is a member of the personal bodyguard of His Highness the *Chogyal* of Sikkim.

The place of work of the non-resident members has an important relevance of its own from an economic and social point of view. The place of residence of 25 persons of Upper Pedong, detatched from their kins in the village, enables one to gain an insight into the mental make-up of the villagers. If for purposes of studies three persons have left home for Kalimpong, Darjeeling and Nepal, one cannot but be impressed by the mobility of a section of the village-population and their keen urge for higher education even at places far beyond the horizon of the village. The psychological response of the villagers to livelihood elsewhere is not static in any sense. Rather a new dynamic force is seeking its outlet. None can foretell where and for whom

TABLE 70

NON-RESIDENT VILLAGERS

	Community of the households of the far-away members	Relation of the members living outside to the head of the household	Purpose of stay outside	If in service, nature of employment	Place of residence of the member living outside	Occupation of the father of the member living outside	Period of stay outside in years	No. of visits in a year by the member to the household	Percentage of monetary contribution to the family budget by the members living away from the family
* 1	Sikkimese Bhutia	Son	Service	Police Constable	Jaldhaka, Dt. Jalpaiguri	Cultivation	6	1	13.3
* 2	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Service in the Territorial Army	Siliguri, Dt. Darjeeling	Ditto	2	2	–
* 3	Sikkimese Bhutia	Son	Ditto	*Havildar Major*	Near Bombay, Maharastra	*Subehdar Major* (Retired)	15	1	18.5
* 4	Ditto	Ditto	Studies		Kalimpong, Dt. Darjeeling		¼	4	Nil
* 5	Dukpa	Ditto	Service	*Havildar*	Maha baleswar, Orissa	Cultivator	5	1	30.0
* 6	Dukpa	Ditto	Ditto	Service in a shop	Laskar-Hat, W. Dinajpur	Trader	1	Nil	12.0
* 7	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Servant in a Hospital	Darjeeling, Dt. Darjeeling	Trader	5	Nil	
8	Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	Asst. Commandant in Armed Forces	Jorehat, Assam	Ex-Junior Commissioned Officer	23	1	57.0

TABLE 70—*contd.*

	Community of the households of the far-away members	Relation of the members living outside to the head of the household	Purpose of stay outside	If in service, nature of employment	Place of residence of the member living outside	Occupation of the father of the member living outside	Period of stay outside in years	No. of visits in a year by the member to the household	Percentage of monetary contribution to the family budget by the members living away from the family
9	Tamang	Husband	Service	Personal *Sepoy* of His Highness, *Chogyal* of Sikkim	Gangtok, Sikkim	Not known	11	2	46·3
10	Ditto	Brother	Ditto	Bus-driver	Kalimpong, Dt. Darjeeling	Agricultural labourer	1	5	52.2
*11	Ditto	Step-son of the male head	Ditto	Cook	Delhi	Not known	3	1	Nil
*12	Ditto	Step-daughter of the male head	Ditto Ditto	Domestic service	Lower Pedong, P.S. Kalimpong, Dt. Darjeeling	Not known	1	25	Nil
*13	Rai	Son	Service	*Lance-Naik*	Dehra Dun, U.P.	General Duty Assistant, Hospital	5	1	24.0
*14	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Armed Police	Calcutta	Ditto	3	2	
*15	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	*Sepoy*	Delhi	Ditto	½	Nil	
16	Ditto	Brother	Ditto	Bus-driver	Shillong, Assam	Domestic servant	4	Nil	10.0
17	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	*Sepoy*	NEFA	*Havildar*	8	2	20.4
18	Ditto	Son	Ditto	Armed Police	Barrackpur, Dt. 24-Parganas	Cultivation	2	1	21.0
19	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Siliguri, Dt. Darjeeling	Cutlivation	1	Nil	40.0
20	Lepcha	Sister's husband	Ditto	Asst. Sub-Inspector of Police	Check Post in Bhutan Border	Not known	15	2	48.3
21	Ditto	Husband	Ditto	Bus-driver	Bhutan	Not known	12	4	82.7
22	Limbu	Son	Ditto	*Sepoy*	NEFA	Carpenter	3	1	16.7
23	Chhetri	Husband	Ditto	Armed Police	Barrackpur, Dt. 24-Parganas	Not known	11	1	72.0
24	Gurung	Daugther	Studies	Undergoing training in nursing	Nepal	Road-labourer	1	Nil	Nil
25	Newar	Son	Ditto	..	Darjeeling	Teacher	1	2	Nil

*Member of the same household—Editor

it is possible to achieve a definite goal of life but one can appreciate one's love for education at a primal stage as a preparatory background for a more decent occupation than that in the village and the readiness of some youths to seek employment which promises better economic returns in a distant land and ensures brighter prospects than those locally available. Likewise, the residence of twenty two members outside the village for reasons of employment also speak of the dormant but dynamic ambition of a section of the people, not of all, to upgrade the standards of their living. Emotional attachment apart, economic bonds of the non-resident members and the social link between them from their place of work and their kins in the village, fostered by visits, correspondence, communication and remittances, enable one to analyse socio-cultural intercourse and the communion of the village with far-off places. If some material traits of life of the villagers of Upper Pedong reveal influence of urbanisation or manifest the symptoms of culture-contacts, it can indisputably be explained as the result of a process which has silently worked unseen without any apparent flutter through the channels of money-orders remitted and the letters dropped by the non-resident persons from distant places in varied conditions of life.

On an appraisal of the places of residence of the non-resident members, it appears that three persons reside in places outside Upper Pedong but within the same police station, four persons live outside Kalimpong police station but within Darjeeling district, six persons stay outside the district of Darjeeling but within the State of West Bengal, nine persons stay in far-away places like Delhi, Bombay, Dehra Doon outside the State of West Bengal but within India and three persons outside India in places in Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal.

For eighteen places, out of 25, the data about rural or urban status are available. It appears that two persons have been living away from Upper Pedong in rural areas, whereas 16 persons stay in urban areas including four metropolitan cities. The information is important for providing the basis of examination of the urbanising forces, strong or feeble, having Upper Pedong within reach of their influence. One has only to conjecture the possible effects of the distant forces on the village.

The absenteeism of 25 members have been caused in different periods of time. The senior-most persons who have joined service in the army appear to have left the village 23 years ago. Others, who have followed his example in stepping out of the village bounds in course of a decade or more, include five persons. Two persons have been living outside for 15 years, another for 12 years and two for 11 years. Compared to them, the rest of the non-resident members have been recent migrants. One person left Upper Pedong eight years back, another person has been staying away from his household for six years, three other persons also for six years, one person for four years, three persons for three years and two others for a couple of years. Eight persons including three students have been living outside for a period of less that one year.

The number of visits home undertaken by each absentee member provides the tool of enquiry for a probe into the relationship subsisting between the non-resident members with their families at home. The enquiry enables one to know whether or not the link is still alive, though one cannot deny that the frequency of visits should not be the only yardstick for measuring the nature and depth of the social relation, as many other factors influence the disposition of the non-resident members towards a trip, annually once or more, to the village. The most important points, apt to influence decisions, are, however, the distance, the marital status of the absentee members and also the question if the spouse of the non-

resident member, when the latter is married, stays in the village Upper Pedong or not.

The next point for consideration, by far the most important, relates to economic ties of the absentee members with their parent households. Of the 19 households from which 25 members stay away, two households with three non-resident members studying outside do not at all affect the question of economic ties.

These considerations apart, the availability of leave, the time consumed by and the expenses for the to and fro journeys home should also be taken into consideration among other factors. The present analysis even without examining all the *conco mitant* factors influencing one's visit home is important in a way. Six persons could not visit Upper Pedong even once a year. The cost and distance appear to have intervened in five cases only. Visit once a year is undertaken by nine persons, of which one person has been away for 23 years, one for 15 years and one for 11 years. Six persons visiting home once annually reside in distant places outside West Bengal. Six persons coming home twice a year include one person living away from the village for 15 years and another for 11 years. Two of these persons come from places in Sikkim and NEFA respectively and one from Calcutta. It is interesting that of the two persons undertaking four trips a year to Upper Pedong, one has been living in Bhutan for more than 12 years. The person visiting home 25 times a year lives in another part of the same *Khas Mahal*, hardly a kilometre away.

From 17 households 22 persons have gone out for an earning. For purposes of contribution to the family budget by two persons or more of the same houshold, the persons and the families have been grduped together to show the percentage of the total contribution of the absentee earners to the consolidated family budget of the household in question. Two households appear to be benefited, each by a group of earners living outside. One family even gets the remittances from three non-resident members. Economic ties and social bonds seem to be independent variables for 17 households of Upper Pedong. None of these households is deprived of the monetary remittance from and personal visit of its non-resident earning members. Four persons without visiting their households even once a year have not ceased remitting their contributions to the budget of their families. Contrarily, of the two persons, who even without helping their families economically have nonetheless visited their households, one has come home at least once and another about 25 times a year. Detachment from one's home for a long period has not dissipated one's urge to contribute to one's family liberally to the best of one's means. It is a remarkable trait indeed of these non-resident members to have maintained their families for many years to the extent that their financial capabilities have permitted. One person absent from Upper Pedong for 12 long years still contributes to 82.7 per cent of the total income of his family from Bhutan, remaining the main economic pivot of his family. One person, employed in the armed police at Barrackpur and away from the village for twelve years, has not been unaware of his responsibilites as an earner, his contribution constituting 72.0 per cent of the household budget of his family at Upper Pedong. Another person employed in the armed forces at Assam has spent 23 years outside Upper Pedong but does not fail to contribute to the extent of 57.0 per cent of the budget of his household at Upper Pedong. Separated though for fifteen years, one Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police remits from Bhutan his contribution to the extent of 48.3 per cent of the total income of the family at Upper Pedong. These instances are illustrative but by no means exhaustive, to point out the way in which the economy of the village as well as the households are being strengthened from outside. Distance has not liquidated the hillmen's sense of belonging to their native village nor has life

elsewhere in an urban setting and a cosmopolitan culture toned down the urge of the absentee members to help their families financially. If some members contribute less to the income of their families, they do so because of their weak economic situations and not too high stations in life. Their toil, sweat and love for their distant home make good the loss on account of their failure to contribute to the family. The members of the army personnel have a uniform mode of holidaying. They come home once a year to spend two months at a stretch with their family in the village. Members of the police force, as a rule, come twice a year, while persons engaged in other occupations come home according to their convenience.

Agriculture

The structure of basic economy of Upper Pedong is agrarian, the occupations of the people being oriented to agriculture. Cultivation was the only means of livelihood for the majority even a decade ago. *Jhuming* (Shifting cultivation), obsolete now and being practised by none, has yielded to settled terrace cultivation universally practised at present, which replaced *Jhuming* long ago.

Agricultural methods and practices, as pursued in the plains area, do not suit the local topography. The slope of the hills with their rugged and weathered surface allows no plant life except scrub jungles to thrive there. The gravelly land of the village consisting of friable clay is also not conducive at all to cultivation. Besides, in the rainy season landslides also cause substantial damage to the standing crops. But, the cropping pattern is areas affected by landslides and erosion of land does not change. Soil-erosion in the village in normal and within permissible limits. The vulnerable area subject to regular landslide in the village covers about 50 acres.

Nature of soil

Cultivators of the region have classified the local soil into four types. *Kala mati* (Black soil) is considered to be very rich and fertile. Land in lower altitudes has mostly the soil of the *Kala mati* variety, fertile in nature and suitable for the cultivation of paddy and maize. But in Upper Pedong no such soil is traceable and paddy is not grown there. Land with *Chimte mati* (Semi-black soil), though not very fertile, is, however, cultivable and suitable for the cultivation of paddy and maize. The land of *Rata mati* (Red soil), holding an intermediate position because of its infertile nature, is still cultivable only after the application of manure in heavy doses. Weathered rocks, coated with a layer of lateritic surface soil of this variety are favoured by the cultivators for raising dry crops, such as maize and *Matua* or *Kodo* (Millet). Uncultivable waste land contains *Sweta mati* (White soil).

Cultivable land is classified into two grades according to their wet nature. *Panikhet* (Water-logged land) is suitable for the cultivation of paddy and maize, while *Sukhakhet* (Dry land) is used for the cultivation of *Kodo*. In Upper Pedong, however, there is no *Panikhet*.

Irrigation

Besides rain providing natural water for the cultivable fields, there is no other source of water like tank or well to irrigate the fields. The agriculturists, aware of the contribution of the rains to cultivation, store as much water as possible during the monsoon in the land under cultivation by enclosing the plots with high ridges. Terraces are raised parallel to one another, each terraced plot storing the requisite volume of water and releasing through an outlet at a height of three to four inches on the wall of the ridge the excess water accumulated above the mark to the adjoining plot in tricklets. The regulated supply of water by its controlled inflow in a terraced plot protects the seedlings against any possible damage form the flowing rainwater gathering momentum in current

during its flow from the higher to the lower altitude.

Cultivation of Makai

Maize the main crop of the village, is sown in February-March in the land ploughed first and then freed of unwanted shrubs, if any, by weeding. After treating the soil with the prescribed dose of the requisite chemical fertiliser to make good the deficiency of its organic or inorganic content, land is ploughed once more to mix the manure well with the soil. It is then levelled with the help of spades and levellers to pulverize large clods of earth and also to make the soil thoroughly prepared for sowing the seeds of *Makai*. During the sowing, ploughing is carried in one part and a person scatters the seeds in the furrowed line of the ploughed earth. As a precautionary step another ploughing is done two to three inches away from the line of actual sowing to ensure that the broadcast seeds are embedded well into the soil which is sometimes levelled with the help of wooden planks by some farmers but not by all. After the sprouting seedlings grow one foot high, the soil of the bed around the seedling is loosened by digging up the earth with forks. When the plants attain a height of two or three feet, the cultivator weeds the field. After the plants of maize grow four to five feet high, a ridge is raised at their root. The operation is locally known as *Doreona*. Harvested in August, maize is usually stored on horizontal bamboo scaffolds serving as shelves suspended from the ceiling of the room. Sixty eight households of the village cultivate maize, the yield being a little more than two *Maunds* per *Bigha* or eight *Maunds* per acre.

Cultivation of Kodo

As a prelude to the cultivation of *Kodo*, a seedbed or nursery is prepared, as essentially the first step taken by the cultivators by digging up the plot of land twice with the help of spades. Land, however, is not ploughed for the purpose. The next stage comes in levelling operation, as done in the cultivation of maize. The soil of the nursery plot is pulverised and thoroughly manured with high dosage of fertilisers before the actual sowing operation. Indigenous manure, such as pig-dung, goat-dung etc., is used ordinarily in the nursery-bed for *Kodo*. Cowdung, believed to be injurious to the seeds of millet, is not used. After the nursery plot is made ready, seeds of millet, sown in April-May by broadcast method, are then covered with a kind of grass, locally known as *Titapati*, to protect the seeds and to provide for the soil a good organic manure, obtained from *Titapati* in a decomposed state. Soon after the seedlings of millet grow an inch or so, stalks of *Titapati* are mown and the leaves are left in the field to decompose. In June-July seedlings of *Kodo*, about a foot high, are ready for transplantation to the land, made ready for the cultivation of *Kodo* by ploughing, laddering and levelling. Millet is grown sometimes in the same plot along with maize, sometime before and sometime soon after the latter's harvesting. Sometimes *Kodo* is grown exclusively in a plot of land. Millet plants attain a height of three feet in the maximum. They are harvested in October-December. In Upper Pedong 36 households cultivate *Kodo*, the yield of which is a little more than one *Maund* per *Bigha* or four *Maunds* per acre.

Cultivation of Ua

Ua (Barley) with an importance of its own in the list of crops grown by the cultivators of Upper Pedong on account of its being a supplementary item in the dietary of the people is used by the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas in the preparation of an indigenous cake and by other communities in the preparation of a sweetmeat of a local variety.

For the cultivation of *Ua*, land is ploughed usually once and then levelled. The seeds are sown in September-October. Manure is seldom used. Weeding operation is necessary neither. It is harvested in March. Yield of *Ua* is a little more than a *Maund* per *Bigha* or five

Maunds per acre. *Ua* is cultivated by 33 households of Upper Pedong.

Cultivation of Phaphar

With harvesting of maize starts the cultivation of *Phaphar*, for which land is ploughed usually once and sometimes even twice and then levelled. The seeds are broadcast in August-September. Manure is not applied to the soil and weeding operation, not deemed necessary, is hardly undertaken. The crop is harvested in December. Even being fast in growth and quick in yield, *Phaphar* is not a very popular crop liked by the farmers. It is commonly believed that the fertility of the soil rapidly runs to waste, if the crop is grown for a number of years consecutively. The yield of the crop per acre is five *Maunds* or a little less than two *Maunds* per *Bigha*. Eleven households of Upper Pedong cultivate *Phaphar*.

Cultivation of Odua

A popular cash crop in the village and also in this part of the hilly region, *Odua* (Ginger) requires for its cultivation the plot of land to be ploughed as many times as possible, the farmers of the village generally ploughing the land four times for the purpose of obtaining very fine grains of soil to enable tubercles and the sooty root-hairs to strive under the soil at ease and get imbedded in the earth. Ploughing is followed by harrowing and levelling to pulverize thoroughly the soil, hard stone-chips, pebbles and grit-stones being picked and sorted out of the soil.

The general preparation of the main plot apart, a separate bed, known locally as *Palang*, is especially prepared in the main plot of land by raising parallel rows of ridges, eight to ten inches high and three to four feet broad. In March-April dried rootstocks of ginger are sown in the bed in a row at a distance of eight to ten inches from one another and covered with dry twigs of a local plant, named *Chilavni*, to ensure protection of the plants of *Odua*. The leaves of *Chilavni* after decomposition are believed to serve as good compost. To accelerate the growth of the ginger plants, care is taken against unwanted grass and herbs, by systematically and frequently weeding them. Two or three months after sowing, root-hairs germinate from the mother stem-root and gradually go deep down the soil. At this stage the mother roots are taken out carefully and collected in the months of May and June and sometimes even as late as July. Following this operation, locally known as *Mau-nikalanu*, 38 kilograms of mother roots are collected from 40 kilograms of ginger, sown in *Palang*. Once mother roots are collected, cowdung and in some cases chemical fertilisers are applied to the main plot, where young roots, even after dissociation from the mother roots, still continue to grow. The cultivating households attend to the weeding operation in *Palang* from time to time. Young roots of ginger grow into fully developed tubers in September-October and sometimes even in November, when ginger is harvested. According to a local estimate, three times the weight of mother roots originally sown are the average yield of ginger. About three quintals of *Odua* are harvested from one quintal of the same. Harvested in September-October, ginger, formerly stored in *Khanri* (Underground cellar), is now spread on the floor of the rooms. In Upper Pedong 32 households have cultivated ginger, the yield being 66 *Maunds* per acre.

Techniques and methods of cultivation

Agricultural practices and procedures in Upper Pedong do not basically, differ much from those in the rural plains of West Bengal. Long before the monsoons, land is tilled with a plough, locally, known as *Hal*. The hard soil of the hilly village of Upper Pedong necessitates the ploughs to be designed differently. Because the rocky land calls for a wooden plough of heavy weight for an effective furrowing, a *Hal* looks heftier than a plough of the plains. It weighs 20 to 25 kilograms along with the ploughshare of steel. A rope of leather fastens tightly the wooden beam of the

TABLE 71

CALENDAR OF AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS FOR DIFFERENT CROPS

Agricultural operations	Months for agricultural operation to grow				
	Maize	Millet	Barley	Buckwheat	Ginger
Ploughing	January-February	March-April	August-September	July-August	January-February
Harrowing, laddering and levelling	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	August	February-March
Sowing	February-March	April-May	September-October	August-September	March-April
Weeding	April-May	June-July	October-November	October-November	May-June
Harvesting	August-September	October-December	March-April	December-January	September-October

plough with the wooden yoke, into which the former is fitted.

Ploughing is invariably followed by harrowing, as in the plains. A framework of bamboo or wood, in appearance resembling a ladder-like contrivance, is used for the purpose of harrowing the ploughed land. A wooden plank, locally known as *Dande*, is also used at times for the same operation.

If the people consider it ever necessary to manure their land, they do so necessarily after harrowing and levelling operations. In case of cultivation of millet, transplantation is necessary and it usually follows the harrowing operation. *Bue* (Nursery seedbed) is separately prepared to nurse the seedlings of the crops which would require transplantation in the main plot of the cultivable land. Weeding from time to time is almost universally undertaken as a compulsory operation with the help of the *Kockchia* (Sickle), an important functional tool also in the harvesting operation. Stalks of the harvested crops are arranged into bundles, which are carried home to the farmyards for threshing and winnowing. Threshing is done manually against a piece of wooden board. Some households also own wooden husking levers to husk the grains. Besides, a power-driven husking machine is run by a diesel engine in Pedong Bazar commercially.

The discussion above amply illustrates that except for some improvisations the methods and techniques of cultivation in Upper Pedong do not deviate widely from the agricultural practices in matters of techniques. Minor deviations here and there have been induced more by the ecology of the place, the most important factor being topographical rather than technological character of the agricultural methods followed here. The physical characteristics of the terrain of the village have been responsible for bringing about the local variations. The Table 71 on the calendar of agricultural operations for different crops raised by the villagers is presented to show that the seasons and operations for cultivation of a number of crops are not much at variance with those followed elsewhere in the plains of West Bengal, even though one or two crops particularly are raised in Upper Pedong on account of the suitability of the soil of the village.

Agricultural tools and implements

Agricultural tools and implements used by the cultivators in Upper Pedong conform to the specification of those used in the plains with necessary adaptations to suit local conditions rather than to pronounce any wide variation evoked by different traits of regional cultures. Agricultural tools and implements of improved

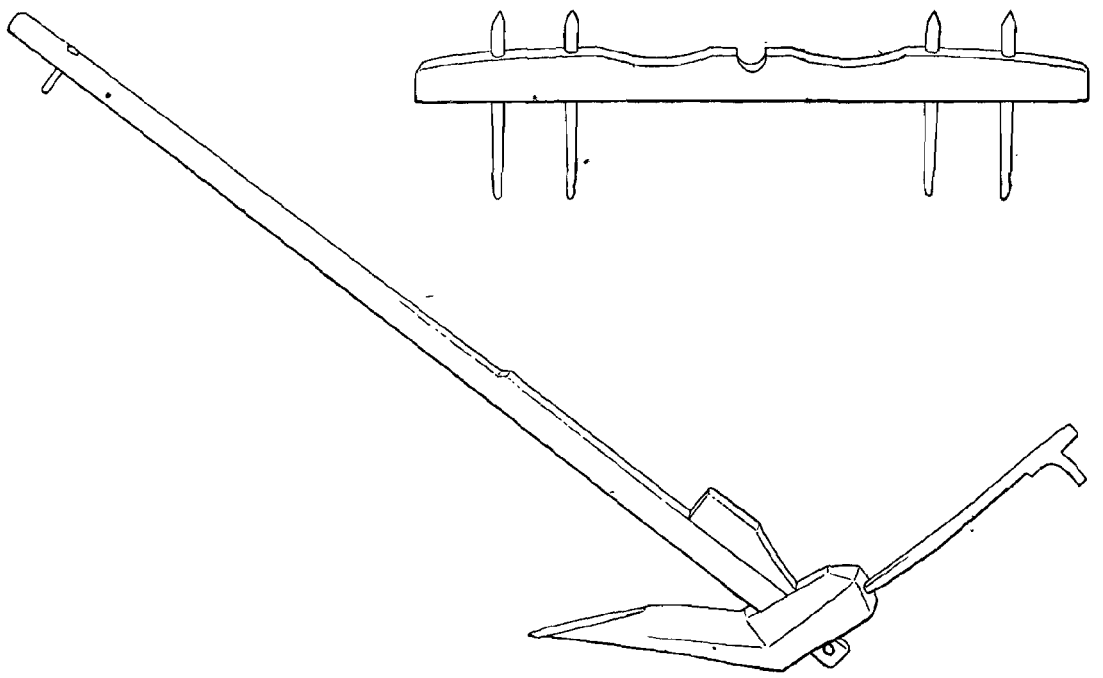
AGRICULTURE

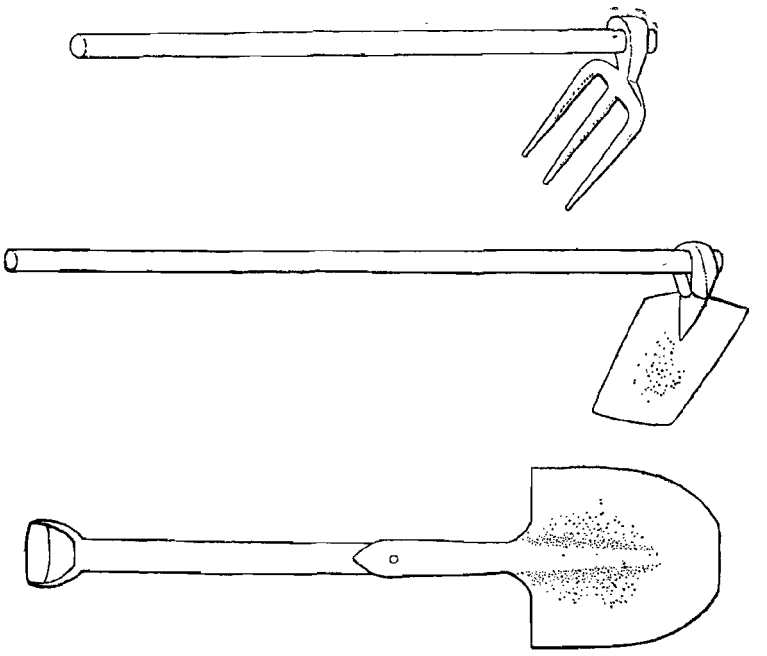
AND

IMPLEMENTS

Jua—an yoke, length 5′

Hol—a plough, length from the tip of the *anard* (handle) to the edge of the *phali* (blade)—4′4″, length of the *harish* (the stump to which an yoke is attached)—9′6″

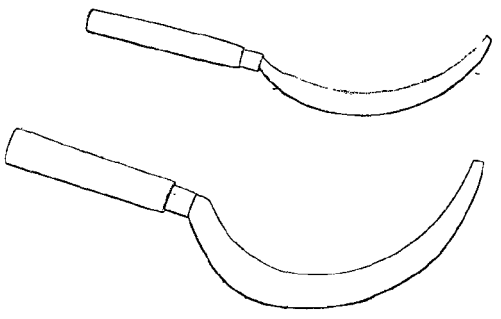




Kanta—a forked hoe, used in road-making, length 2′3″

Kodalo—a spade, used in road making and farming, length 3′2″

Belcha—a hoe, used in road making, length 3′



Kochchia—a sickle for harvesting paddy, length 11″

Sikkal—a sickle for trimming the branches from jungle, length 14″

types are not used in Upper Pedong to signify a modern outlook for change and an urge for improvement and progress. The tools and implements, used by the villagers, are mostly of the traditional type, comprising plough and yoke, harrow, spade, sickle and fork.

TABLE 72

AGRICULTURAL TOOLS AND IMPLEMENTS

Agricultural tools and implements	Description and manipulation	Function	Source	Price Rs.	Price *Paise*	Remarks
Hol (Plough)	A wooden Plank with two narrow ends fitted with a steel blade. The person manipulating the plough puts his weight on the wooden end, when drawn by bullocks or buffaloes. The plough used in the hilly region is much heavier (20-25 kilograms) than that of the plains	To make furrows in the hard soil after tillage	Wooden plough is made to order by the village carpenters, but the ploughshare of steel is purchased from the local market	10 to 14	00 00	Wooden plough costs Rs. 5.00 *paise* to Rs. 6.00 *paise* inclusive of charges for carpentry. Steel blade costs Rs.5.00 *paise* to 8.00 *paise*
Jua (Yoke)	A wooden bar four inches long, three inches and a half broad and three inches thick with two small holes at two opposite ends through which two wooden pegs are inserted. The frame of wood is placed on the shoulders of a pair of draught cattle, the wooden beam being tied to the wooden yoke with a leather rope	The yoke is fitted to the plough drawn by animal power	Made to order by the carpenters making the plough	3	00	..
Dande (Harrow)	A ladder-like frame, made of two long bamboo or wooden poles fitted with wooden rungs, drawn by the draught cattle, the farmer standing on it while being drawn	Large clods of earth in the ploughed land ore broken and the soil is pulverized when a harrow is drawn over it	Ditto	3	00	..
Kodalo (Spade)	A flattened iron blade with one end sharp and the other end containing a ring-like hole through which a wooden handle is inserted. The spade is struck in a slanting position against the surface of the earth	Used for digging, levelling and for removing large chunks of earth and also for preparing terraces too small to be ploughed effectively	Local market	3	00	..
Kchchia (Sickle)	An arch-like reaping hook of iron operated manually	Used in weeding unwanted grass, plants, shrubs and other wild growth and also required during harvesting crops like paddy in land situated outside Upper Pedong	Local market	4	00	..

The Table 72 will elaborately describe the nature, function, source and price of the important agricultural tools and implements, indispensable to the cultivators in different agricultural operations in different seasons.

Land-utilisation and crop-pattern

The main crops, obtained by the villagers from the land under cultivation within Upper Pedong and outside, comprise paddy, *Makai, Ua, Phaphar, Kodo* and *Odua.* Paddy is not grown in any plot of land within Upper Pedong. The land-utilisation pattern of Upper Pedong for the cultivation of different crops is presented in the Table 73.

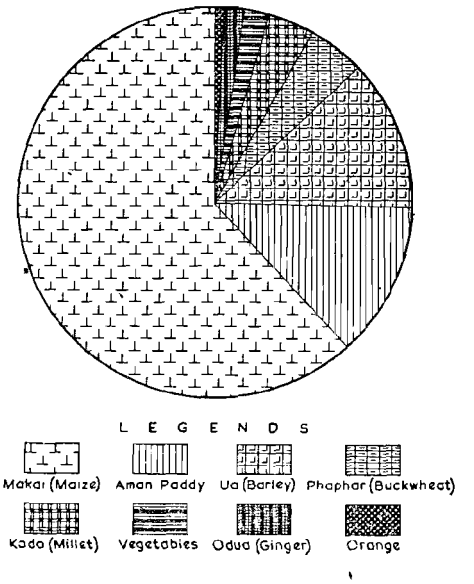
TABLE 73

LAND UTILISATION FOR DIFFERENT CROPS

Crop	Owned land under cultivation within and outside Upper Pedong (in acre)	Percentage of the area of land under each crop to the total area of land under cultivation
Aman paddy	20.20	13.0
Makai (Maize)	96.45	61.9
Ua (Barley)	19.50	12.5
Phaphar (Buckwheat)	7.32	4.7
Kodo (Millet)	5.81	3.7
Odua (Ginger)	2.62	1.7
Vegetables	3.00	1.9
Orange	3.00	0.6
Total	**155.90**	**100.0**

That maize is the main crop grown in the village and for that matter most important one for the granaries of different households is also supported by the land-utilisation pattern of the village in 1965-66 for the cultivation of different crops. The same reckoner further highlights paddy, barley, buckwheat and millet to be the crops in their descending degrees of importance, if on the score of land-use only one volunteers to arrive at a conclusion. No other inference can possibly be deduced from the facts and figures adducec. The area of land allotted to each crop also indicates the villagers' preferential choice for the crops seriatim. Vegetables and oranges are grown no doubt; but the land earmarked and utilised for the two produce of the kitchen-gardens and orchards rather than of the land under cultivation appears to be insignificant, when viewed from the point of land-use. The table only relates to the use of owned land under cultivation. Besides, another 10 acres of land, not in the ownership of the villagers, have also been cultivated on crop-share basis. Maize grown in 6.72 acres (67.2 per cent), paddy in 3.00 acres (30.0 per cent) and ginger in its command 0.23 acres (2.8 per cent) will all substantiate the observation that maize is the first choice of the cultivators.

CROPS AND ACREAGE

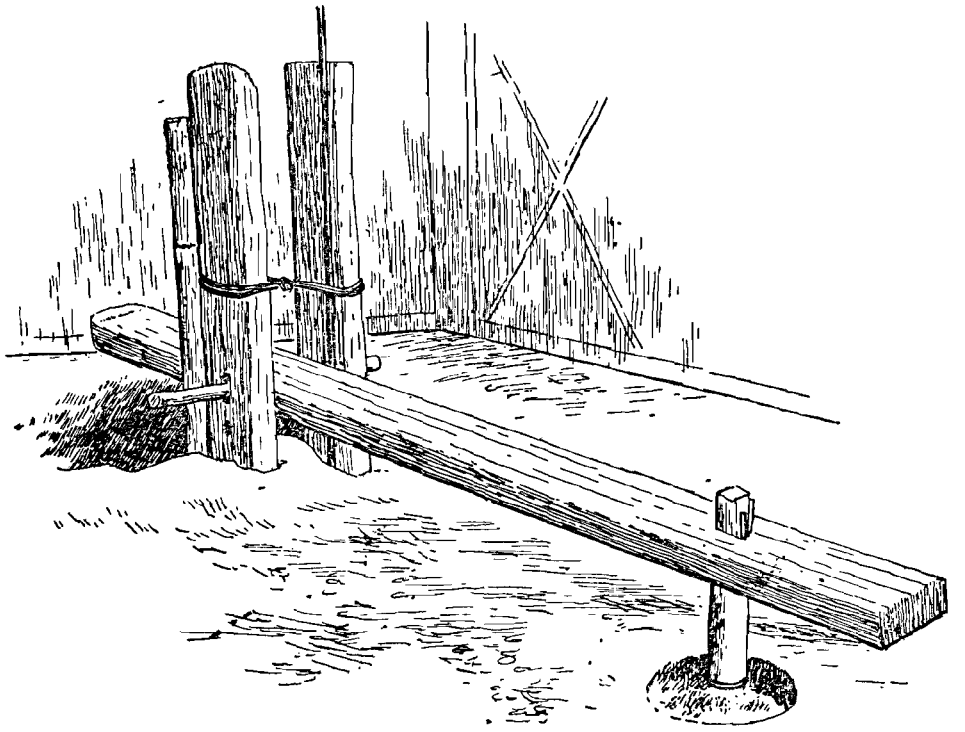


Single-cropping and double-cropping land

Rotation of crops in Upper Pedong has been born of necessity rather than of choice. Because of meagre resource of land, in the command of the villagers, cropping pattern has

made the villagers devise double-cropping to utilise most effectively the land in different seasons. Optimum utilisation of land in agriculture has thus ensured the fullest exploitation of the fertility of the land in raising different crops round the year, in no part of which the cultivator allows the land to remain as cultivable fallow. The hills, however lofty the peaks and wide their flanks, are not enough bounteous in making available to the villagers that much area of cultivable land as they would wishfully desire to have at their disposal for gainful use and effective cultivation. In Upper Pedong reclamation of land on individual industry and enterprise has been considered an unrealistic proposal on account of its impracticability, prohibitive costs, want of finance in an average household to defray the capital expenditure and diffidence of the majority to accept the project and implement it. Expansion of land under cultivation by reclamation being thus not feasible ordinarily, the villagers are left with what little they have and what little they can reclaim. In a village where the choice is so constricted and narrow, the agriculturists cannot remain prisoners of indecision about the questions of land-utilisation and rotation of crops. The multiple use of land in the actual span of the agricultural calendar is the only logical step to which the villagers take recourse. That is why, an agriculturist would invariably practise double-cropping in the same plot of land, if found convenient and feasible in the least. The corollary does not,

Dhenki—for husking paddy

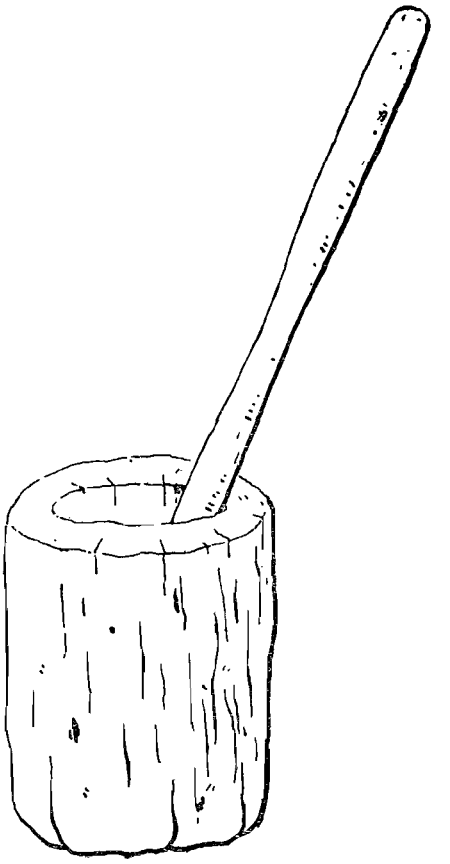


however, necessarily follow that the whole of the cultivable land grows more than one crop in a phased annual programme of agriculture, as all the plots alike are not suitable for the rotation of crops. But, a major portion of the total area of land under the plough is so utilised that the cultivation of one crop follows closely that of another. Thus, millet is mostly grown in the land, also producing maize, and the land for maize is utilised even partially, if not fully, in the cultivation of barley. Of 96.45 acres of maize-producing land in the ownership of the villagers, 12.47 acres (12.9 per cent) also produce millet. Barley is grown in 4.65 acres of land (4.8 per cent). Again, of 6.72 acres of the maize-growing land under cultivation on crop-share basis and being not in the ownership of the villagers, 1.90 acres of land (28.3 per cent) are also used for the cultivation of paddy. Taking into consideration the area of cultivated land as a whole, owned or not, it appears that 8.7 per cent of the area of cultivable land is utilised for double-cropping.

Reciprocal aid in agriculture

Mutual aid on reciprocal basis in agricultural operations is widely prevalent and commonly practised in Upper Pedong. Instead of tradition, environmental factors appear to have given birth to the local practice of reciprocal aid. As already mentioned, the monsoons provide natural water for agriculture in Upper Pedong too. Water, collected and stored in individual plots, partially affects the supply of the same to plots in lower altitudes of the same ridge. Rainwater, also collected and stored in plots at lower altitudes, does not always meet the needs adequately. Hence, cultivation is undertaken in the plots, first enjoying the fruits of early showers. Against such a context reciprocal aid becomes a necessity in the concomitant conditions of agriculture in the hill tract of Upper Pedong and assumes an importance on its intrinsic merits. To enable the landed cultivators in lower altitudes, failing to enjoy the natural benefits of rain in times of need and to have a share of the rainwater stored in plots in higher altitudes, the tillers cultivating the plots in higher altitudes own the responsibility to complete their work in record time. But, not always equipped with the necessary resources of labour and animal power to complete the work of cultivation in target time, the cultivators in need require help from others. At this stage the farmers from the lower elevations come forward to extend help to the former group. The gesture of co-operation is motivated largely by self-interest, but,

Okhly & Musly—Pestle and Mortar for hand-pounding
the height of the *Okhly*—1′ 7″
the length of the *Musly*—3′ 9″



the spirit of cooperation and mutual help benefit both the groups of farmers. Locally known as *Parma*, the system of reciprocal aid is known to the Bhutias as *Khala*, according to which the neighbours of both the sexes help the cultivating households in need of aid from the neighbours for a number of days till the work in the field is completed. Whether for tilling the land or sowing the seeds or harvesting the crops, the system is invoked. The assisting household is reciprocally helped at the time of cultivation of his own land in the lower altitude for the same number of mandays for which help has been extended by him earlier. The members helping in the actual agricultural operations on reciprocal aid are usually treated to tea and light tiffin. The Table 74 would show the extent of reciprocal aid prevalent among the agriculturist households of Upper Pedong.

No household appears to have used any new agricultural implement in course of last five years. Fifty per cent of the cultivating households borrow agricultural implements from others at the time of cultivation and have in their ownership cultivable land with an area not exceeding four acres on an average per household. But, the households with more than four acres of cultivated land in the ownership of each possess all the agricultural implements required by them. The system of *Parma* (Reciprocal aid) is so universal that all but four families mutually aid one another in all the agricultural activities and receive help in return.

Of the 27 landless sharecropper households (excluding the solitary landed cultivator-*cum*-sharecropper), only five households with all the agricultural tools and implements in their

TABLE 74

RECIPROCAL AID IN AGRICULTURE

Landed area under cultivation (in acres)	No. of households owning the land under cultivation	Total area of the land under cultivation (in acres)	No. of households borrowing agricultural implements from others	No. of households taking help of neighbours at the time of sowing or harvesting	No. of households assisting their neighbours and receiving help from them at the time of cultivation
0.1 to 1.0	..	..	..	..	..
1.1 to 2.0	21	34.21	15	19	19
2.1 to 3.0	8	20.99	5	7	7
3.1 to 4.0	4	13.80	2	4	4
4.1 to 6.0	3	13.45	..	3	3
5.1 to 6.0	1	5.48	..	1	1
6.1 to 7.0	2	12.65	..	2	2
7.1 to 8.0	3	22.25	..	2	2
8.1 to 9.0	..	..	..	..	..
9.1 to 10.0	1	10.00	..	1	1
10.1 and above	1	23.07	..	1	1
Total	**44**	**155.90**	**22**	**40**	**40**

individual ownership do not have to borrow them from others. Again, seven households among the landless sharecroppers depend on reciprocal aid in cultivating their land, whereas the remaining 20 households do not have to depend on the help of their covillagers in the seasons of cultivation.

Manure and fertilisers

Cowdung is used almost universally the timeold manure, collected by the cultivator households owning cattle from their cattlesheds throughout the year for preservation in a remote corner of their homestead land and allowed to decompose. Cemented pits, ten feet long, five feet wide and two to three feet deep, are specially constructed by seven households in a corner of the homestead to store and preserve cowdung. Four households have also received loan from the Government of West Bengal through the Office of the Block Development Officer of Kalimpong National Extension Service Block II at Algarah for the purpose of constructing *pucca* pits to process indigenous organic manure. The use of chemical fertilisers or-other improved type of organic manure is quite infrequent and less wide. Of the cultivators owning agricultural land, only four families are in the habit of using ammonium sulphate regularly. Three of them are owners of large areas of cultivated land, as they own 23.07, 10.0 acres of cultivated land respectively. The fourth household owns only 2.40 acres of land. Besides, one more household is reported to have used chemical fertilisers for a couple of years, but has since given up its use, being not convinced of any utility from the use of fertilisers in boosting up the yield of his land.

Average productivity

To estimate the average productivity of land for different crops grown in Upper Pedong, the total acreage of land under a particular crop and the total produce have been taken into consideration to prepare the Table 75 on the average productivity of land per acre according to the crop-pattern.

TABLE 75

AVERAGE YIELD OF DIFFERENT CROPS

Crop	Total acreage (including double cropping land)	Total production (in *Maunds*)	Average productivity (in *Maunds*)
Paddy	20.20	153	7.6
Maize	96.45	674	7.0
Barley	24.15	152	6.2
Buckwheat	7.32	48	6.6
Millet	18.28	122	6.7
Ginger	2.62	173	66.0

It appears that the per acre yield of the crops grown in the village is not very high. But, keeping in view the high altitude of the village, where land is mostly unsuitable for cultivation, the average productivity of an acre of land for every crop is satisfactory.

Improved methods of cultivation

As pointed out earlier, a large portion of the total area of land in the village remains fallow. Of the total landed area, 3.4 per cent owned by the villagers consist of cultivable fallow, and 14.2 per cent comprise uncultivable fallow. Inflation in the price of foodgrains in recent years and the growing scarcity of food, however, have tended the cultivating households to be more aware of the importance of cultivation and accordingly induced them to put larger landed area under the plough with the avowed purpose of growing more foodgrains and earning more from the sale of the cash crops. Therefore, some of the landowner households with cultivable fallow have become alert, directing themselves to the reclamation of as much waste land as possible.

Out of 44 landed cultivator households, ten families have brought under cultivation 8.40 acres of cultivable fallow in course of last five years, inspite of difficulties, risks and high expenses.

The villagers have not yet used any improved seed for any crop. On some occasions, some seeds offered but too belatedly have been of little use to them. The villagers are still unaware of any improved methods of cultivation and the Japanese method of cultivation is unheard of. The soil-conservation measures have not yet produced any tangible change in the cropping pattern, though the measures embrace steps like construction of high ridges, terracing etc., introduced in 25 acres of land.

Food available for the village

An element of unavoidable discrepancy between the total produce grown in the land owned by the residents of Upper Pedong and the total produce available to them has crept in, because in some cases land owned by the villagers is cultivated by persons living outside the village on crop-share basis. Obviously, therefore, a portion of the produce is taken as share by outsiders. Besides, in cases where land outside the village and owned by households of the same village is cultivated on crop-share by the households of Upper Pedong, a part of the total produce instead of the whole, is available to the villagers. The Table 76 relates to the crops at the disposal of the villagers.

TABLE 76

CROPS AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE VILLAGE

Crop	Total produce at the disposal of the villagers (in *Maunds*)
Paddy	149
Maize	696
Barley	159
Buckwheat	49
Ginger	175
Millet	128
Total	**1,356**

Self-sufficiency or scarcity

On a resume, it is observed that 43 households take rice as staple food in the two principal meals of the day, the rest daily consuming rice as the staple food of their diet in one principal meal. The villagers as a whole take rice at least once a day, while the members in about half the total number of families take rice twice a day.

If a hillman above 14 years of age takes four *Chhataaks* of rice on an average in his principal meal and a child in the age-group (5-14) takes approximately three *Chhataaks* of rice in one principal meal, the total annual requirement of the people of the village alone roughly comes to 1,162 *Maunds* of paddy, on the assumption that all the members in 87 households consume rice only once a day in one of the principal meals. Only 149 *Maunds* of paddy being available to the households of the village, the actual deficit of paddy in the village looks quite large, mounting up further when one takes into account the persons consuming rice twice a day. In recent years more and more households are reportedly switching over to maize, wheat, barley or buckwheat, the crops believed to be occupying a prominent place in the dietary of the people as one of the staple food-substitute for rice in the principal meal.

On the basis of one principal meal per member per day about 1,162 *Maunds* of paddy are required. The village actually requires a larger quantity of paddy, the estimated figure ranging between 2,000 *Maunds* and 2,500 *Maunds*. But, the total stock of foodgrains (paddy, maize, barley and buckwheat) at the disposal of the village from the supply of their own produce is found to be 1,053 *Maunds* only. A deficit village unable to produce the target quantity of foodgrains to meet its own annual requirements, Upper Pedong meets only 50.0 per cent of the required quantity of food from its own stock of agricultural production. The village has, therefore, to depend on the neighbouring *Bustees* (Residential localities) to meet the deficit.

Disposal of agricultural produce

Agricultural produce, obtained by the villagers, is not consumed by them wholly but partially retained for disposal by sale at the different *Hats* and in the neighbouring villages. The Table 77 shows the details of the households selling a portion of the produce obtained by them.

Fifty per cent of the households growing paddy, 32.8 per cent of the households producing maize and 15.6 per cent of the households producing barley dispose of a portion of the produce obtained by them. But buckwheat, obtained by the producer household, is not sold even in part. All but two households producing ginger (93.8 per cent of the ginger-growers) dispose of the main bulk of the produce, whereas in contrast only 28.6 per cent of the households growing millet dispose of a portion of the grain produced by them.

If some of the households dispose of a portion of the agricultural produce, grown by them, they do so not because they have any surplus. None of the households disposing of paddy has, in fact, any surplus produce. Likewise, none of the fourteen households sells maize from their household stock of agricultural produce, because of surplus. Two households selling barley do not find the quantity of grains produced by them to be surplus. Ginger being not a foodstuff itself, the households growing the same mostly dispose of this crop, keeping only a part for domestic consumption. Millet, used for the preparation of liquor, is retained for domestic consumption throughout the year by the majority (77.4 per cent) of the households.

The Table 78 would throw light on the quantity of produce disposed of.

TABLE 78

DISPOSAL OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE

Crop	Total quantity (in *Maunds*) at the disposal of the villagers	Toal quantity (in *Maunds*) disposed of by the villagers	Percentage
Paddy	149	24.0	16.0
Maize	696	99.0	14.2
Barley	159	12.0	7.5
Buckwheat	49	..	..
Ginger	75	159.5	91.4
Millet	28	32.0	25.0

From the pattern of disposal of the agricultural produce one does not find it had to read the relative importance, the different crops have assumed to the villagers. It appears that 91.4 per cent of the total quantity of the ginger produced in the village, 25.0 per cent of the millet, 6.0 per cent of the paddy, 14.2 per cent of the maize and only 7.5 per cent of the barley, produced or obtained by the villagers, are disposed of by sale.

TABLE 77

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND DISPOSER OF PRODUCE

Status of cultivator	No. of households growing paddy	No. of households selling a portion of the paddy	No. of households producing maize	No. of households selling a portion of the maize	No. of households producing barley	No. of households selling a portion of barley	No. of households producing buckwheat	No. of households selling a portion of buckwheat	No. of households producing ginger	No. of households selling a portion of ginger	No. of households producing of millet	No. of households selling a portion of millet
Owner-cultivator	8	2	4	22	32	5	11	..	27	26	29	9
Sharecropper	4	4	23	..	..	..	..	..	5	4	6	1
Total	**12**	**6**	**27**	**22**	**32**	**5**	**11**	..	**32**	**30**	**35**	**10**

Livestock, forestry and plantation

It is interesting that livestock even being an important economic resource for the economy of the village, occupationally only one worker in the village is connected with the rearing of livestock.

It is, however, not intended to underestimate in any way the role of livestock in the economy of the village. Income has been supplemented by 30 households from the sale of milk and milk products like butter and *Ghee* (Clarified butter), the daily turnover of sale of milk alone being 42.750 kilograms. The households owning draught cattle employ them in ploughing the land of the households owning one draught bullock. The households owning goats and sheep rear the young stock for sale at a later stage. The households rearing ducks or geese sell the birds as well as their eggs. Rearing of livestock as such has not yet been accepted by the villagers as a remunerative occupation. Though a section of the villagers treats the birds and the animals as good stock for investment to ensure a steady and secure income, if not employment, to supplement the household budget and to acquire some convertible asset in hours of crisis and need, livestock does not call for fulltime attention of the males, when the number of birds and beasts are very small in individual ownership. The female members of the household find enough time to attend to them.

That is why, poor households particularly evince some interest in the investment of their little savings on livestocks, which are disposed of by sale in hours of exigency. A Sheep Breeding Station, under construction by the Department of Animal Husbandry and Livestock, the Goverment of West Bengal, employs a Rai male of 31 years of age as a labourer on a monthly wage of Rs.60.00 *paise* only.

A Sherpa female, aged 38 years is a plantation labourer in Munsong Cinchona Plantation as a daily commuter from the village, earning Rs.40.00 *paise* as her monthly wage from this occupation.

Two persons, one aged 35 years and another 60 years and belonging to the Kami and the Mangar communities respectively, are employed by the local Forest Beat Office in the village as casual labourers from time to time in log-cutting operations. The average annual income from the work has been reported to be Rs.550.00 *paise* for each. The real income goes up, if the facility of rent-free quarter provided by the Forest Beat Office to the labourers is taken into account and computed to monetary figures. An old man of 81 years of age, a Sanyashi is still continuing in his occupation as a woodcutter-*cum*-seller. Logs of wood, hewn from the trees felled in the forest, are brought by him to the village for sale. The occupation is stated to have yielded an average annual income of Rs.250.00 *paise*.

Houschold manufacturing industry

The village is devoid of any noteworthy manufacturing, servicing or processing industry, whether large-scale or small-scale. An unmarried Sikkimese Bhutia woman within her teens is engaged at home in the manufacture of indigenous liquor from millet on a very small-scale. In the evening, customers, constituted mostly by her acquaintances, friends and relatives, visit her house for a drink on payment of some token of cash. The private bar, even though an unlicensed establishment, has supplemented the income of the family. An amount of Rs.200.00 *paise* a year accrues from the nondescript, private unlicensed trade in home-made liquor, brewed and distilled secretly in one of the bedrooms.

Non-household manufacturing industry

In addition to the five persons engaged in manufacturing other than household industry of carpentry, there are two other persons who are carpenters by their subsidiary occupations.

TABLE 79

CARPENTARY AS A VOCATION

Community	Age	Educational standard	Nature of occupation	By whom trained	Aproximate annual income from the profession Rs. *Paise*	Average per capita annual income Rs. *Paise*
Sikkimese Bhutia	55	Class II	Primary	Father	290 00	
Ditto	25	..	Ditto	Ditto	290 00	
Ditto	18	Class II	Ditto	Ditto	290 00	
Lepcha	60	Class III	Ditto	Dr. Graham's Home, Kalimpong	350 00	284 00
Limbu	70	..	Ditto	Ditto	200 00	
Rai	29	Class IV	Subsidiary	Ditto	250 00	
Bhujel	39	..	Ditto	Father	200 00	225 00

The Table 79 shows the details of all the seven carpenters.

Of the seven persons with the occupation of a carpenter (2.3 per cent of the working force), five carpenters are within the working age-group of 15-59, the remaining two carpenters belonging to the old age-group of 60 years and above. Again to four craftsmen though the techniques of the carpenter's trade have been hereditary, they have not been so to three others who have acquired the skill and technical knowledge of the artificer as apprentice trainees in Dr. Graham's Home at Kalimpong, founded in 1900 by very Rev. Dr. J. A. Graham, Guild Missionary of the Church of Scotland, with the object "to provide for children wholly or partly of British or other European descent such an education and training based upon Protestant principles, as may fit them for emigration to British Colonies or for suitable work elsewhere". Thanks to the Home's vocational training, the carpenters of the village have not had the necessity to migrate to a distant land for an honourable living.

The area of business of the carpenters covers the neighbouring villages within a radius of five to six kilometres. The seven carpenters of the village attend to calls from outside mostly on foot. Quite infrequently do they undertake a journey by bus and even when they do so, they undertake the journeys only to work in villages situated on the busroute. The carpenters generally work on daily wages, the rate varying between Rs.4.00 *paise* to Rs.5.00 *paise*. At times they also work on piece-rate basis or job-contract. They are concerned mostly with the manufacture of wooden frames for doors and various other items of furniture, such as, chairs, tables, benches, stools etc. The craftsmen set off with their own box of tools comprising varieties of axe, saw, chisel, hand-driven drilling machine, hammer, file etc.

Construction

Because of the hazard of regular landslips during the monsoons, roads often impassable after a landslide, are closed to vehicular traffic in case of extreme danger. Roads are otherwise always under repair, more so at the place where it demands the attention of qualified engineers. Construction and repair of roads are, therefore, seldom discontinued, lest the drivers should find it difficult to negotiate their vehicles at any place because of bad maintenance. Improved communications have opened a new avenue

with several opportunities of employment to the people already pursuing their existing vocations. Construction of new buildings and repair of old ones by the Government of West Bengal for different wings of administration at the village-level have also added a new chapter to the local economy. Construction and repair of roads and buildings have created opportunities for labour-itensive jobs, inviting the potential labour-force seeking employment as skilled and unskilled labourers and also partially easing the problem of rural unemployment in the lean months of agricultural operations.

The villagers, engaged in the broad Industrial Category of construction, pursue the occupations, detailed in Table 80.

TABLE 80

WORKERS IN CONSTRUCTION

Occupation	No. of workers engaged
Labourer	57
Labour Supervisor *(Baider)*	4
Contractor of construction of road	3
Khalasi	2
Mason	3
Total	**69**

Road-labourer

About 82.6 per cent of the persons engaged in construction comprise labourers employed in different stages of road-construction. Incidentally, the labourers in construction of roads constitute 30.6 per cent of the total workers of the village. The labourers in road-construction also comprise heads of households accounting for nearly 20.7 per cent of the total households in Upper Pedong. The distribution of the labourers according to age and sex is given in the Table 81.

Elderly villagers, especially those above 60 years of age, do not participate in the construction and repair of roads. The arduous nature of work in road-building demanding hard labour has acted as the deterrent factor and dissuaded the old people from participation in the working force of road-labourers. But contrary to the humanitarian principle, the employment of child labour, even in limited number, explaning about 7.0 per cent of the total labour-force, appears to be in practice. Minor working girls below 14 years of age tend to tilt the balance of the sex-ratio of the child-labour employed in road-construction in favour of the Eves. The participation of only one male child in the same activity has, however, made the labour force among the children at work in road-sites representative of both the sexes. Further details of the road-labourers, engaged in the construction of roads, are highlighted by the Table 82.

TABLE 81

ROAD LABOURERS

Age-group	No. of road-labourers		
	Male	Female	Total
Upto 14	1	3	4
15-34	21	16	37
35-59	10	6	16
60+	..	..	..
Total	**32**	**25**	**57**

Though the participation-rate of the Bhujels in road-construction is the highest, the feature by itself is not important enough to arrest one's attention and merit an analytical probe, as the community is numerically in the minority. The participation-rate appears to be remarkably high and even greater than the village-average among the Sherpas, Dukpas, Tamangs, Gurungs and the Limbus. The higher participation-rate of the Sherpas, Dukpas and the Tamangs in road-construction is accountable to the pattern of their land-ownership.

The daily routine of life of the labourers, breaking the stones on the road-side or sizing

TABLE 82

ETHNIC IDENTITY OF THE ROAD LABOURERS

Community	No. of house-holds	No. of households with one or more road-labourers	Total no. of workers	No. of road-labourers	Participation-rate of workers in road-construction
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	2	25	3	12.0
Dukpa	5	3	9	4	44.4
Tamang	17	10	35	14	40.0
Rai	11	3	40	9	20.5
Sherpa	9	8	29	16	55.2
Kami	6	3	11	3	27.3
Lepcha	4	..	5	..	..
Limbu	4	2	9	3	33.3
Sanyashi	4	..	4	..	..
Chhetri	4	1	4	1	25.0
Gurung	3	1	5	2	40.0
Newar	2	..	3	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	3	2	66.7
Mangar	1	..	1	..	..
Yakha	1	..	1	..	..
Brahman	1	..	1	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	1	..	..
Total	**87**	**34**	**186**	**57**	**30.6**

a stone-slab or carrying buckets of water is not kaleidoscopic. Attendance of the majority of the labourers to the work-site early in the morning on the Kalimpong-Rishi Road is a punctual event. The workers carry their own tools and implements comprising mostly baskets and axes, to work under the supervision of a *Baider* (Labour Supervisor). The job done by all and sundry comprises the breaking of boulders into pieces, loading of the hewn stone-chips into baskets and their carriage to the site of work. The work is in full swing till 3 P.M. or 4 P.M. During the recess of an hour's duration earlier, most of the workers return home for a light refreshment or tiffin. All the workers do not get the same wage on account of different rates for different classes of labour. Whereas an adult male gets a daily wage of Rs.3.00 *paise*, his female counterpart is paid a wage of Rs.2.00 *paise* a day. A child of 12 years or above, is paid a daily wage of Rs.1.75 *paise*.

The regular workers engaged as road-labourers apart, 28 casual road-labourers in the village seek employment in the road-building schemes of the locality and around as a subsidiary means of livelihood during seasonal agricultural unemployment. Needless to mention, these casual labourers, comprising a section of the cultivators of Upper Pedong, thus augment the band of road-labourers to 85, explaining 45.7 per cent of the total workers of the village. A guesswork sizes up the role of

road-construction in building the village economy.

Labour supervisor

It is the *Baider*, as the Labour Supervisor is locally called, who employs the labourers in the road-construction work on daily wage on behalf of the contractor who undertakes the work of construction or repair of the road from the Public Works (Road) Department under the Government of West Bengal. The *Baider* supervises the work done by the gang of labourers appointed by him and pays them their wage daily at the end of their work in the afternoon. Compared to the daily wage of Rs.3.00 *paise* earned by an adult male labourer, the remuneration of a *Baider* for his day's labour stands at Rs.5.00 *paise*. The higher wage and the supervisory nature of work of a *Baider* invests him with some prestige in the eyes of the villagers. Because of certain discretionary executive powers, mostly preremptory, delegated by the contractor to a *Baider* and wielded at times by the latter to enforce discipline among the workers and to command respect from them by an authoritative management and control in the appointment of personnel and dismissal of a truant or an insolent worker, often the *Baider* is elevated to a position approximating to that of supreme employer whose decrees are seldom revocable and in no wise appealable. As a consequence, the *Baider* by virtue of his position as the *de facto* employer is placed in a singularly privileged position in the social hierarchy of the village, enjoying some distinction and status, not otherwise proffered on members of the same ethnic group adhering to different professions or occupations. The Table 83 will show the details of the demographic characteristics and the socio-cultural profile of the four *Baiders*.

TABLE 83

LABOUR SUPERVISOR

Community	Age	Educational attainment	Nature of occupation	Aproximaate annual income from the occupation (Rs.)	Average annual income (Rs.)
Sikkimes Bhutia	30	Class VI	Primary	700.00	680.00
Tamang	62	Class IX	Primary	920.00	
Ditto	41	Class VI	Primary	600.00	
Rai	29	Class IV	Primary	500.00	

Contractor of roads

Before the details about the household and the workers therein pursuing the occupation of the road-contractor are specified, it should be pointed out that a contractor undertaking the execution of a definite scheme on the construction or repair of a road for a stretch of specified distance is assuredly an *entrepreneur* with his capital invested in the engineering work relating to a road-construction. In reality, the profession as such may be treated to be a commercial venture specialising in the construction or repair of highways or roads. A businessman truly speaking, the contractor in Upper Pedong is the head of a Tamang household, aged 60 years, being assisted by two sons, one aged about 27 years and another 19 years. The head has read upto Class V, the eldest son upto the Matriculation standard and the youngest upto Class VIII. The father of the head of the household was also a contractor with sphere of his business in the plantations. The present head and his two sons work in



Warmth to swell the grain

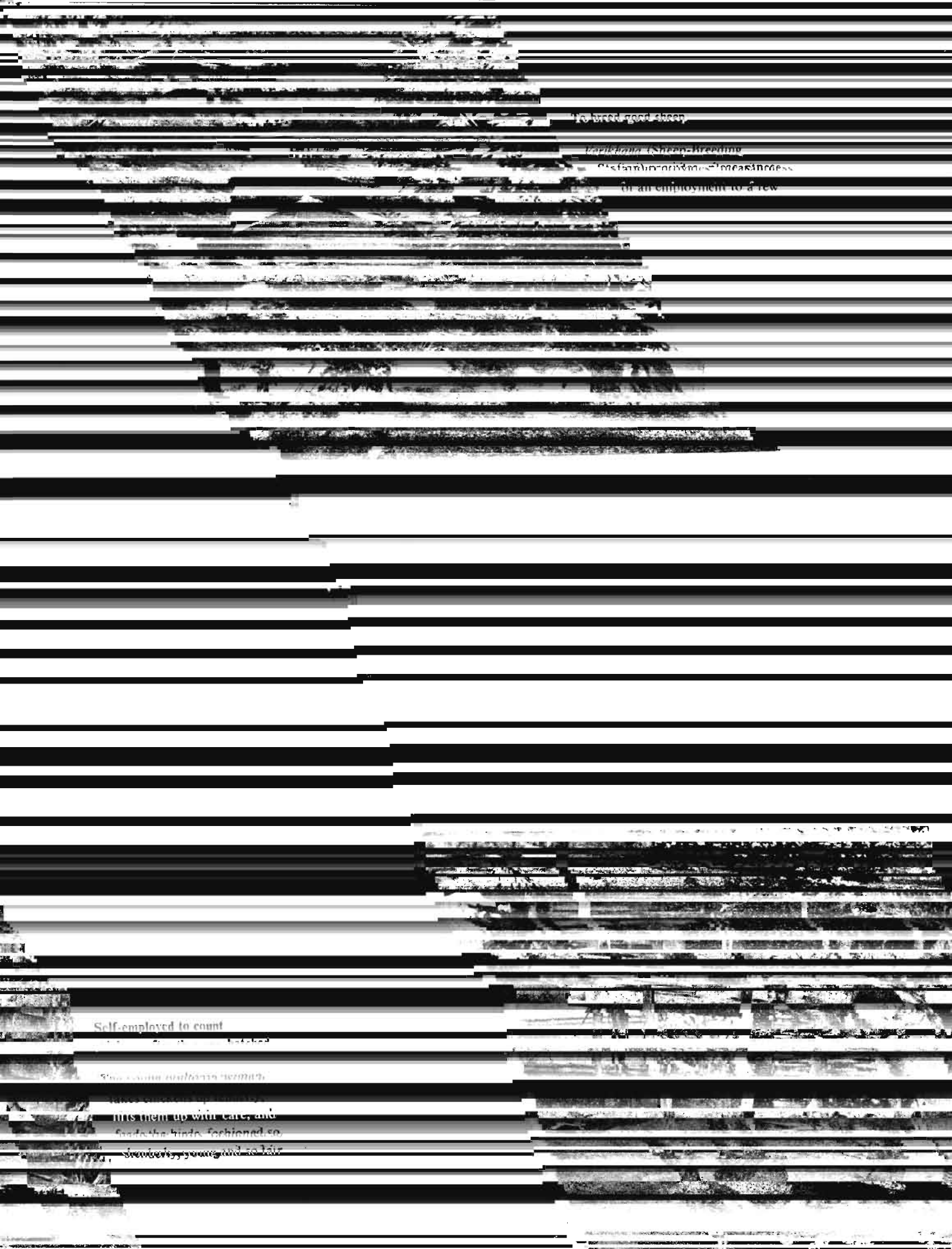
A couple in the agricultural
land where plants of maize
have grown about high to
seeds scattered there, clearing
the pernicious weeds.

Rejected but not destroyed

Natural manure being

cemented litter of putrid





close unision in assignments from the Public Works (Roads) Department of the Government of West Bengal. They engage *Baiders* through whom labourers and masons are appointed and provided with necessary materials and requisite equipments. The contractor works outdoor from Pedong *Khas Mahal* to the Rishi Bridge. The contractor visits the work-sites sometimes in a Jeep of the Public Works (Roads) Department accompanied by Engineers of the Government and sometimes on foot to supervise personally the work done by the gangsmen. When asked to return the approximate amount of the running capital invested in his business, the Tamang contractor intelligently evaded a direct answer. But when pressed further to disclose his income from business, an approximate annual income Rs.3,000.00 *paise* was reported by the respondent to have been earned from the road-construction work. The respondent does not, however, hesitate to conceal his actual income by citing a standing liability of Rs.6,000.00 *paise* on account of some loss in business.

Khalasi—There are two *Khalasis* in the village, one a Sherpa of 21 years of age and another, a Lepcha aged about 23 years. Whereas the Lepcha has read upto Class III, the Sherpa is illiterate. The Lepcha is the head of his household, while the Sherpa is not so in his family. Both are employed as sweeper *-cum-*cleaner in the work-site of road-construction by the Public Works (Roads) Department of the Government of West Bengal on a monthly wage of Rs.62.00 *paise*.

Masons—Upper Pedong has a triumvirate of Tamang masons, two of whom are below 30 years of age with education upto Class V and Class III respectively, the third man of the trio being an unlettered elderly person of 59 years. Heads of their respective households, the three persons with an unbroken record of their steadfast adherence to the builder's trade have been faithfully pursuing the hereditary occupations of their families, conforming to the tradition of several generations past. The subsidiary occupation of cultivation as a sharecropper further exemplifies the supplementary role of agriculture and construction in the economy of the village. The three masons find gainful employment in the construction of houses and roads alike. The daily wage of Rs.2.50 *paise*, paid to a mason, does not at all compare unfavourably with that paid to the unskilled road-labourers.

Role of construction in the village-economy

The productivity of the soil of the village being not conducive to the growth of agriculture as the main crop of the village-economy, the advent of activities like construction may be construed as a fortuitous boon to the residents of Upper Pedong, providing a second line of defence to the straitened and indigent agricultural economy of the village. It requires hardly any proof to emphasise that construction has saved the village from cosumptive undernourishment and has arrested a decaying process by infusion of an element of vitality into the metabolism of economic growth and sustenance. The magnetic spell of constructional work cast on the village may be understood from the fact that 37.9 per cent of the households of Upper Pedong are recent immigrants in course of last 15 years, being drawn to the tempting potentialities of employment in the wake of the construction of Algarah-Pedong Road in 1950-51. Once the roads were constructed, their maintenance and repair in the hilly terrain have kept the ball rolling.

The agricultural sector has provided employment to 50.5 per cent of the workers of the village. Of the remaining 45.5 per cent claimed by the non-agricultural sector, as much as 37.1 per cent of the workers therein are engaged in construction, 30.7 per cent in repairing work on roads, 2.2 per cent as labour-supervisors, 1.6 per cent as road contractors, 1.1 per cent as *Khalasis* and 1.6 per cent as masons. Again, of all the 65 workers with subsidiary

occupations, 29 persons (44.6 per cent) are engaged in construction.

Another salient feature of road-construction is that it offers steady and continuous opportunities of employment to absorb the surplus labour-force of the village throughout the year. The opening of new vehicular roads connecting Kalimpong with different parts of the district and also the improved and faster means of transport have made the maintenance of the roads an imperative necessity, consequencing in the inflow of labourers as a continuous process. Frequent landslides in the rains make the roads impassable. Therefore, the employment of a large fleet of labourers to clear the road-blockade and restore normal traffic movement becomes logically an important issue. Road-construction, therefore, keeps not only the traffic agoing but invigorates also the local economy, bolstering up a section of the villagers who, in the absence of such an agency for ready employment, would have been a group of blighted people, a perennial drag on the economic life of Upper Pedong.

Trade and commerce

Upper Pedong is essentially and out and out a residential village, trade and commerce having no place and little function in the village proper. The mart for Upper Pedong is located in Pedong Bazar on the arterial Kalimpong-Rishi Road along which the marketing and shopping centres for the village under survey have grown. Nobody ever feels interested in the village to run any trade for a very small clientele in Upper Pedong nor does any resident ever feel that the market at Pedong Bazar is at all distant from the village. Upper Pedong, has therefore, no place for any shop in its heart or any market within its bounds. Only two persons, one a seller of tea and another a pedlar of flattened rice, have retained some vestige of trade and commerce within the village.

Seller of tea

An old, illiterate Gurung woman of 56 years sells brewed tea, prepared to taste, at Pedong every *Hat*-day and is reported to earn an annual income of Rs.100.00 *paise*, an amount, very insufficient though for one's maintenance, being further supplemented by remittances from her son.

Trader in flattened rice

An illiterate Dukpa, aged 50 years, and incidentally also the head of his household, trades in flattened rice, roving on foot from place to place with the ware. Purchased from Pedong Bazar or Kalimpong in bulk at a wholesale price, flattened rice is sold in retail in the villages around and also at the *Hats* at Pedong Bazar and Algarah. The trade yields a net annual income of Rs.450.00 *paise*. A subsidiary occupation of cultivation of his own land measuring 1.40 acres during the slack months of his trade earns him a supplementary income in kind.

Other services

While agriculture and road-construction as the twin massive pillars support the economic structure of Upper Pedong, a few vocations, even though followed by a relatively insignificant proportion of workers, send their modest contributions to the coffers of individual households. Other services comprising the occupations with fixed incomes and also the professions of some functionaries of the village-society come under this group, wherein 10 persons or 5.4 per cent of the total workers of the village are engaged. Three persons are pursuing the independent profession of a village-priest. The local, educational institution in the village has provided employment to four persons and the Local Health Centre to three others.

Teachers

St. George Mission High School, the local high school of the village, is not only endowed

with a long heritage of a philanthropic institution for the spread of education among the less advanced people in a hilly region or enriched with the past record of the glory of a proselytizing agency to preach a gospel and convert to an alien religion the people of the place by a labour of love, but has also employed four persons in its service as teachers. One finds little scope to underestimate the role of the institution in enabling four pedagogues of the village to carve out a successful career and in placing them in a respectable profession with a fixed salary, quite a handsome figure in the context of the earnings from other occupations. The Table 84 will enumerate the biodata of the persons in the teaching profession.

All the teachers except the two Newars are heads of their respective households. Three teachers have no secondary occupation, while one teacher cultivates under personal supervision his own land measuring 130 acres.

TABLE 84

TEACHING AS A PROFESSION

Community	Sex	Educational qualification	Age	School in which employed	Annual salary Rs.	*Paise*
Sikkimese Bhutia	Male	Intermediate	39	St. George Mission High School	1,440	00
Newar	Male	Bachelor of Arts	28	Ditto	1,440	00
Ditto	Female	Matriculate	38	Ditto	960	00
Unspecified	Male	Marticulate	25	Ditto	960	00

Priests

An effort to associate religion with economy amounts to a sacrilege. Subject to interpretation as a digression though, it will not be so profane as to attempt an analysis of the pursuits of the priests of the village. If the sacerdotal offices of three villagers have not defiled their sacrosanctity because of the cash-nexus for some of their functions, one may justifiably find even the religious life of the village to be economically resourceful, capable of providing dignified means of livelihood to a few people. Here too the two individuals are backed by two religious institutions in their livelihood, though not directly, to earn a remunerative income in cash. Attached to their respective institutions, the two religious functionaries not only find the needs of their life met by their respective institutions, but also gain some added authority and vest of pontifical prerogatives to make their offices indispensable to the village-life. Their functions to render religious services to individual households in individual capacities and for that matter, divorced from the institutions they are now attached to, call for a remuneration. The vicarial profession draws its life-force from a religious calling, but itself it sustains in a different way and to a limited extent the economic life of the village also.

Priesthood, as a vocation accepted by three villagers consisting of a Sikkimese Bhutia, a Dukpa or a Bhutanese Bhutia and a Nepali Brahman, is the hereditary occupation of the households of which the three priests are the heads.

Presiding *Lama* (Priest) of the Sikkimese *Gompa* (Monastery) of the village, the Sikkimese Bhutia prelate is provided with rent-free residential quarters attached to the *Gompa*. Required to perform the worship of the deity of the *Buddha* along with other rituals in the *Gompa* everyday, the *Lama* has an annual income of Rs. 500.00 *paise* from his remuneration.

A free-lance professional without formally being attached to any *Gompa,* the Dukpa officiates as a priest in all the socio-religious ceremonies of the Bhutias, both the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Bhutanese Bhutias. Settled in a plot of homestead land, temporarily provided to him by a Sikkimese Bhutia villager, the Dukpa priest is said to earn an annual income of Rs. 200.00 *paise.*

Regularly called upon to officiate as a priest in the ceremonies and rituals of individual households of all the Hindu Nepali communities of Upper Pedong and the neighbouring villages, the Brahman is formally attached as the high priest to a Hindu temple in Upper Pedong. Required to perform the daily worship in the temple twice a day, the Brahman also attends to household worship of the families of the Nepali communities on call. The annual income of the Brahman from his priestly profession amounts to Rs.500.00 *paise* on an average.

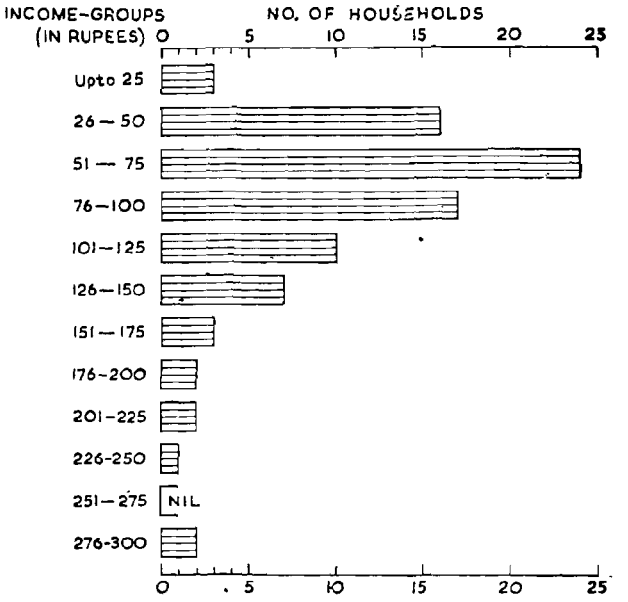
General Duty Assistant

Of the three General Duty Assistants attached to the local Health Centre in the village, one is a Rai, aged 45 years, with education upto Class VII, the other is a Lepcha, 35 years old, with education upto Class IV and the third man is a Limbu, aged 30 years, with education upto Class III. All the three persons are heads of their respective households having no secondary occupation. The annual income of one is reported to be Rs. 1200.00 *paise* from this employment and that of two others is Rs. 960.00 *paise* per person.

Income

The most onerous part of an investigation of the present nature relates to the collection of data on the income of individual households. Suspicious about the objectives of so direct a probe into the income of family, the respondents have often tried to evade direct answers.

MONTHLY INCOME



But, when the questions on income have not been allowed to be skipped over unreplied, the heads of households venture to answer back. Even then the data are not wholly correct on account of certain inherent limitations. In the absence of any systematic budget and record of regular accounts of income and expenditure, the households fail to provide accurate returns remaining contented with approximate estimates. The complexity becomes further multiplied by several other factors. Simultaneous pursuit of more than one occupation in one season and of a different occupation in some other part of the year, lack of continuity of employment throughout the year and so on and so forth afford the households ample scope to conceal, to confuse and to make very wide and sweeping conjectures in answering questions about their income during an investigation. The statistical data culled in the fields, after being subjected to rigid scrutiny, only provide a workable basis, however crude, for a discussion about income. The annual income of Upper Pedong from all sources total Rs. 95.230 *paise* for the period 1965-66. The Table 85 will show the total annual income of the households of all the communities.

Compared to the relative numerical strength of the households of each community and its proportion to the total number of households in the village, the annual income earned by the

TABLE 85

ANNUAL INCOME AND AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD

Community	No. of house-holds	Percentage	Total annual income in rupees	Percentage of total annual income	Annual income per household in rupees	Average monthly income per household in rupees
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	15.0	16,436	17.3	1,264.31	105.36
Dukpa	5	5.8	4,096	4.3	819.20	68.27
Tamang	17	19.6	17,660	18.5	1,038.82	86.57
Rai	11	12.7	15,790	16.6	1,435.45	100.62
Sherpa	9	10.4	11,149	11.7	1,238.78	103·23
Kami	6	6.9	5,135	5.4	855.83	71.32
Lepcha	4	4.6	4,454	4.7	1,113.50	92.80
Limbu	4	4.6	5,970	6.3	1,492.50	124.38
Sanyashi	4	4.6	1,750	1.8	437.50	36.45
Chhetri	4	4.6	3,289	3.4	822.50	68.54
Gurung	3	3.4	2,040	2.1	680.00	56.67
Newar	2	2.3	3,500	3.7	1,750.00	145.83
Bhujel	1	1.1	1,300	1.4	1,300.00	108.30
Mangar	1	1.1	550	0.6	550.00	45.83
Yakha	1	1.1	650	0.7	650.00	54.17
Brahman	1	1.1	500	0.5	500.00	41.67
Unspecified	1	1.1	960	1.0	960.00	80.00
Total	**87**	**100.00**	**95,230**	**100.00**	**2,094.60**	**91.22**

Sikkimese Bhutias the Rais, the Sherpas, the Lepchas, the Limbus, the Newars and the Bhujels is proportionately higher than that earned by the households of other communities. This clearly demarcates a group of households as economically more powerful than others, the numerical strength neither pronouncing nor suggesting them as belonging to any dominant faction. Thus, it appears that 50.7 per cent of the total households of Upper Pedong earn 61.7 per cent of the total annual income of the village, while to the remaining 49.3 per cent of the total number of households accrues 38.3 per cent of the total annual income of Upper

TABLE 86

SOURCE OF ANNUAL INCOME

Source of annual income	Total annual income received (in rupees) by Sikkiemse Bhutia	Dukpa	Tamang	Rai	Sherpa	Kami	Lepcha	Limbu
Cultivation	7,280	885	4,100	6,965	3,390	1,875	570	3.355
Agricultural labour	200	200	400	..	..	130	..	75
Livestock	1,910	500	760	2,120	2,190	..	30	900
Forestry and plantation	100	..	..	50	480	550	..	..
Construction	2,080	1,125	9,960	4,025	5,089	2,110	744	320
Other services	1,940	200	..	1,200	..	..	960	960
Remittances	500	700	1,600	1,180	..	470	1,800	160
Trade and commerce	200	450	..	..	..	..	..	..
Carpentry	870	..	..	250	..	..	350	200
Miscellaneous	1,356	36	840	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**16,436**	**4,096**	**17,660**	**15,790**	**11,149**	**5,135**	**4,454**	**5,970**

Source of annual income	Total annual income received (in rupees) by Sanyashi	Chhetri	Gurung	Newar	Other minority communities	Total	Percetage of total annual income
Cultivation	800	1,200	325	1,100	1,100	32,945	34.6
Agricultural labour	200	..	..	..	..	1,205	1.2
Livestock	..	410	150	..	150	9,120	9.6
Forestry and plantation	350	..	..	..	550	2,080	2.2
Construction	400	500	..	..	500	27,343	28.7
Other services	..	100	490	2,400	1,460	9,120	9.6
Remittances	..	1,080	975	..	..	8,465	8.9
Trade and commerce	..	..	100	..	..	750	0.8
Carpentry	..	..	..	..	200	1,870	2.0
Miscellaneous	..	100	..	..	..	2,332	2.4
Total	**1,750**	**3,290**	**2,040**	**3,500**	**3,960**	**95.230**	**100.00**

Pedong. The inequality of income among the households of different communities in the village is thus a patent fact to bring in sharp focus their economic disparities. The average income of a household in the village amounts to Rs. 1094.60 *paise* annually or Rs.91.22 *paise* a month. Though the highest average monthly income in Upper Pedong is Rs.145.83 *paise*, earned by the Newars, the Rais, the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Bhujels, the Sherpas and the Lepchas earn more than the average monthly income of a householder. Households of the remaining ten communities earn less than the monthly average income for the village, as evident from the Table 85.

As pointed out earlier, no household is peopled with members all pursuing any one single occupation. A number of occupations not only highlights the economic structure of the village but also suggests the variegated occupational pattern of the households of different communities. The same picture is conveyed by the sources of annual income of the households. The sources also delineate the relative importance of the occupations from the point of their economic potentialities to offer a remunerative income. The Table 86 will be a good reckoner.

As pinpointed by the discussion on occcpations, agriculture in general, including both cultivation and agricultural labour, and cultivation in particular top the list of priorities by virtue of the proportion of their contribution to the total annual income of the village. Agricultural sector alone accounts for 35.8 per cent of the total annual income of the households. This bespeaks a very significant part played by the agricultural sector in the village-economy, no other occupation or economic activity competes with the agricultural sector in seeking a position of importance. Construction, however, comes next in importance as the second highest income-earner. The analysis of the occupational structure categorising agriculture and construction as twin props of the economy of Upper Pedong is further corroborated by the fact that to these two occupations. Upper Pedong owes 64.5 per cent of the total annual income of all the households.

Several other interesting features emanate from the Table 87. The Sikkimese Bhutias earn the largest part (45.5 per cent) of their total annual income from agriculture. To the total annual income of the village from agriculture the same community contributes the lion's share (22.6 per cent). The major portion (27.5 per cent) of the total annual income is earned from construction but to the total annual income of all the households from construction the Tamangs contribute the largest share (36.4 per cent). Interestingly, however, construction alone has the maximum (56.4 per cent) to offer to the total annual income of all the Tamang households. In the case of the Rais, the largest contribution (44.1 per cent) to their total annual income is earned from agriculture. The Sherpas owe most of their total annual income (45.6 per cent) to construction and the Kamis also owe (44.1 per cent) to the same source. Among the Lepchas, the economic forces sustaining the households are all generated outside the bournes of Upper Pedong, where the households do not have to look after themselves all along but are also assisted by other non-resident working members. Remittances, no matter whether in large packets or small, in regular intervals or in irregular frequencies, sent by the working members from outside not only indicate the import of extraneous economic resources contributing to the economic growth of the village by way of monetary remittances into the village and the consequential resuscitation of the village-economy, but also suggest indirectly a wider socio-cultural import. While the remittance palpably brings out the socio-economic ties of the resident households of the village with the non-resident working members staying outside,

it also manifests another type of communication and a channel of intercourse, along which the seeds of culture of the distant working place, rural or urban, agricultural or industrial, enter into the village-life to germinate and set in action certain forces of change, substitution or assimilation in disguise. Besides, the remittance is the expression *par excellence* of a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding which motivation alone explains why a person is prompted to remit a protion of his income to some other person or persons living in the household in the village-home. And that identifies the force which coalesces several members of the household together and strikes a note of unity and cohesion in the face of even a disjointed morphological character of the household. Tò come to the point in question about the remittance of the contribution to the total annual income of the Lepcha households, it is observed that this source appears to be quite significant in accounting for the largest

TABLE 87

COMMUNITIES AND SOURCE OF INCOME (PERCENTAGE)

Community	No. of house-holds	Total amount of income (in rupees) from the following sources with corresponding percentage figures form					
		Cultivation	Agricultural labour	Livestock	Forestry and plantation	Construction	Other services
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	7,280 (44.3)	200 (1.2)	1,910 (11.6)	100 (0.6)	2,080 (12.7)	1,940 (11.8)
Dukpa	5	885 (21.6)	200 (4.9)	500 (12.2)	.. ..	1,125 (27.4)	200 (4.9)
Tamang	17	4,100 (23.2)	400 (2.3)	760 (4.3)	.. ..	9,960 (56.4)	.. ..
Rai	11	6,965 (44.1)	.. ..	2,120 (13.4)	50 (0.3)	4,025 (25.5)	1,200 (7.6)
Sherpa	9	3,390 (30.4)	.. ..	2,190 (19.6)	480 (4.3)	5,089 (45.7)	.. ..
Kami	6	1,875 (36.5)	130 (2.5)	.. ..	550 (10.7)	2,110 (41.1)	.. ..
Lepcha	4	370 (12.8)	.. ..	30 (0.7)	.. ..	744 (16.7)	960 (21.5)
Limbu	4	3,355 (56.2)	75 (1.2)	900 (15.1)	.. ..	320 (5.4)	960 (16.1)
Sanyashi	4	800 (45.7)	200 (11.4)	.. ..	350 (20.0)	400 (22.9)	.. ..
Chhetri	4	1,200 (36.5)	.. ..	410 (12.5)	.. ..	500 (15.2)	.. ..
Gurung	3	325 (15.9)	.. ..	150 (7.4)	.. ..	490 (24.0)	.. ..
Newar	2	1,100 (31.4)	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	2,400 (68.6)
Others	5	1,100 (27.8)	.. ..	150 (3.8)	550 (13.9)	500 (12.6)	1,460 (36.9)
Total	**87**	**32,945 (34.6)**	**1,205 (1.2)**	**9,120 (9.6)**	**2,080 (2.2)**	**27,343 (28.7)**	**9,120 (9.6)**

(40.3 per cent) contributory factor building up the total earnings of the Lepcha community from all other sources. Again the income of the Lepchas from remittances, that have added to the total annual income of Upper Pedong, win the top place (21.3 per cent) in the context of the total annual income of the village from this source, The Limbus earn most (57.5 per cent) of their annual income from agriculture, which is incidentally the largest (57.1 per cent) source of the total annual income of the Sanyashi households also. The Chhetris likewise owe to agriculture the most (36.4 per cent). But the Gurung households have working members outside to remit sums in a proportion (47.8 per cent) larger than any other source. The Newars find other services to be more rewarding (68.6 per cent) than agriculture and their earnings from other services distinguish them as earners of higher income (26.3 per cent) in the perspective of the total annual income of Upper Pedong from this avenue. All the

TABLE 87 (contd.)

COMMUNITIES AND SOURCE OF INCOME (PERCENTAGE)

Community	No. of house holds	Total amount of income (in rupees) from the following sources with corresponding percentage figures				Total
		Remittances	Trade	Carpentry	Others	
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	500 (3.0)	200 (1.2)	870 (5.3)	1,356 (8.3)	16,436 (100)
Dukpa	5	700 (17.1)	450 (11.0)	.. ..	36 (0.9)	4,096 (100)
Tamang	17	1,600 (9.1)	.. ..	.. ..	840 (4.7)	17,660 (100)
Rai	11	1,180 (7.5)	.. ..	250 (1.6)	.. ..	15,790 (100)
Sherpa	9	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	11,149 (100)
Kami	6	470 (9.2)	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	5,135 (100)
Lepcha	4	1,800 (40.4)	.. ..	350 (7.9)	130 (3.0)	4,454 (100)
Limbu	4	160 (2.7)	.. ..	200 (3.3)	.. ..	5,970 (100)
Sanyashi	4	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1,750 (100)
Chhetri	4	1,080 (32.8)	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	3,290 (100)
Gurung	3	975 (47.8)	100 (4.9)	.. ..	.. ..	2,040 (100)
Newar	2	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	3,500 (100)
Others	5	.. ..	.. ..	200 (5.0)	.. ..	3,960 (100)
Total	**87**	**8,465** **(8.9)**	**750** **(0.8)**	**870** **(2.0)**	**12,332** **(2.4)**	

other minority communities as a whole also find other services as the most (36.9 per cent) remunerative source compared to other occupations from which they earn their income. The Sherpas occupy a prize position for the largest contribution (24.0 per cent) to the total annual income of Upper Pedong from livestock. In forestry and plantation the Kamis and other minority communities share the honours of twin earners for contribution to the annual income of Upper Pedong from this source in equal proportions (26.4 per cent). The annual income of Upper Pedong from trade and commerce is indeed very small. Yet, in the limited sphere the Dukpas hold an important place for contributing the largest amount (60.0 per cent) to the total annual income of the village earned from trading activities. It has been pointed out earlier that the residential village of Upper Pedong does not offer any prospect to any entrepeneur within its limits for the dependence of the village largely on the commercial centres of Pedong Bazar at its foot. Carpentry itself offers a very modest means of livelihood to the artificers, its contribution to the coffers of the village being also small. The contribution by the Sikkimese Bhutia carpenters wins them the laurels (46.5 per cent) of sharing the highest income of the village from carpentry. The same Sikkimese Bhutia community also shares the major portion (58.1 per cent) of the total annual income of Upper Pedong from miscellaneous other sources.

As the economic structure of the village is not monolithic, it draws its sustenance from different sectors of economy with diverse channels of income. The agricultural sector, an important source of income, alone accounts for 35.8 per cent of the total annual income of the village. The non-agricultural sector with several economic divisions providing rest of the income plays, therefore, an important part in earning an income from a source, primary or subsidiary, for the households of the village. This feature alone characterises Upper Pedong as singularly different from other villages elsewhere in West Bengal where the rural economy is supported by the primary sector of agriculture as the main prop.

In Upper Pedong cultivation remains still an important calling, providing the people with a single major source of income. To the income from the non-agricultural sector construction contributes the lion's share and closely in its heels follow two occupations connected with other services and livestock, each contributing 9.6 per cent of the total annual income of the village. The village also draws 8.9 per cent of its total income from outside sources through remittances. Cultivation and construction together account for two-thirds of the total income of the village. Employment opportunities, opened up by constructional work in and around the village, have helped the non-agricultural sector to generate an economic force of immense potentiality not only to sustain the households but also to mop up the surplus labour-force released on account of agricultural unemployment during the slack seasons of cultivation. The nature of dependence on any single occupation differs from community to community. Whereas the Limbus draw more than half of their total income from cultivation, the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Rais and the Sanyashis earn nearly half of ther income from the same source. The Sherpas, the Kamis, the Chhetris and the Newars depend on cultivation to earn one-third of their total income. The income from cultivation earned by the Dukpas, the Tamangs, the Lepchas and the Gurungs constitute one fourth to one eighth of their total income. But, all other communities except the Sanyashis have very little share in the income offered by the work of an agricultural labour.

To the Sherpas and the Limbus 19.6 per cent and 15.1 per cent respectively of their total income come from livestock. The share of the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dukpas, the Rais and the Chhetris in the earnings from livestock

hardly approximates to even one-eighth part of their total income.

From forestry and plantation the Sanyashis and the Kamis draw one-fifth and one-tenth of their total income respectively. The share of other communities with the exception of the Sherpas in the income from this source is insignificant.

Next to cultivation, the alter ago of most of the communities is construction from which the Tamangs alone earn more than half of their total income.

From other services, the Newars derive more than two-third, the Lepchas earn more than one-fiftienth, the Sikkimese Bhutias draw about one-eighth of their total income, the

TABLE 87

MONTHLY INCOME AND OCCUPATIONS

Industrial classification	Occupation	No. of households	No. of households with monthly income (in rupees)											
			1-25	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-125	126-150	151-175	176-200	201-225	226-250	251-275	276-300
Cultivation	Owner-cultivator	31	..	1	5	9	8	2	1	2	2	..	..	1
	Share-cropper	6	..	2	3	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Agricultural labourer	Agricultural labourer	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Livestock, forestry and plantation	Labourer in Sheep-Breeding Station	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Forest labourer	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Wood-cutter	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Manufacturing other than household industry	Carpenter	3	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Construction	Road labourer	18	1	8	7	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
	Labour supervisor	3	..	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Contractor in road-construction	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
	Khalasi	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Mason	3	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Trade and commerce	Hawker of rice and parched rice	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Tea-seller	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other services	Teacher	3	..	..	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	General Duty Assistant in the Health Centre	3	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
	Priest	3	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Non-worker		4	..	..	1	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total		**87**	**3**	**16**	**24**	**17**	**10**	**7**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**1**	..	**2**

share of the Rais and the Dukpas having insignificant shares. The Gurungs, the Lepchas and the Chhetris are substantially helped by the members working outside their households. Trade and commerce as well as carpentry have a major contribution to the corporate economy of the village. The monthly income of the households according to the occupation of the heads of households is given in the Table 87.

The majority (27.6 per cent) of the households earn a monthly income varying from Rs.51.00 *paise* to Rs.75.00 *paise* and the monthly income of 80.5 per cent of the households do not exceed Rs.125.00 *paise*. On the basis of monthly income, the households may be classified into the low income-group (monthly income upto Rs.100.00 *paise*), middle income-group (monthly income upto Rs.200.00 *paise*) and higher income-group (monthly income upto Rs.300.00 *paise*). It appears that 69.0 per cent of the households are in low income-groups, 25.3 per cent of the households belong to the middle income-group and 5.7 per cent of the households fall in the higher income-group. Whether households in low income-group may be equated with the poor section of the villagers depends on the *per capita* monthly income of the households.

Against the perspective of the economic stratification of the households, the industrial classification of the occupation of the head of the household becomes meaningful. Of the households with their heads engaged in the agricultural sectors comprising the owner-cultivators, the share-croppers and the agricultural labourers, 56.4 per cent belong to the low income-group, 35.9 per cent to the middle-income-group and 7.7 per cent to the higher income-group. Seven households with two heads working as agricultural labourers and five heads as share-croppers belong to the low income-group. Only 9.7 per cent of the households with owner-cultivators belong to the higher income-group. Of the households with their respective heads working in the non-agricultural sector, 79.1 per cent belong to the middle income-group and 4.2 per cent to the higher income-group. The contractor in road-construction and one General Duty Assistant in the Health Centre constitute two heads of households in the higher income-group. The households of all the four heads engaged generally in livestock, forestry and plantation, the households of the two heads working as carpenters, households of 16 heads working as road-labourers, the household of one labour supervisor, households of three masons, two petty traders, two teachers, two General Duty Assistants working in the Health Centres, three priests and three non-workers constituting 38 households belong to the low income-group.

If the figures of monthly income on the basis of the occupations of the heads of households enable one to rank the households on the basis of their economic classifications, the Table 88 will be helpful to locate the households of different communities in different income-levels.

While varying number of households of all the communities except the Bhujels belong to the low income-group, none of the Kami, Sanyashi, Chhetri, Gurung, Mangar, Yakha, Brahman and the unspecified households belongs to the higher income-group. Though none of the Limbu and the Newar households belongs to the middle income-group, a few of them, however, may be ranked in the higher income-group. Again, none of the Dukpa, Sherpa, Lepcha and the Bhujel households belongs to the higher income-group. The Bhujel house-hold among all others belongs to the middle income-group. All the three income-groups cover households of the Sikkimese Bhutia, the Tamang and the Rai communities.

A community-wise analysis of each income-group shows that 53.3 per cent of the Sikkimese Bhutia, 80.0 per cent of the Dukpa, 70.6 per cent of the Tamang, 45.5 per cent of the Rai,

44.4 per cent of the Sherpa, 75.0 per cent each of the Lepcha and the Limbu, 50.0 per cent of the Newar and cent per cent of all the households of the rest of the communities belong to the low income-group.

The middle income-group comprises 38.4 per cent of the Sikkimese Bhutia, 20.0 per cent of the Dukpa, 23.5 per cent of the Tamang, 45.5 per cent of the Rai, 59.6 per cent of the Sherpa, 25.0 per cent of the Lepcha and cent per cent of the Bhujel households.

The higher income-group consisting of the microscopic minority of the villagers comprise one household each from the Sikkimese Bhutia, Tamang, Rai, Limbu and the Newar communities.

Income by itself cannot be a very reliable guide for any economic reconnoitre in any society, urban or rural, unless the profile is examined from different angles and against multiple perspectives. Despite income providing the canvas for a socio-economic portrait of an individual, his household and his community, his occupation and his society, the degree of accuracy of the data, whether concerning the person or his village, is apt to be disturbed by many subjective considerations and complexities of techniques and methods in the collection, collation, analysis and interpretation of the data. The questions, even when direct and

TABLE 88

MONTHLY INCOME AND ETHNIC GROUPS

Community	No. of households	No. of households with monthly income (in rupees)											
		1-25	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-125	126-150	151-175	176-200	201-225	226-250	251-275	276-300
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	..	..	4	3	4	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Dukpa	5	..	3	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	17	..	4	8	..	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	1
Rai	11	..	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	..	1	..	..
Sherpa	9	..	1	2	1	2	2	1	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	6	..	2	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	4	..	..	1	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	4	..	1	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Sanyashi	4	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	1	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	3	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**3**	**16**	**24**	**17**	**10**	**7**	**3**	**2**	..	**1**	..	**2**

unambiguous, do not appear to be innocuous to the interviewee. The enquirer instead is often subjected to critical interrogations by the interviewee because of suspicion and diffidence. Bad accounting, absence of book-keeping habits and far worse memory of the villagers in presenting the figures of income of their respective households often leave no alternative than accepting, on some checks and cross-checks, what is returned by the interviewee with an air of apparent credence and superficial confidentiality. One can either opt to use the datum after making an attempt to squeeze as much correct figure as one can from an unwilling person or lose even that for ever. The information, otherwise quite illuminating and trustworthy because of its conformism to reality, when processed and presented in a tabular form, can beguile any reader to paradoxical conclusions. At least it has proved so in Upper Pedong. The tables relating to monthly income of households, hitherto presented, have led to classification of households into three economic tiers, the low, the middle class and the higher income-group. The observations appear superficially quite sound, but the very foundation of the classification is blasted, when the households are examined in the background of their *per capita* daily income. The economic classification in such a case would be unassailable, if one attempts at the dispersal of income uniformly among all the members of a household and at subsequent economic reclassification of the household. The concentration of pseudo-wealth in a household on the basis of its total income will not appear to be so, if one examines the question of *per capita* income. The stress of the dependants on the earners becomes self-evident from such a reappraisal. The myth that total income of a household also provides an insight into its *inter se* economic ranking with other households is exploded by the question of *per capita* income. The Table 89 relates to the *per capita* daily income of households with reference to their total monthly income.

Fantastic though it may look from a casual glance at the Table 89 that the range of *per capita* daily income can be so varied and polarised, nothing can be more real and impressive than the picture suggested by the table itself. It defeats one's imagination and clouds one's sense of judgement to take into credence the fact that there is in Upper Pedong at least one household with a *per capita* daily income not exceeding 0.20 *paise*. However enigmatic the issue may be to husband such a partly earning to the sky-high expenditure for one's bare living and existence, the insoluble problem is posed by reality and not by *Sphinx*. The probe, if continued further, also divests the households in the higher monthly income-groups of their false sense of security, untenable as such in the face of facts, and elevates some other households in the lower monthly income-groups higher to economic thinks pedestals of economic ranks. If the *per capita* daily income of 0.40 *paise* or less be the yardstick of economic indigence to classify a household with the same *per capita* daily income as very poor, one may very well look upon a household with the *per capita* daily income varying between 0.41 *paise* to 0.80 *paise* as poor, a household with the *per capita* daily income of 0.81 *paise* to Rs.1.50 *paise* as belonging to the middle income-group, a household with the *per capita* daily income of Rs.1.51 *paise* to Rs.2.50 *paise* as rich and a household with the *per capita* daily income of Rs.2.51 *paise* or more as very rich. On application of the new economic norms defined above, to the village-society, it appears that the majority (80.5 per cent) are constituted by the very poor (18.4 per cent) and the poor (62.1 per cent) commonalty of the village, the middle income-group consisting of 12.6 per cent of the households. The wealthy section comprising the rich (4.6 per cent) and the very rich (2.3 per cent) households represent the microscopic minority of the village society of Upper Pedong.

One may see even with half an eye that the

TABLE 89

PER CAPITA DAILY INCOME *VIS-A-VIS* MONTHLY INCOME

Monthly income (in rupees)	Total no. of households in the monthly income-group	No. of households with per capita daily income of							
		Upto 0.20 *paise*	0.21 *paise* to 0.30 *paise*	0.31 *paise* to 0.40 *paise*	0.41 *paise* to 0.50 *paise*	0.51 *paise* to 0.60 *paise*	0.61 *paise* to 0.70 *paise*	0.71 *paise* to 0.80 *paise*	0.81 *paise* to 0.90 *paise*
0-25	3	1	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
26-50	16	..	5	1	3	1	1	2	1
51-75	24	..	1	5	5	4	4	3	..
76-100	17	..	..	3	2	3	4	1	3
101-125	10	..	..	..	3	2	2	2	..
126-150	7	..	..	..	..	3	1	1	2
151-175	3	..	..	..	2	..	1	..	..
176-200	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
201-225	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
226-250	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
251-275	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
276-300	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Total	87	1	6	9	16	14	15	9	7

Monthly income (in rupees)	Total no. of households in the monthly income-group	No. of households with per capita daily income of							
		0.91 *paise* to Re.1.00 *paise*	Rs. 1.01 *paise* to Rs. 1.25 *paise*	Rs. 1.26 *paise* to Rs. 1.50 *paise*	Rs. 1.51 *paise* to Rs. 1.75 *paise*	Rs. 1.76 *paise* to Rs. 2.00 *paise*	Rs. 2.01 *paise* to Rs. 2.50 *paise*	Rs. 2.51 *paise* to Rs. 3.00 *paise*	Rs. 3.01 *paise* and above
0-25	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
26-50	16	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
51-75	24	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..
76-100	17	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
101-125	10	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
126-150	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
151-175	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
176-200	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
201-225	2	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
226-250	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
251-275	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
276-300	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	87	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1

household, of which the *per capita* daily income does not exceed 0.20 *paise*, is the poorest of all the villagers and as such, no hyperbolic statement is called for to dilate the poverty and suffering of the people. Suffice it to say, that economically the weakest member of the people of Upper Pedong is a Chhetri household with five members, the head of which is a labourer engaged in the construction of roads. The household in question is supported by the head, the only working member of any importance, with an income of Rs.200.00 *paise* annually from his principal occupation. In the meagre land comprising 0.75 acre in area, obtained on *Pakhuria* system, the wife of the head has just started farming. The land has not yielded yet any income, either apparent or real. In times of financial crisis loan being very difficult to secure, begging has been resorted to by the couple to feed three of their dependant non-working members. But by charity alone a decent life cannot be assured to a household, where poverty reigns supreme. Any stranger without even an inkling of the living conditions of the people would from the moment of his entry into the house forms his own impression about the economy of the household. With no furniture or consumer goods, the household, an immigrant into the village one year ago, has, excepting a milch cow, no such asset at its disposal to fetch a loan on mortgage. The milch cow, however, enables the young members to live on the rationed nutrient, when the milk of human kindness is on the point of getting dry.

How ineffective the total monthly income of a household may become, in upgrading the economic standard of its members, is also evident from the table. Mere quantum of income of any household cannot be a significant datum to indicate the financial stability of a household and cannot as such be independent of some fundamental demographic questions like size of each family, the ratio of dependent non-working members to earning working members for every household and also the real income of a household. Variableness of the total amount of income of different households does not necessarily bring out the economic differences of the families. Hence, any attempt at hierarchical classification of the households on the basis of their total income in the perspective of the village-economy of Upper Pedong will be ill-conceived, unfortified and also inadequate to rank the households in the economic gradation. The table before has been empiric to show that some households despite their high income remain still very poor. All the three households in the monthly income-group of Rs.(0-25) are either very poor or poor. If the next slab of monthly income of Rs.(26-50) still fails to eradicate poverty from 81.3 per cent of the households in this income-group comprising very poor and poor households, it has been so because of the economically dependant mouths sharing the humble bread earned by the toiling workers within the family. Again, of the households in the monthly income-group of Rs.(51-75), 20.0 per cent are very poor and 66.7 per cent are poor. The monthly income-group of Rs. (76-100) has not entitled all the households therein to be placed in the same economic plane, as 17.6 per cent of these households are very poor and 58.8 per cent of the families in the same income-group are poor. Poverty appears to have spared none, as 90.0 per cent of the households in the monthly income-group of Rs.(100-125) and 71.4 per cent of the households in the monthly income group of Rs. (125-150) are poor. Apparently contradictory though it may appear, the households in the higher monthly income-groups, otherwise classified as rich or very rich, cannot on the merit of *per capita* income be graded so. All the households in the monthly income-groups of Rs.(151-175) and Rs.(226-250) are poor. Even the highest monthly income-group of Rs.(276-300) in the village does not remove the classic garb of indigence from one of the two households in this income-group. One agrees finally that from income, however,

TABLE 90

PER CAPITA DAILY INCOME AND ETHNIC GROUPS

Community	No. of house-holds	Average per capita daily income of a household	No. of households with per capita daily income of: 0.01 *paise* to 0.20 *paise*	0.21 *paise* to 0.30 *paise*	0.31 *paise* to 0.40 *paise*	0.41 *paise* to 0.50 *paise*	0.51 *paise* to 0.60 *paise*	0.61 *paise* to 0.70 *paise*	0.71 *paise* to 0.80 *paise*	0.81 *paise* to 0.90 *paise*
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	0.70 *paise*	..	..	..	2	2	3	3	1
Dukpa	5	0.56 *paise*	..	1	1	..	..	1	..	2
Tamang	17	0.61 *paise*	..	1	1	5	4	4	..	1
Rai	11	0.61 *paise*	..	1	..	3	..	3	1	2
Sherpa	9	0.53 *paise*	..	1	1	3	1	1	1	..
Kami	6	0.49 *paise*	..	..	3	..	..	..	1	1
Lepcha	4	0.53 *paise*	..	..	1	..	2	1	..	..
Limbu	4	0.56 *paise*	..	..	..	1	2	..	1	..
Sanyashi	4	0.40 *paise*	..	1	..	1	1	1	..	..
Chhetri	4	0.56 *paise*	1	..	1	..	..	1	1	..
Gurung	3	0.56 *paise*	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..
Newar	2	Rs. 1.60 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	0.51 *paise*	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Mangar	1	Rs. 1.51 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	Rs. 1.80 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	0.27 *paise*	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	0.53 *paise*	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Total	**87**		**1**	6	9	15	15	15	8	7

Community	No. of house-holds	Average per capita daily income of a household	No. of household with per capita daily income of: 0.91 *paise* to Re. 1.00 *paise*	Rs. 1.01 *paise* to Rs. 1.25 *paise*	Rs. 1.26 *paise* to Rs. 1.50 *paise*	Rs. 1.51 *paise* to Rs. 1.75 *paise*	Rs. 1.76 *paise* to Rs. 2.00 *paise*	Rs. 2.01 *paise* to Rs. 2.50 *paise*	Rs. 2.51 *paise* to Rs. 3.00 *paise*	Rs. 3.00 *paise* and above
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	0.70 *paise*	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Dukpa	5	0.56 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	17	0.61 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Rai	11	0.61 *paise*	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sherpa	9	0.53 *paise*	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	6	0.49 *paise*	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	4	0.53 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	4	0.56 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	4	0.40 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	0.56 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	3	0.56 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Newar	2	Rs. 1.60 *paise*	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
Bhujel	1	0.51 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	Rs. 1.51 *paise*	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	.
Yakha	1	Rs. 1.80 *poise*	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Brahman	1	0.27 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	0.53 *paise*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**		**1**	3	1	2	1	1	1	1

high, does not accrue the same economic benefit to be conferred on all the households on a *pro rata* basis and that in the context of the rural economy of Upper Pedong *per capita* income happens to be the real arbiter of the economic destiny of the households as also of their future.

When the commoners of the village comprise the very poor and the poor, one is little interested to know which communities constitute the poor class. Yet, the ethnic background of the households with different *per capita* incomes is provided in the Table 90.

As it appears from the table, none of the households of the Sikkimese Bhutia, Limbu, Newar, Bhujel, Mangar, Yakha and the unspecified communities is very poor. Even of the very poor class, the Kamis are the largest constituents. The Dukpas, the Tamangs, the Sherpas and the Chhetris have each a couple of very poor households. The rest of the very poor comprise a household each from the Rai, the Lepcha, the Sanyashi, the Gurung and the Brahman communities.

The Newar, the Mangar and the Yakha households are neither very poor nor poor, representing altogether a different class and being the privileged section of a handful few outside the orb of the economic disparities and the pale of appalling wants of the underdogs residing in the village. Of the poor households, the Tamangs (24.1 per cent), the Sikkimese Bhutias (20.4 per cent), the Rais (13.0 per cent) and the Sherpas (11.1 per cent) constitute the majority. The rest of the poor households consist of four Limbus, three Lepchas, three Sanyashis, two Chhetris, one Dukpa, one Gurung, one Bhujel, one Kami and one unspecified community.

The middle income-group consisting of eleven households has within its fold three Rais, two Sikkimese Bhutias, two Dukpas, one Tamang, one Sherpa, one Kami and one Newar. The rich comprise only four households, constituted by one Kami, one Gurung, one Mangar and one Yakha. One does not miss two very rich families of the village consisting of one Tamang household and one Newar.

On a resume, it becomes patent that the very poor and the poor, constituting the majority of the villagers concerns the Sikkimese Bhutias (84.6 per cent), the Dukpas (60.0 per cent), the Tamangs (88.2 per cent), the Rais (72.7 per cent), the Sherpas (88.9 per cent), the Kamis (66.7 per cent), the Gurungs (66.6 per cent) and all the Lepchas, the Limbus, the Sanyashis, the Chhetris, the Bhujels, the Brahmans and the household of the unspecified community. It is interesting that even though the majority of the households of all the communities except three are either very poor or poor, the income for quite a significant number of households of each community is still below the average daily *per capita* income of the community concerned. The households which earn less than the average *per capita* daily income of the respective communities comprise the Sikkimese Bhutias (53.8 per cent), the Dukpas (40.0 per cent), the Tamangs (64.7 per cent), the Rais (36.4 per cent), the Sherpas (55.6 per cent), the Kamis (50.0 per cent), the Lepchas (25.0 per cent), the Limbus (50.0 per cent), Sanyashis (25.0 per cent), Chhetries (50.0 per cent), the Gurungs (33.3 per cent) and the Newars (50.0 per cent).

The occupational pattern of the heads of households with reference to the *per capita* daily income is considered useful and is presented in Table 91.

Of the households with the heads working in the agricultural sector (44.8 per cent), 76.9 per cent are constituted by the very poor and the poor families explaining 42.9 per cent of the total number of economically backward households of the same class in Upper Pedong. Construction, the second largest source of income,

has not showered fortune on all and sundry. Of the households with their heads engaged in construction, 30.8 per cent are very poor and 57.7 per cent are poor, but none of the households is either very rich or rich. The heads of the rich households are engaged in agriculture or forestry or plantation and one rich household is headed by a non-worker. Agriculture is also the pursuit of the head of one very rich household, other services being the occupation of the head of another very rich household.

Indebtedness

The dissertation on income lays down sufficiently clearly the hillman's incompatibility to strike a balance between his earnings and expenditure. The logical consequence of the prolonged stress of the cost of living on the

TABLE 91

PER CAPITA DAILY INCOME OF THE HOUSEHOLDS

Industrial classification	No. of households	No. of households with per capita daily income of: 0.1 *paise* to 0.20 *paise*	0.21 *paise* to 0.30 *paise*	0.31 *paise* to 0.40 *paise*	0.41 *paise* to 0.50 *paise*	0.51 *paise* to 0.60 *paise*	0.61 *paise* to 0.70 *paise*	0.71 *paise* to 0.80 *paise*	0.81 *paise* to 0.90 *paise*
Cultivation	37	..	2	3	7	6	7	3	3
Agricultural labourer	2	..	..	..	1	..	1	..	..
Forestry, plantation, livestock etc.	4	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
Household industry	3	..	..	1	..	1	..	1	..
Construction	26	1	3	4	6	4	3	2	3
Trade and commerce	2	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	..
Other services	9	..	1	1	2	2	1	1	..
Non-worker	4	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	1
Total	**87**	1	6	9	16	14	15	9	7

Industrial classification	No. of households	No. of households with per capita daily income of: 0.91 *paise* to Re. 1.00 *paise*	Rs. 1.01 *paise* to Rs. 1.25 *paise*	Rs. 1.26 *paise* to Rs. 1.50 *paise*	Rs. 1.51 *paise* to Rs. 1.75 *paise*	Rs. 1.76 *paise* to Rs. 2.00 *paise*	Rs. 2.01 *paise* to Rs. 2.50 *paise*	Rs. 2.51 *paise* to Rs. 3.00 *paise*	Rs. 3.00 *paise* and above
Cultivation	37	1	2	1	..	1	..	..	1
Agricultural labourer	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Forestry, plantation, livestock etc.	4	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
Household industry	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Construction	26	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Trade and commerce	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other services	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Non-worker	4	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Total	**87**	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1

economic vitality of a household is indebtedness. Even the strongest will cannot keep off the long hands of a creditor, ready to mop up the deficit resulting from inequalities of income and expenditure.

A little more than half of the households of all the communities except the Gurung, the Mangar and the unspecified are in debt. Among the numerically dominant communities, the higher incidence of debt on a proportionately large number of families is observed among the Kamis, the Limbus and Rais. A little less than one sixth of the Sherpas, a little more than one third of the Dukpas, the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Tamangs are indebted. Half of the Sanyashi, Chhetri and the Newar households and only one-fourth of the Lepchas are in debt.

A little more than one-third and one-fifth of the total amount of loan taken by the indebted households in the village are availed of by the indebted Limbu and the Rai households respectively. Again nearly one-sixth of the total amount of loan has been taken by the indebted households of three communities *viz.*, the Tamang, the Kamis and the Chhetris. Thus,

TABLE 92

RANGE OF INDEBTEDNESS (COMMUNITY-WISE)

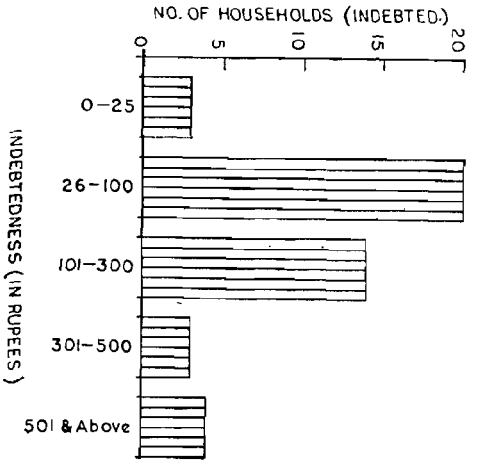
Community	Number of households	No. of households in debt	Percentage of households in debt	Total amount of debt (Rs.)	Percentage of loan to the total amount of debt	Amount of average loan per household Rs.	*paise*
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	5	38.5	1,450	11.2	290	00
Dukpa	5	2	40.0	312	2.4	156	00
Tamang	17	6	35.3	640	5.0	106	67
Rai	11	9	69.2	2,715	21.1	301	67
Sherpa	9	5	45.4	465	3.6	93	00
Kami	6	5	83.3	690	5.3	138	00
Lepcha	4	1	25.0	200	1.5	200	00
Limbu	4	3	75.0	4,651	36.1	155	00
Sanyashi	4	2	50.0	80	0.6	40	00
Chhetri	4	2	50.0	780	6.1	390	00
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..		..
Newar	2	1	50.0	300	2.3	300	00
Bhujel	1	1	100.0	60	0.5	60	00
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..		..
Yakha	1	1	100.0	500	3.9	500	00
Brahman	1	1	100.0	50	0.4	50	00
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..		..
Total	**87**	**44**	**50.6**	**12,893**	**100.0**	**197**	**89**

38.6 per cent of the indebted households constituted by the Limbus, the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Rais have taken 68.4 per cent of the total amount of loan of all the indebted households.

The average amount of loan per indebted household stands at Rs. 197.89 *paise*. Including the single Yakha indebted household and the only one Newar household in debt, average amount of loan for a Chhetri household in debt is the highest closely followed by that of the Rais and the Sikkimese Bhutias.

The Table 93 gives some idea about the range of debt among the different communities in the village.

DEBT AND ITS INCIDENCE



It appears that a little more than 50.0 per cent of the indebted households have not transgressed the limit of Rs.100.00 *paise* in taking a loan. On the other hand, only 9.1 per cent of the indebted households have taken a loan to the tune of Rs.501.00 *paise* or above. Credit ranging from Rs.101.00 *paise* and above with the ceiling fixed on Rs.500.00 *paise* has affected 38.6 per cent of the households in debt.

The Table 94 correlates monthly income of the households with the range of debt of the indebted households.

There appears to exist hardly any relation between income and indebtedness, as the households in debt come from both the higher and the lower income-groups. The exception is observed only among the households with the monthly income not exceeding Rs.100.00 *paise*. The percentage of the households in debt rises in direct relation to the rise in monthly income. Thus, 33.3 per cent of all the households in the monthly income-group of Rs.(0-25) are in debt, 43.8 per cent of the households in the second group with monthly income ranging between Rs.26.00 *paise* and Rs.50.00 *paise* are indebted, 45.8 per cent of the households with monthly income between Rs.51.00 *paise* and Rs.75.00 *paise* are in debt and 58.8 per cent of the households with monthly income of Rs.76.00 *paise* to Rs.100.00 *paise* are indebted. The households with lower monthly income are not financially too solvent to go without debt. But, their creditworthiness being minimal, the households have to cut the coat according to the cloth, instead of taking recourse to deficit-finance. The households in the higher income-group do not suffer from the limitation of their creditworthiness.

But once the households earn a reasonable amount of income, a slow downward trend is perceptible in the percentage of households in debt with graduated increment of income. Thus 83.3 per cent of the households with the monthly income of Rs.126.00 *paise* to Rs.150.00 *paise*, 75.0 per cent of the households with monthly income of Rs.151.00 *paise* to Rs.176.00 *paise*, 50.0 per cent of the households in the monthly income-group of Rs.(175-225) and 33.3 per cent of the households with monthly income of Rs.226.00 *paise* to Rs.300.00 *paise* are in debt.

TABLE 93

RANGE OF INDEBTEDNESS COMMUNITY-WISE

Community	No. of households	No. of households in debt	Number of households by range of indebtedness (in rupees) 0-25	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-150	151-200
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	5	1	..	..	..	..	1
Dukpa	5	2	..	..	..	..	1	1
Tamang	17	6	..	2	1	1	..	1
Rai	11	9	..	..	3	2	..	..
Sherpa	9	5	1	1	..	2	..	1
Kami	6	5	..	1	1	1	..	1
Lepcha	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Limbu	4	3	..	..	..	2	..	..
Sanyashi	4	2	1	..	1	..	..	..
Chhetri	4	2	..	..	..	..	1	..
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**44**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**8**	**2**	**6**

Community	Number of households by range of indebtedness (in rupees) 201-250	251-300	301-350	351-400	401-450	451-500	501 and above
Sikkimese Bhutia	..	2	..	..	..	..	1
Dukpa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Rai	..	..	..	..	1	1	2
Sherpa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Gurung	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**1**	**5**	..	..	**1**	**2**	**4**

The Table 95 relates to indebtedness correlated to the occupation of the head of the household.

The table reveals an interesting economic trait of the village. Of the occupations of the heads of households free from debt, several are

TABLE 94

MONTHLY INCOME AND DEBT

Range of monthly income (in rupees)	Total no. of households	No. of households in debt	No. of households by range of indebtedness (in rupees)					
			0-25	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-150	151-200
1—25	3	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
26—50	16	7	1	1	1	2	1	..
51—75	24	11	1	4	4	..	..	1
76—100	17	10	..	..	..	4	1	1
101—125	10	4	..	..	1	..	..	1
126—150	6	5	..	..	..	2	..	2
151—175	4	3	..	..	1	..	..	1
176—200	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
201—225	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
226—250	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
251—300	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**44**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**8**	**2**	**6**

Range of monthly income (in rupees)	No. of households by range of indebtedness (in rupees)							Percentage of households in debt
	201-250	251-300	301-350	351-400	401-450	451-500	501 and above	
1—25	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	33.3
26—50	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	43.7
51—75	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	45.8
76—100	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	59.0
101—125	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	40.0
126—150	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	83.3
151—175	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	75.0
176—200	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	60.0
201—225	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	50.0
226—250	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	100.0
251—300	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**1**	**5**	..	..	**1**	**2**	**4**	..

of such a nature that none following the same occupation has taken any debt whatsoever. Forest labourers, labour-supervisors, road-contractor, *Khalasi*, tea-vendor, seller of rice etc. comprising eight households explain 18.6 per cent of the debt-free households. But, all of them do not stand on the same economic plane. If the forest labourers, labour-supervisor, tea-vendor, and rice-seller have been free from any debt, lack of creditworthiness rather than affluence explains the fact.

Nature of loan

Of the total amount of loan taken by the indebted households, that in cash involves six households in the turnover of Rs.1,130.00 *paise* accounting for 12.9 per cent of the total quantum of credit. Incidentally, loan of this category ranks second from the point of monetary value and third on the score of number of households concerned with this category of credit.

TABLE 95

INDEBTEDNESS AND OCCUPATION

Occupation	Total no. of households	No. of households in debt	No. of households by range of indebtedness (in rupees) 0-25	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-150	151-200
Owner-cultivator	31	19	..	..	4	4	1	2
Sharecropper	6	3	..	..	1	2	..	..
Agricultural labourer	2	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Labourer in Sheep-Breeding Station	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Forest-labourer	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Woodcutter	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Carpenter	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Road-labourer	18	11	2	3	..	1	1	2
Labour-supervisor	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Contractor of road-construction	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Khalasi	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Mason	3	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Tea-vendor	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Seller of rice and parched rice	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Teacher	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
General Duty Assistant in Health Centre	3	2	..	..	..	1	..	..
Priest	3	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Non-worker	4	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**44**	**3**	**5**	**7**	**8**	**2**	**6**

TABLE 95—contd.

Occupation	No. of households by range of indebtedness (in rupees)							Percentage of house-holds in debt
	201-250	251-300	301-350	351-400	401-450	451-500	501 and above	
Owner-cultivator	..	3	..	..	1	2	2	63.0
Sharecropper	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	50.0
Agricultural labourer	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	50.0
Labourer in Sheep-Breeding Station	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	100.0
Forest-labourer	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Woodcutter	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	100.0
Carpenter	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	33.3
Road-labourer	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	61.1
Labour-Supervisor	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Contractor of road-construction	..	..	..	..	.	..	..	..
Khalasi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	100.0
Mason	..	..	..	..	.	..	..	33.3
Tea-vendor	..	..	.	.	..	.	..	..
Seller of rice and parched rice	..	..	.	.	.	..	.	..
Teacher	..	1	.	.	.	..	..	33.3
General Duty Assistant in Health Centre	..	..	.	..	..	..	1	66.7
Priest	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	33.3
Non-worker	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	25.0
Total	**1**	**5**	..	..	**1**	**2**	**4**	**50.6**

But as the most important category may be classified the loan in kind, also the major item having been resorted to by the majority of the indebted households. The total amount of loan in kind taken by 77.3 per cent of the indebted households explains 64.6 per cent of the total amount of debt of all loanee households. The location of the village being quite contiguous to Pedong Bazar, an important centre of trade and commerce for the region and the vital, if not the only, market for the locality, most of the villagers purchase the items of grocery and the articles of necessity from the shops on credit, though not everyone is a creditor at will.

Loan from the Government of West Bengal for specific utilitarian purpose like land-development etc. has been taken by 8.6 per cent of the indebted households and accounts for 15.9 per cent of the total amount of loan of all the indebted households. The loan is disbursed by the Block Development Officer of the Kalimpong National Extension Service Block II at Algarah.

Loan from the Central Cooperative Bank at Pedong Bazar taken by four households (9.1 per cent) constitutes 8.6 per cent of the total amount of loan taken by all the indebted households.

Loan has been taken on *Dadan* too in the nature of forward contract, the terms of which would be discussed later. Not very popular in the village Pedong, *Dadan* has still made 4.6 per cent of the households in debt liable to the tender to the extent of 1.3 per cent of the total amount of loan of the indebted households.

Loan has also been advanced on the security of the land in mortgage. But, the transaction has not been resorted to by many. Easy availability of loan in kind from the grocers at Pedong Bazar without any security does not necessitate the occasion of mortgage of land. Besides, the villagers being composed of quite a fair number of tribals, transfer of land to non-tribals calls for the prohibitory provisions of the law. As a result, creditors are reluctant to grant any loan on the mortgage of land by a tribal. The Table 96 would give the details of the loan of different categories.

Terms of loans

Of six households, loanees in cash, a school teacher, has borrowed an amount of Rs. 300.00 *paise* from the Provident Fund against an interest of 4½ per cent per annum. Another household has taken a loan of Rs.200.00 *paise* from his relative at the rate of 6¼ per cent per annum. The terms of the loan taken in the nature of

TABLE 96

NATURE OF LOAN

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households in debt	Amount of loan in cash (in rupees)	No. of households with loan in cash	Amount of loan in kind (in rupees)	No. of households with loan in kind	Amount of loan from Government (in rupees)	No. of households with loan from Govt.
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	5	500	2	750	3	..	..
Dukpa	5	2	200	1	12	1	100	1
Tamang	17	6	..	..	640	6	..	..
Rai	11	9	200	1	2,045	6	120	2
Sherpa	9	5	..	..	465	5	..	..
Kami	6	5	30	1	560	3	..	..
Lepcha	4	1	..	..	200	1	..	..
Limbu	4	3	..	..	200	2	150	1
Sanyashi	4	2	..	..	10	1	70	1
Chhetri	4	2	200	1	130	2	50	1
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	2	1	..	..	300	1	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	60	1	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..	200	1	300	1
Brahman	1	1	..	..	50	1	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**44**	**1,130**	**6**	**5,622**	**34**	**790**	**7**
Percentage	*100.0*	*50.6*	*12.9*	*13.6*	*64.6*	*77.3*	*9.1*	*15.9*

Dadan envisages that the borrowing household would sell the crop raised by him at a concessional rate to the lender to repay the loan. The rate of interest is 25.0 per cent in one case and 15.0 per cent in the remaining two cases. It thus appears that the rate of interest charged for loans in cash is not very high.

It has been pointed out earlier that the loans in kind refer to the purchase of goods from different shops in Pedong Bazar on credit. Though no interest is openly charged for the purchase of kinds on credit, the customers feel that the price charged is not at par with that paid for articles purchased in cash. But, it is not possible to calculate the difference in price which, if any, may be regarded as the interest on the credit. The loan from the Government of West Bengal through the Office of the Block Development Officer carries the standard rate of interest of 6¼ per cent per annum uniformly. The loan from the Central Cooperative Bank also carries the same rate of interest.

Last but not the least, loan in one case has been secured against mortgage of land till a stipulated date, by which if the loan is not repaid, the mortgagee is entitled to cultivate the land himself and reap the harvest. The

TABLE 96—contd.

Community	Amount of loan from Central Cooperative Bank (in rupees)	No. of households with loan from Central Cooperative Bank	Amount of loan in *Dadan* (in rupees)	No. of households with loan in *Dadan*	Amount of loan in mortgage (in rupees)	No. of households with loan in mortgage	Total amount of loan (in rupees)
Sikkimese Bhutia	..	..	200	1	..	..	1,450
Dukpa	..	..	..	..	..	..	312
Tamang	..	..	..	..	..	..	640
Rai	350	2	..	..	..	..	2,715
Sherpa	..	..	..	..	..	..	465
Kami	..	..	100	1	..	..	690
Lepcha	..	..	..	..	..	..	200
Limbu	..	..	..	..	115	1	465
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	80
Chhetri	400	2	..	..	..	..	780
Gurung	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	..	..	..	..	..	..	300
Bhujel	..	..	..	..	..	..	60
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	500
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	50
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**750**	**4**	**300**	**2**	**115**	**1**	**8,707**
Percentage	*8.6*	*9.1*	*3.5*	*4.6*	*1.3*	*2.3*	*100.0*

Table 97 would give an idea of the amount of loan carrying interest.

Purpose of indebtedness

As loans are not taken without a purpose, indebtedness has been classified into productive and unproductive, according to the nature of the purpose of the loan. The Table 98 details the purpose for which debt is incurred. It appears from the table that 36.0 per cent of the total amount of loan have been taken for productive purposes, while 63.9 per cent have been spent for unproductive purposes.

This does not speak well of the brighter aspects of the economy of the village. Only heads of the owner cultivator households have utilised 44.4 per cent of their loan for productive purposes, while the share-cropper households have utilised nearly three-fourth of the total amount of loan for unproductive purposes. The loan taken by the agricultural labourers or the woodcutters have been spent unproductively. The households engaged in carpentry have utilised nearly two-thirds of the total loan for productive purposes, while the corresponding proportion of utilisation of loan for productive

TABLE 97

LOANS WITH INTEREST

Community	Total no. of house-holds	No. of house-holds in debt	Amount of indebted-ness in rupees	Amount of loan (in rupees) with interest	Amount of loan (in rupees) with no interest	Amount of loan (in rupees) on *Dadan* i.e. to be repaid by selling crops to the lender at a conces-sional price	Percentage of loan with interest to total loan
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	5	1,450	500	750	200	48.3
Dukpa	5	2	312	300	12	..	96.2
Tamang	17	6	640	..	640	..	Nil
Rai	11	9	2,715	670	2,045	..	24.7
Sherpa	9	5	465	..	465	..	Nil
Kami	6	5	690	30	660	..	4.4
Lepcha	4	1	200	..	200	..	Nil
Limbu	4	3	465	150	200	..	32.3
Sanyashi	4	2	80	70	10	..	87.5
Chhetri	4	2	780	450	330	..	57.7
Gurung	3	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Newar	2	1	300	..	300	..	Nil
Bhujel	1	1	60	..	60	..	Nil
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Yakha	1	1	500	300	200	..	75.0
Brahman	1	1	50	..	50	..	Nil
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Total	**87**	**44**	**8,707**	**2,470**	**5,922**	**200**	**30.7**

TABLE 98

UTILISATION OF LOAN

Occupation	Total no. of house-holds	No. of loanee house-holds	Total amount of loan	Productive loans (in Rs.)			
				Purchase of cattle	Construc-tion of house	Agricul-tural produc-tion	Betterment of land
Owner-cultivator	31	19	4,720	500	485	610	500
Share-cropper	6	3	260	..	..	..	..
Agricultural labourer	2	1	65	..	..	..	..
Labourer in Sheep-Breeding Station	1	1	60	..	..	..	..
Forest-labourer	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Woodcutter	1	1	10	..	..	..	..
Carpenter	3	1	325	150	..	..	..
Road labourer	18	11	1,477	100	..	30	50
Labour Supervisor	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
Contractor of road-construction	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Khalasi	1	1	200	..	..	..	..
Mason	3	1	40	..	40	..	..
Tea-seller	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hawker of parched rice	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Teacher	3	1	300	..	300	..	..
General Duty Assistant	3	2	1,000	..	..	250	..
Priest	3	1	50	..	..	..	..
Non-worker	4	1	200	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**44**	**8,707**	**750**	**825**	**890**	**550**
Percentage	..	..	*100.0*	*8.61*	*9.48*	*10.22*	*6.32*

UTILISATION OF LOAN

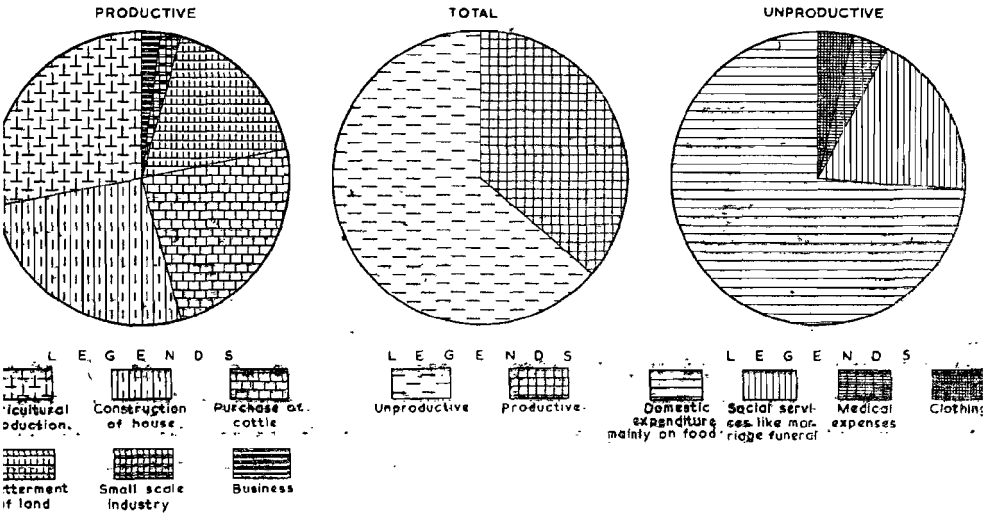


TABLE 98—contd.

Occupation	Productive loans (in Rs.)		Unproductive loans (in Rs.)			
	Business	Small scale industry	Domestic expenditure mainly on food	Social services like marriage, funerary rites	Clothing	Medical
Owner-cultivator	..	..	2,155	200	170	100
Share-cropper	..	70	190	..	..	..
Agricultural labourer	..	..	..	65	..	..
Labourer in Sheep-Breeding Station	..	..	60	..	..	..
Forest labourer	..	..	..	..	..	..
Woodcutter	..	..	10	..	..	..
Carpenter	60	..	..	..	..	115
Road labourer	..	..	712	555	30	..
Labour Supervisor	..	..	..	..	..	..
Contractor of road-construction	..	..	..	..	..	..
Khalasi	..	..	200	.	..	..
Mason	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tea-seller	..	..	..	..	..	..
Hawker of parched rice	..	..	..	..	..	..
Teacher	..	..	..	..	..	..
General Duty Assistant	..	..	750	..	..	..
Priest	..	..	50	..	..	..
Non-worker	..	..	..	200	..	..
Total	**60**	**70**	**4,127**	**1,020**	**200**	**215**
Percentage	*0.69*	*0.80*	*47.40*	*11.71*	*2.30*	*2.47*

purposes by the road-labourers is only one-eighth. A mason and a school-teacher are found to utilise the whole of the loan for productive purposes. But a couple of General Duty Assistants spent three-fourths of the loan for unproductive purposes.

Domestic expenses on account of food and social services like marriage and funerary rites explain utilisation of 11.7 per cent of the total loan for the purpose, while 11.7 per cent of the loans have been utilised for social observances like marriage, funeral etc.

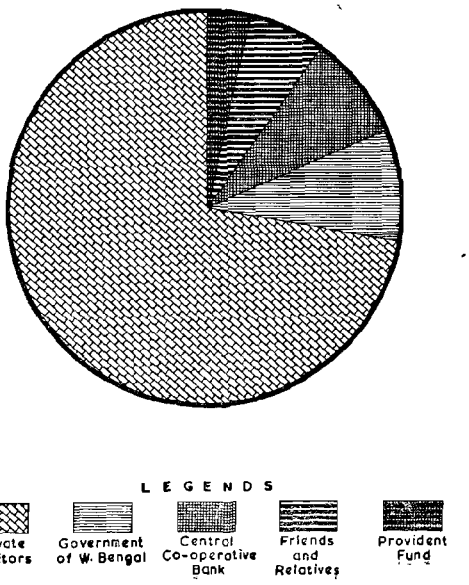
Source of loans

The loans for the households are provided not by patent creditors on strict terms against acceptable security or bond as such. In the village-life of Upper Pedong mutual relationship sometimes has relaxed the terms of debt and has helped the households in need cross the hurdles of financial stringency. The Table 99 relates to the sources from which the indebted households of Upper Pedong have secured the loan.

TABLE 99

SOURCE OF LOAN

Community	Total amount of loan in rupees	Amount of loan in rupees from: Private creditors: Marwari shop-keepers	Private creditors: Bihari shop-keepers	Private creditors: Nepali shop-keepers	Friends and relatives	Government of West Bengal	Central Co-operative Bank	Provident Fund
Sikkimese Bhutia	1,450	650	300	..	200	..	..	300
Dukpa	312	..	200	..	12	100	..	..
Tamang	640	440	40	160	..	..	..	..
Rai	2,715	1,105	1,080	60	..	120	350	..
Sherpa	465	450	15	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	690	610	..	50	30	..	..	..
Lepcha	200	..	..	200	..	..	..	..
Limbu	465	100	..	100	115	150	..	..
Sanyashi	80	10	..	..	..	70	..	..
Chhetri	780	30	..	100	200	50	400	..
Gurung	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	300	..	300	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	60	60	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	500	100	100	..	..	300	..	..
Brahman	50	50	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**8,707**	**3,605**	**2,035**	**670**	**557**	**790**	**750**	**300**



SOURCE OF CREDIT

The loan, taken from a number of shop-keepers of Pedong Bazar and amounting to Rs.6,310.00 *paise*, also includes the loan in kind amounting to Rs.5,622.00 *paise*. Of the total loan advanced by the private creditors, the loan advanced by the Marwari, Bihari and Nepali shop-keepers account for 57.1 per cent, 32.3 per cent and 10.6 per cent respectively. Private creditors consisting of the shop-keepers who have advanced 72.5 per cent of the total loan excluds the small group of friends and relatives which has advanced 6.4 per cent of the loan obviously free of interest.

Expenditure

Data relating to expenditure being not readily available in a good number of cases, the daily expenditure pattern of the respective households has been put under close scrutiny. By estimation and approximation only some rough estimates of expenditure have been made. Despite honest efforts, all the limitations of the estimate of expenditure of the people of Upper Pedong cannot be avoided. But they are minimised as far as practicable.

The average monthly income of a household of the village stands at Rs. 90.38 *paise* against

TABLE 100

EXPENDITURE-PATTERN

Community	No. of house-holds	Total amount of annual income of the village (in Rs.)	Amount of annual expendi-ture of the village (in Rs.)	Amount saved out of current income (in Rs.)	Extent of deficit (in Rs.)	Meeting the deficit by				
						Sale of assets (in Rs.)	Past savings (in Rs.)	Loan (in Rs.)	Contribu-tion from brother (in Rs.)	Charity from Mission-aries (in Rs.)
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	16,436	20,356	550	4,470	700	3,000	770	..	..
Dukpa	5	4,096	4,845	..	749	..	437	312	..	..
Tamang	17	17,660	16,938	1,252	530	..	140	390	..	..
Rai	11	15,790	16,587	261	1,058	50	200	808	..	..
Sherpa	9	11,149	11,516	205	572	30	177	365	..	..
Kami	6	5,135	6,245	..	1,110	..	450	660	..	..
Lepcha	4	4,454	4,640	90	276	..	..	76	200	..
Limbu	4	5,970	6,130	100	260	90	..	170	..	..
Sanyashi	4	1,750	1,800	..	50	40	..	10	..	..
Chhetri	4	3,290	3,990	..	700	..	..	280	420	..
Gurung	3	2,040	2,140	50	150	150	..	..	..	720
Newar	2	3,500	4,030	190	720	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1,300	1.676	..	376	..	316	60	..	..
Mangar	1	550	550	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	650	633	17	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	500	550	..	50	..	..	50	..	..
Unspecified	1	960	900	60	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**95,230**	**103,526**	**2,775**	**11,071**	**1,060**	**4,720**	**3,951**	**620**	**720**

an estimated average monthly expenditure of Rs.98.33 *paise*. The shortfall is caused by the overall spending habit of an average villager in excess of earnings from all sources.

By corelating the income of the households with their expenditure, some broad features of the budgetary pattern of the households emerge from the Table 100.

It appears that 2.9 per cent of the total income of all the households of Upper Pedong are accounted for by savings out of the current income. But, that does not depict the real picture of the expenditure-pattern of the village nor does that interpret the spending habits of the people. All the households except three comprising one Mangar, one Yakha and one family of the unspecified community have a deficit budget. The extent of deficit for the village as a whole may be evident from the fact that 10.7 per cent of the total amount of expenditure of the village are met by deficit finance. Again, the extent of deficit accounts for 10.2 per cent of the gross total expenditure. It appears that the bulk of the deficit is met out of past savings and loans. Thus 42.6 per cent of the deficit are met out of past savings, 35.7 per cent out of loans, 9.6 per cent out of sale of assets, 6.5 out of contributions from the missionary institutions and 5.6 per cent out of contributions from brothers. The Table 101 throws more light on the budgetary pattern of households.

TABLE 101

BUDGETARY PATTERN OF HOUSEHOLDS

Community	Total no. of households	Number of households having excess of income over expenditure	Number of households having excess of expenditure over income	Number of households whose income and expenditure are equal
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	4	4	5
Dukpa	5	..	4	1
Tamang	17	3	6	8
Rai	11	4	7	..
Sherpa	9	2	6	1
Kami	6	..	5	1
Lepcha	4	1	2	1
Limbu	4	1	3	..
Sanyashi	4	..	3	1
Chhetri	4	..	3	1
Gurung	3	1	1	1
Newar	2	1	1	..
Bhujel	1	..	1	..
Mangar	1	..	..	1
Yakha	1	1	..	..
Brahman	1	..	1	..
Unspecified	1	1	..	..
Total	**87**	**19**	**47**	**21**
Percentage	*(100.0)*	*(21.9)*	*(54.0)*	*(24.1)*

It appears from the above Table that more than half of the households has excess of expenditure over income, nearly one fourth of them has kept their expenditure equal to their income while a little more than one fifth of the households has managed to accumulate some savings. In all, 19 households have located an annual saving to the tune of Rs.2775.00 *paise*, the bulk of the savings being made by the Sikkimese Bhutia, the Rai, the Tamang and the Sherpa households.

The Table 102 highlights details of the pattern of expenditure. It appears from the Table that the percentage of expenditure on foodgrains for the village as a whole is 57.6, the percentage of expenditure on foodgrain

TABLE 102

PATTERN OF EXPENDITURE

Community	No. of house-holds	Total annual income	Total annual expen-diture	Amount of annual expenditure on					
				Food	Fuel and lighting	Repair of houses including rent on houses	Cloth-ing	Travel-ling	Recrea-tion
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	16,436	20,356	9,739 (47.8)	952 (4.7)	116 (0.6)	1,672 (8.2)	187 (0.9)	270 (1.3)
Dukpa	5	4,096	4,845	2,384 (49.2)	230 (4.8)	8 (0.2)	417 (8.6)	25 (0.5)	25 (0.5)
Tamang	17	17,660	16,938	10,392 (61.4)	1,185 (7.0)	175 (1.0)	1,750 (10.3)	110 (0.7)	210 (1.2)
Rai	11	15,790	16,587	9,933 (59.9)	762 (4.6)	110 (0.7)	1,730 (10.4)	80 (0.5)	245 (1.5)
Sherpa	9	11,149	11,516	7,659 (66.5)	580 (5.0)	50 (0.4)	1,135 (0.9)	110 (1.0)	170 (1.5)
Kami	6	5,135	6,245	3,737 (59.8)	290 (4.7)	15 (0.2)	602 (9.6)	.. ..	60 (1.0)
Lepcha	4	4,454	4,640	3,063 (66.0)	240 (5.2)	.. ..	530 (11.4)	10 (0.2)	30 (0.7)
Limbu	4	5,970	6,130	3,783 (61.7)	350 (5.7)	..	610 (10.0)	75 (1.2)	120 (2.0)
Sanyashi	4	1,750	1,800	1,280 (71.1)	125 (6.9)	.. ..	150 (8.3)	.. ..	.. ..
Chhetri	4	3,290	3,990	2,502 (62.7)	185 (4.6)	120 (3.0)	230 (8.3)	27 (0.7)	50 (1.3)
Gurung	3	2,040	2,140	1,118 (52.3)	200 (9.4)	. ..	260 (12.2)	50 (2.3)	50 (2.3)
Newar	2	3,500	4,030	1,664 (41.3)	180 (4.5)	.. ..	350 (8.7)	20 (0.5)	130 (3.2)
Other communities	5	3,960	4,309	2,350 (54.5)	1,445 (10.3)	.. ..	415 (9.6)	70 (1.6)	75 (1.7)
Total	**87**	**95,230**	**103,526 (100.0)**	**59,604 (57.6)**	**5,724 (5.5)**	**594 (0.6)**	**9,951 (9.6)**	**764 (0.7)**	**1,435 (1.4)**

being the lowest for the Newars. The Bhutias, the Rais, the Kamis, the Gurungs and other communities also spend comparatively lower proportions of income on food. But some other communities like the Sanyashis, the Sherpas and the Lepchas spend two-thirds of their total income and sometimes even more on the same item.

The next major head of expenditure is on clothing. It has already been pointed out that the hilly people, more or less aware of the functional utility of dress, spend relatively larger amounts on clothing. Several communities like the Gurungs, the Lepchas, the Rais, the Tamangs and the Limbus spend more than 10·0 per cent of their income on clothing.

TABLE 102—*contd.*

PATTERN OF EXPENDITURE

Community	Amount of annual expenditure on								
	Education	Social function	Tax on agricultural land	Agriculture	Medical grounds	Liquor	Purchase of assets and construction of houses	Forest license	Repayment of old loans
Sikkimese Bhutia	1,025 (5.0)	275 (1.4)	68 (0.3)	1,015 (5.0)	120 (0.6)	792 (3.9)	4,000 (19.7)	125 (0.6)	.. ..
Dukpa	151 (3.1)	520 (10.7)	3 (0.1)	210 (4.3)	400 (8.3)	272 (5.6)	150 (2.1)	50 (1.0)	.. ..
Tamang	753 (4.4)	250 (1.5)	28 (0.2)	885 (5.2)	220 (1.3)	835 (4.9)	120 (0.7)	25 (0.2)	.. ..
Rai	160 (1.0)	849 (5.1)	43 (0.3)	1,355 (8.2)	140 (0.8)	705 (4.2)	200 (1.2)	126 (0.7)	.. ..
Sherpa	112 (1.0)	.. ..	27 (0.2)	580 (5.0)	97 (0.8)	560 (4.9)	306 (2.7)	50 (0.4)	80 (0.7)
Kami	90 (1.4)	.. ..	10 (0.2)	280 (4.5)	.. ..	316 (5.1)	770 (12.3)	75 (1.2)	.. ..
Lepcha	152 (3.3)	52 (1.1)	8 (0.2)	30 (0.6)	20 (0.4)	205 (4.4)	300 (6.5)	.. ..	.. ..
Limbu	93 (1.5)	210 (3.4)	25 (0·4)	625 (10.2)	30 (0.5)	209 (3.4)	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
Sanyashi	20 (1.1)	.. ..	.. ..	100 (5.6)	.. ..	125 (7.0)	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
Chhetri	76 (1.9)	200 (5.0)	6 (0.1)	180 (4.5)	.. ..	134 (3.4)	180 (4.5)	.. ..	.. ..
Gurung	110 (5.1)	.. ..	2 (0.1)	40 (1.9)	200 (9.3)	110 (5.1)	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..
Newar	1,156 (28.7)	75 (1.9)	5 (0.1)	300 (7.4)	.. ..	50 (1.2)	.. ..	.. ..	100 (2.5)
Other communities	10 (0.2)	.. ..	6 (0.1)	170 (4.0)	80 (1.9)	110 (2.6)	528 (12.3)	.. ..	50 (1.2)
Total	**3,908 (3.8)**	**2,431 (2.3)**	**231 (0.2)**	**5,770 (5.6)**	**1,307 (1.3)**	**4,423 (4.3)**	**6,554 (6.3)**	**450 (0.4)**	**380 (0.4)**

Note : Figure within brackets indicates percentages—Editor

The expenditure on travelling is relatively small, as the villagers do not have to move about frequently. Recreations being few, expenses thereon are also not high. Education claims only 3.8 per cent of the total income, but this does not give the real picture inasmuch as the majority of the people are tribals who get free education and other help statutorily from the Government. The Sikkimese Bhutias and the Gurungs spend relatively more on education. The expenses of the Newars on education is 28.7 per cent of their income, because of the substantially higher amount spent on education by a single Newar household.

The budgetary pattern of the households varies not only from household to household but also from one ethnic group to another and also from one income-group to another. To cut the coat according to cloth, one is not always required to be a spendthrift. But, all the factors do not always conform to the same maxim. The size of a household has a remote control on the expenditure-pattern, even when the expenses are attuned to austerity and regulated by watchful housewifery. But, the size of a household is independent of the variable factors of earners and dependants. In other words, other things remaining the same, income of a household does not necessarily multiply with the enlargement of the size of the household, whereas expenditure usually increases with the size being inflated. If in Upper Pedong *per capita* daily expenditure steals a

TABLE 103

DAILY AVERAGE BUDGET OF AN INDIVIDUAL

Community	Average *per capita* daily income in rupees	Average *per capita* daily expenditure in rupees	Remarks on the average daily budget of an individual
Sikkimese Bhutia	0.70	0.87	Deficit
Dukpa	0.56	0.66	Deficit
Tamang	0.61	0.59	Surplus
Rai	0.61	0.64	Deficit
Sherpa	0.53	0.54	Deficit
Kami	0.49	0.59	Deficit
Lepcha	0.53	0.55	Deficit
Limbu	0.56	0.58	Deficit
Sanyashi	0.40	0.41	Deficit
Chhetri	0.56	0.55	Surplus
Gurung	0.56	0.59	Deficit
Newar	1.60	1.84	Deficit
Bhujel	0.51	0.66	Deficit
Mangar	1.51	1.51	Nil
Yakha	1.80	1.73	Surplus
Brahman	0.27	0.30	Deficit
Unspecified	0.53	0.49	Surplus

march on the *per capita* daily income of the majority of the households, one need not infer therefrom lack of opportunities of employment or earning and an out-of-proportion rise in the price-level. The net effect results often in the denudation of individual economy. The Table 103 will throw light on the average *per capita* daily income and expenditure of different communities.

Of the households belonging to seventeen communities in Upper Pedong, only those of the Tamang, the Chhetri, the Mangar and the unspecified communities appear to have an average *per capita* daily income locating surplus funds in savings after meeting the expenses. It is not, however, suggested that all the households have personal savings. Neither should the Table lead one to the conclusion that other communities suffer from an economic insufficiency. And if so, it is because self-sufficiency of one or more households offsets the indigence of another.

The correlation of income and expenditure will have a direct bearing on the overall economy of the village and the households as a whole, if one examines the households from the point of *per capita daily* income and expenditure. The Table 104 will present information on this score.

It is depressing that no household with a *per capita* daily income of 0·50 *paise* or below has shown a surplus budget. Surplus budget is located in only 9.2 per cent of the total households of the village. The majority (65.5 per cent) of the households, however, have limited their *per capita* daily expense exactly to their *per capita* daily income. Deficit budget seems to have vitiated the individual economic sufficiency of 25.3 per cent of the households. Of them again, none has a *per capita* daily income exceeding 0.90 *paise*. The households with a *per capita* daily income of 0.91 *paise* or more have not, except in one case, revealed a deficit budget. The optimum *per capita* daily income, apt to contain an individual's daily expense within his limit of the income, appears to be roughly Rs. 1.00 *paise* or so. Even then, the same can only feed a hungry individual with the humblest food of the poor, but cannot meet the needs of a person beyond bread. In case one desires not to live by bread alone, one will fail to locate funds to answer questions of the soul surging in his mind. A villager in such a context is physically too weak and fragile and mentally ill-equipped to provide a solution to the problem. Needs of the body are too great and too many to spare any surplus funds to provide food for the mind. In such an eventuality a person often tends to dream of all that his life could not fulfil, but not to tell them to others.

Growth of wealth or inundation of economy

In a village where a little more than fifty per cent of the households are in debt and a little less than one tenth of the households have shown surplus budget in the balance-sheet of their *per capita* daily income and expenditure, in a village where statutory restrictions prohibit the sale or transfer of land from the tribals like the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dukpas and the Lepchas to the non-tribals of the hills or the plains, it is not quite easy to assay the wealth owned by the households. The year preceding the date of enquiry being the reference period for the questions on the sale and purchase of assets, the data may not be comprehensive for a longer period, say a decade or a half, during which wealth accumulates.

As such, the analysis will be quite partial in the sense that the growth of wealth or the inundation of the assets will relate to the live-stock or other sundry household effects. The net effect of the two-way transaction relating to the purchase and sale of assets has amounted to the net loss of one cow, one calf, three goats, five pigs and jewellery worth Rs. 400.00 *paise*.

The Table 105 relates to the sale and purchase of assets.

UPPER PEDONG

TABLE 104

PER CAPITA DAILY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Per capita daily income in rupees	No. of house-holds	No. of households with *per capita* daily expenditure in rupees							
		0.01 to 0.20	0.21 to 0.30	0.31 to 0.40	0.41 to 0.50	0.51 to 0.60	0.61 to 0.70	0.71 to 0.80	0.81 to 0.90
0.01 to 0.20	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.21 to 0.30	6	..	4	2	..	..	..	..	..
0.31 to 0.40	9	..	..	6	2	1	..	..	..
0.41 to 0.50	15	..	..	..	11	4	..	..	..
0.51 to 0.60	15	..	..	..	3	11	..	1	..
0.61 to 0.70	15	..	..	..	..	..	10	4	1
0.71 to 0.80	8	..	..	..	..	..	2	3	2
0.81 to 0.90	7	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3
0.91 to 1.00	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
1.01 to 1.25	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1.26 to 1.50	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1.51 to 1.75	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1.76 to 2.00	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2.01 to 2.50	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2.51 to 3.00	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
3.00 and above	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**1**	**4**	**8**	**16**	**16**	**12**	**9**	**7**

PER CAPITA DAILY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

TABLE 104—*contd.*

Per capita daily income in rupees	No. of house-holds	No. of households with *per capita* daily expenditure in rupees							
		0.91 to 1.00	1.01 to 1.25	1.26 to 1.50	1.51 to 1.75	1.76 to 2.00	2.01 to 2.50	2.51 to 3.00	3.00 and above
0.01 to 0.20	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.21 to 0.30	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.31 to 0.40	9	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.41 to 0.50	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.51 to 0.60	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.61 to 0.70	15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.71 to 0.80	8	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.81 to 0.90	7	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
0.91 to 1.00	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
1.01 to 1.25	3	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
1.26 to 1.50	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
1.51 to 1.75	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
1.76 to 2.00	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
2.01 to 2.50	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
2.51 to 3.00	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
3.00 and above	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	87	2	5	1	3	..	1	..	2

UPPER PEDONG

TABLE 105

SALE AND PURCHASE OF ASSETS

Assets sold	Value (in rupees)	Community	Place of sale	Assets purchased	Value (in rupees)	Community	Place of purchase
Two cows	300	Sikkimese Bhutia	Algarah	One bullock	150	Dukpa	Lower Pedong
Jewellery	400	Sikkimese Bhutia	Kalimpong	One calf	50	Sherpa	Algarah
A calf and a bull	140	Sikkimese Bhutia	Merong Gaon	One cow Utensils	156 100	Sherpa	Lower Pedong
Two pigs	50	Rai	Rhenok Bazar				Kalimpong
A pig	30	Sherpa	Algarah	One calf	70	Kami	Lower Pedong
Two pigs A goat	50 40	Sherpa	Algarah	One cow	150	Chhetri	Kashyone
A goat	20	Sanyashi	Algarah	Two goats	28	Bhujel	Algarah
A goat	20	Sanyashi	Algarah				
Two goats One cow	35 115	Gurung	Algarah				
Total	1,200				704		

IV

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Demographic profile

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Sherpa
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Mangar
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Limbu

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Tamang
Rai
Limbu
Yakha
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Kami
Mangar

Gurung
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Husband's age vis-a-vis his wife's
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Deosi
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Religious institutions of the Buddhists

Sikkimese Gompa
Bhutanese Bhutia Gompa
Tibetan Gompa
Tamang Gompa
Sherpa Gompa
Sects of the Buddhists
Nyg Ma Pa (Rnin Ma Pa)
Bkah-Gdams-Pa
Dge-Lugs-Pa (Dgah-Ldan-Pa)
Bkah-Rgyud-Pa
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The Buddhist Triad
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Tantric Buddhism
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Services in the Church

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Bhutia legend about their prayer

Bhutia legend about the king with a bull's horn

Bhutia legend about Min-a-repa

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Rai legend about ancestor-worship

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A few proverbs in Khaskura

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IV

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

Demographic profile

Population trend

In Upper Pedong, a constituent segment of a *Khas Mahal Mouza*, the lowest revenue division and the administrative micro-unit in a police station, it is not possible to examine the trends in population figures for the village. Census population statistics are available at the *Mouza* level, but not for any part thereof. The non-availability of population figures of different Censuses for Upper Pedong should not, however, defeat the purpose of examination of the demographic profile of its parent structure, the *Mouza* of Pedong *Khas Mahal*. Any observation made for the *Mouza* will, even partially, hold good for the segment thereof.

Age-structure by sex and community

To highlight the broad demographic aspects of Upper Pedong, an analysis of the age-composition of the population by sex and community is important. Apart from having an insight into the potentialities of the village-economy, an idea of the labour-force together with the composition of the active and non-active section of the population may be obtained. The village people have for the purpose of classification been divided into three broad age-groups. Persons of the age-group (0-14) years have been treated as minors and the people in the age-group of (15-59) years have been classified as adults. The old age-group covers, all persons aged 60 years and above.

Minor males alone contribute quite substantially (47.1 per cent) to the total male population and the minor females constitute 42.8 per cent of the total females of the village. The children of both the sexes account for 44.9 per cent of the population of Upper Pedong. The

TABLE 106

POPULATION IN DIFFERENT CENSUSES

Mouza	Year	Population	Males	Females	Increase or decrease of population	Average annual rate of growth in percentage
Pedong *Khas Mahal*	1951	1,118	..	..	..	..
	1961	1,673	975	698	555	4.96

males predominate in number among the children (53.5 per cent), while 46.5 per cent of the children are females.

In sharp contrast, the sex-ratio tilts the balance in favour of females (52.2 per cent) who outnumber the males (46.3 per cent) in the age-group of (15-59) years. The total population in the working age-group of the adults constitutes nearly half of the total village population, the elderly people of 60 years and above comprising 5.9 per cent of the total population. Hence, in the old age-group the females are numerically in the minority. Again, for the village as a whole, the differential in sex-ratio is not abnormal, as there are 956 females per thousand males in the village.

The villagers in the age-group of (15-59) constitute in general the potential labour-force of the village and justifiably also build the resource of manpower of the village. The infants and the children (44.9 per cent) of the village together with the aged and the retired people (5.9 per cent) of Upper Pedong in the universal age of superannuation explain the economically dependent class of people in Upper Pedong against the labour potential of 49.2 per cent of the general population of the village.

Though generally such a trend in age-pyramid indicates the economic weight of the dependent section of the general population being otherwise borne normally by the potential labour-force by fruitful participation in the economic life of the village, the imbalance generated between the economically active and inactive classes in Upper Pedong should not be taken as a breeder of any emergent problem.

The analysis also highlights several other demographic features of Upper Pedong. That about 44.9 per cent of the villagers belong to the age-group (0-14) is an indicator of the high birth-rate of the population. That only 11.6 per cent of the population belong to the age-group of 50 years and above and that only 5.9 per cent of the villagers belong to the age-group of 60 years or more bear testimony to the sparsity of elderly people in the village.

Of the total population of the village in the age-group (40-50) the males constitute 20.5 per cent, while the females constitute 18.1 per cent. Of the persons aged 50 years and above, the males constitute 12.4 per cent, 11.6 per cent comprising the females. Of the population belonging to 60 years and above, the males constitute 6.6 per cent, while the females account for 5.0 per cent of the persons of the same age-group. The sex-ratio appears to be low among the persons of advanced age.

Sex-ratio

Among the Bhutias comprising the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas in the age-group (0-14), the sex-ratio tends to be 778 females per thousand males. The sex-ratio among the Bhutias of the age-group (15-59) appears to be unity. But, in the age-group of 60 years and above there are 500 Bhutia females per thousand male Bhutias. The sex-ratio among the Bhutias of Upper Pedong appears to be 867 females per thousand males.

Among the Rais, the females outnumber the males in all the age-groups. Among the Rai children in the age-group of (0-14) there are 1154 females per thousand males. In the working age-group of (15-59) the sex-ratio stands at 1353 females per thousand males. Among the old and the aged above 60 years, the females predominate in number, being twice the number of males. All ages taken into consideration, there appears to be a preponderance of females over the males.

Among the children and the adults of the working age-group (15-59) of the Sherpa community, the males are predominant numerically over the females in the same age-group. But in the age-group of 60 years and above the

sex-ratio appears to be balanced among the Sherpas. The overall sex-ratio among the Sherpas stands at 657 females per thousand males.

Among the Kamis the sex-ratio reveals the preponderance of males over females in the age-groups (0-14) and (15-59).

In the case of the Lepchas, the sex-ratio more or less approaches unity. There are 1090 females per thousand males among the Lepchas.

Among the Limbus, there are 933 females per thousand males. But the sex-ratio of the Sanyashis is overwhelmingly in favour of the females, as there are eight females against four males of the same community. The ratio of the females and the males among the Chhetris is balanced.

TABLE 107

SEX-RATIO

Community	No. of females per thousand males
Sikkimese Bhutia and Dukpa	867
Tamang	975
Rai	1,290
Sherpa	657
Kami	611
Lepcha	1,090
Limbu	933
Sanyashi	2,000
Chhetri	1,000
Gurung	1,000
Newar	1,000
Bhujel	5,000
Mangar	..
Yakha	..
Brahman	1,500
Unspecified	1,500
Total	**956**

Families by type and size

In Upper Pedong one may come across quite a number of families which sociologically may be classified into different categories according to their types, ranging from incomplete, nuclear, intermediate, and joint to irregular. By the concept of a household, as defined and accepted in Census of 1961, any group of persons, whether related to each other consanguineously, connubially or not, comes within its purview if it lives under the same roof and partakes of food from the same kitchen. For purposes of analysis in the present survey the same concept holds good with the difference that a further sociological characteristic has been introduced into the same. So, to the two-fold elements of house and food have been added further elements of connubial relationship or kinship pattern in the absence of the former. A household without a regular married couple has been equated with an incomplete family, whereas a married couple with or without unmarried siblings is deemed to form a simple family. Again, a person living with his wife, with or without unmarried siblings but with unmarried brothers or sisters or with either of the parents constitutes an intermediate family. A joint family is composed of a person, his wife and married sons or daughters or married brothers or sisters. An irregular family consists of one living with one's irregular kins.

The morphology of the families, as typified by the Table 108, reveals an interesting feature, the cardinal point of which has been shaped by the determinant factor of marriage itself. The structure of a family is never a changeless issue. The matrix of the whole system is always subject to change brought about by marriages contracted by members of the family. As a consequence, what is reflected in the Table is but a glimpse of the social structure of the village in its lowest indivisible social unit at a point of time. Hence, it would serve but little purpose if the form is analysed too much

UPPER PEDONG

TABLE 108

FAMILY-TYPE

Community	No. of households	Incomplete family consisting of				Nuclear family consisting of	
		Widowed mother and her son	Widow, widower or a married person living alone	A person never married	Separated or divorced person with or without siblings	Married couple with unmarried siblings	Married couple without sibling
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	1	..	..	..	9	..
Dukpa	5	1	..	..	..	3	1
Tamang	17	2	1	..	..	11	1
Rai	11	4	..	..	..	3	..
Sherpa	9	..	..	..	..	6	..
Kami	6	1	..	1	..	3	..
Lepcha	4	..	.	..	..	3	..
Limbu	4	1	.	..	..	1	..
Sanyashi	4	..	..	..	2	2	..
Chhetri	4	1	..	..	..	3	..
Gurung	3	1	1	..	..	1	..
Newar	2	1	1	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Mangar	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Sub-total	*87*	*13*	*4*	*2*	*2*	*47*	*2*
Grand total	**87**			**21**			**49**

for nothing, instead of being examined for the real substance. It needs no emphasis that the morphological structure of a family is ever subject to the three vital events of the life-cycle, namely, birth, marriage and death. The socio-economic forces do nevertheless shape the structure, but only indirectly and invisibly. Hence, the outward structure of a family will be superficial for analysis, unless one delves into the character and potentialities of the bond integrating several persons into a familial group and subjecting them to the unseen forces that dictate the power and life-span of the bonds. Even so, the structure of a family at a particular point of time is important in its own way.

It appears that 23.0 per cent of the families are incomplete, being without any couple. The majority of the families are morphologically nucleolated, 10.4 per cent are intermediate, 8.0 per cent are joint and 1.1 per cent irregular.

Simple families seem to be structurally the prevalent type in the village, the joint family being more an exception than the rule. An average incomplete family is the smallest family

TABLE 108—*contd.*

FAMILY-TYPE

Community	Intermediate family consisting of		Joint family consisting of			Irregular family consisting of divorced person living with mother's sister and own sisters
	Nuclear family with the head's mother or father	Nuclear family with the head's unmarried brother	Married couple with married siblings	Married brothers	Married brothers and married sisters	
Sikkimese Bhutia	2	..	..	..	..	1
Dukpa	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	1	..	1	..	..	..
Rai	3	..	1	..	..	..
Sherpa	1	..	1	1	..	..
Kami	..	1	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	..	..	..	..	1	..
Limbu	..	..	1	1	..	..
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	..	..	..	..	..	..
Newar	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sub-total	*8*	*1*	*4*	*2*	*1*	*1*
Grand total	**9**		**7**			**1**

Note: The single-membered Gurung household with a married Gurung woman, her husband living away, has been treated as an incomplete family—Editor

unit, consisting of 2.5 members on an average. An average nuclear family consists of 5.2 members, the village average size for a family. The joint family is the largest family unit comprising 9.9 members on an average, the size of the average intermediate family standing in between the nuclear and the joint family and being composed of 6.2 members on an average.

The average size of family for the village as a whole is five. As for individual communities, the average size of the Limbu family is bigger than the village average, closely followed by the average for the Rai and the Sherpa family. On the other hand, the average Sanyashi family is the smallest in size, closely followed by the average Gurung and the Dukpa family.

Households with four to six members comprise the majority (46.0 per cent) of the households of the village. The households with 4-6 members explain 20.7 per cent of the households of the village. About 19.5 per cent of the households of Upper Pedong contain 7-9 members in each. Single-membered households explain 8.0 per cent of the total households of the village and 5.7 per cent of the households are large-sized, each containing 10 members or more.

Structural types of the households do not necessarily depend on their size. In other words, Upper Pedong illustrate how wrong it is to presume that families are morphologically dependent on population variables. More often than one may conjecture, the structure is very directly related to kinship-pattern and the connubial element. That is why, nuclear households do not all contain two or three members. Instead, 82.4 per cent of the nuclear households are found to be each inhabited by four members ordinarily and by seven members or more in quite a fair number of cases. Intermediate family as an appendage to a nuclear family or as an extended simple family is apt to be larger in size than the nuclear family. Hence, intermediate households are mostly bigger than the characteristic nuclear family of the village with four to six members in the majority of cases. Joint family in the simplest form requires four members or two nuclear families. Upper Pedong does not seem to have been the home of any joint household with less than four members. Rather, in the majority of joint families, the size

TABLE 109

AVERAGE SIZE OF A FAMILY

Community	No. of households	Males	Females	Total persons	Average size
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	37	27	64	4.9
Dukpa	5	8	12	20	4.0
Tamang	17	40	39	79	4.6
Rai	11	31	40	71	6.4
Sherpa	9	35	23	58	6.4
Kami	6	18	11	29	4.8
Lepcha	4	11	12	23	5.8
Limbu	4	15	14	29	7.3
Sanyashi	4	4	8	12	3.0
Chhetri	4	10	10	20	5.0
Gurung	3	5	5	10	3.3
Newar	2	3	3	6	3.0
Bhujel	1	2	5	7	7.0
Mangar	1	1	..	1	1.0
Yakha	1	1	..	1	1.0
Brahman	1	2	3	5	5.0
Unspecified	1	2	3	5	5.0
Total	**87**	**225**	**215**	**440**	**5.1**

of a household reveals not less than seven members therein. The households, incomplete and irregular in structure, have in the majority of cases (95.2 per cent) not more than six members in each.

Marital status

The structure of a family being largely controlled by the most important factor of marriage, the central event and a significant landmark in the life-cycle of an individual, the marital status of an individual, apart from revealing several features of this social institution and holding the key to many sociological and demographic problems, has its own importance. If the structure of a family is changed by the institution of marriage itself, its size is no less affected by the latter's aftermath. In short, marital status of an individual is an integral part of the study of the fertility and fecundity prospects of a person too. Besides, it enables one to read possible changes supposed to have been introduced in the social usages and customs by the welfare measures of the government and also by the enlightenment initiated by the new pace-setters of education and communication. The discussion hereinafter concerns the marital status of persons of different age-groups and communities.

None of the males among the Bhutias is found married at an age of 24 years or below nor is any Bhutia female married before the

TABLE 110

SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD

Community	No. of households	Households with one member			Households with 2-3 members		
		Number	Males	Females	Number	Males	Females
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	..	..	..	2	4	1
Dukpa	5	..	..	..	1	1	1
Tamang	17	1	..	1	6	8	8
Rai	11	..	..	..	2	3	3
Sherpa	9	..	..	..	1	1	2
Kami	6	1	1	..	2	3	2
Lepcha	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	4	..	..	..	1	2	..
Sanyashi	4	1	1	..	2	1	4
Chhetri	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gurung	3	1	..	1	1	..	2
Newar	2	1	..	1	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	1	1	1	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	1	1	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**7**	**4**	**3**	**18**	**23**	**23**

TABLE 110—*contd.*

SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD

Community	Households with 4-6 members			Households with 7-9 members			Households with 10 members and above		
	Number	Males	Females	Number	Males	Females	Number	Males	Females
Sikkimese Bhutia	9	24	20	2	9	6	..	..	..
Dukpa	4	7	11	..	..	.	..	..	..
Tamang	6	15	13	3	11	12	1	6	5
Rai	4	9	10	3	12	11	2	7	16
Sherpa	5	19	9	2	9	6	1	6	6
Kami	..	..	..	3	14	9	..	..	..
Lepcha	3	7	7	1	4	5	..	..	..
Limbu	2	5	6	..	..	.	1	8	8
Sanyashi	1	2	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	3	8	5	1	2	5	..	.	..
Gurung	..	..	..	1	5	2	..	..	..
Newar	1	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	..	..	..	1	2	5	..	.	.
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	.
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	.
Unspecified	1	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**49**	**103**	**93**	**17**	**68**	**61**	**5**	**27**	**35**

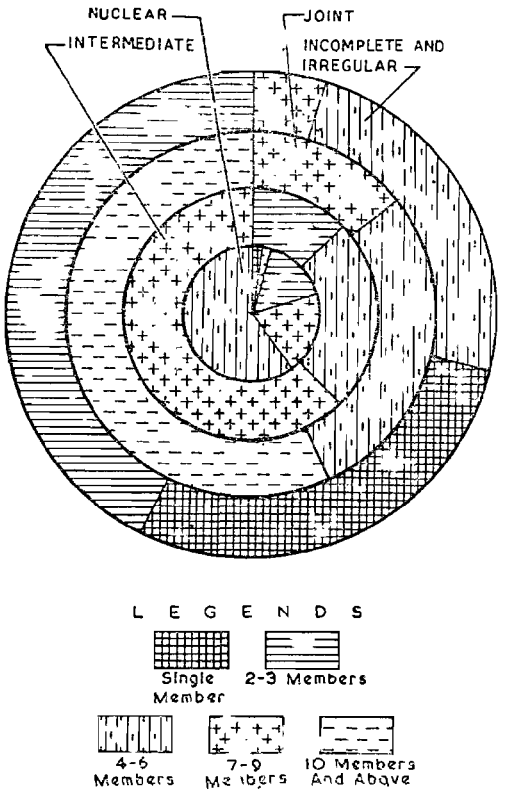
TABLE 111

HOUSEHOLD BY STRUCTURE AND SIZE

Type of family	No. of households	No. of households with: Single member	2—3 members	4—6 members	7—9 members	10 members and above
Nuclear	50	..	8	31	10	1
Intermediate	8	..	1	2	5	..
Joint	7	..	..	2	1	4
Incomplete and irregular	22	7	9	5	1	..
Total	**87**	**7**	**18**	**40**	**17**	**5**

*The husband of one married Gurung woman is temporarily away from the household—Editor

HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPES AND SIZE



attainment of the working age of 15 years or more. The incidence of divorce appears to be 5.4 per cent of the persons who have once married.

Among the Tamangs, no male below 20 years of age is married. But, none of the males above 29 years of age remains a bachelor either. Of the eight males in the age-group (20-29), only half are married. That four males in the same age-group have remained unmarried is not because of any vow of celibacy but for the reason that negotiations for their marriage, though set apace, have yet to bring about a wedlock. The limiting age of marriage among the Tamang girls seems to be fixed at 19 years, as no girl beyond this age remains still unmarried. Of the eight girls in the age-group (15-19), seven are awaiting their spouses.

Among the Rais, no male has remained unmarried beyond the age of 34 years, nor does any girl above 24 years of age look for her own marriage. A teenager Rai male has been found married, though another boy of the same age-group remains unmarried. The proportion of widowers and widows is quite high among the Rais.

No Sherpa young man above the age of 24 years has remained a bachelor. Three Kamis each in the age-group of 25-29, 35-39 and 50-54 respectively have not yet contracted their own marriage. No Lepcha young man above the age of 19 years is found a bachelor. But, one Limbu woman in the age-group of 35-39 has remained a spinster. Among the Sanyashis, conjugal life has not proved a bliss to three persons living a life separated from their spouses.

The majority of the villagers (59.8 per cent) are unmarried. The married persons account for 33.2 per cent of the total population, of which 5.7 per cent are widowed and 1.3 per cent are divorced or separated.

Of the male population, 63.1 per cent are unmarried and 56.3 per cent of the females are yet to do married. That child-marriage is not practised is evident from the fact that none of the children, male or female in the age-group of 0-14, has been returned as married. Of the population excluding children in the age-group of 0-14, 19.0 per cent remain unmarried. Of the males aged 15 years and above, 25.4 per cent are yet to marry and 23.4 per cent of the females in the same age-group remain unmarried. This is so because girls get married at a relatively lower age than that of the males. To illustrate the point, one may examine the married males and females in the age-group (15-24). Of 23 married persons in the same age-group, 18 (78.3 per cent) are females. The higher incidence of

marriage among the females is further strengthened by the fact that none but one (in the age-group of 35-39) female has remained a spinster beyond the age of 24 years.

The fact that there are 28 girls still unmarried (23.1 per cent of the total unmarried females) within the age-group of 15-24 indicates the relatively higher age at marriage of the girls.

If there be no parity in sex-ratio among the married persons, this has been caused by the absentee husbands of six married females who are away from their wives in a different place because of their occupation. The husband of one Tamang woman is working in Bhutan, that of a Rai is an army-personnel, the husband of a Lepcha woman is the driver of an automobile in Bhutan, that of another is an Assistant Inspector of Police. The husband of a Chhetri woman and that of a Gurung woman are employed in the army.

Marriageable age and age at marriage

As marriage releases the growth potential of population, an analysis of the age of marriage, implying thereby the socially permitted marriageable age, and the age at marriage, connoting thereby the age-differential from the marriageable age in the event of actual marriage, has a vital significance in examining the demographic profile of the village in the context of social practices. But, the study as such is beset with a number of limitations. First, the unit of the study is a tribal village where the level of literacy is, if not unbelievably low, not favourable towards such a study aimed at collecting data on age at marriage. The age-returns mostly are far from accurate, specially so from the aged people. Secondly, the study

TABLE 112

MARITAL STATUS

Community	Age-group	Never married		Married		Widowed		Divorced/ separated		Total population		
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
Sikkimese Bhutias and Dukpas	0—4	5	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	5	3
	5—9	7	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	7	8
	10—14	6	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	6	3
	15—19	4	4	..	1	..	..	..	..	9	4	5
	20—24	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	2	3
	25—29	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	4	3	1
	30—34	..	..	1	1	..	..	1	..	3	2	1
	35—39	..	..	2	3	1	1	..	..	7	3	4
	40—44	..	..	2	3	..	..	..	..	5	2	3
	45—49	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	3	1	2
	50—54	..	..	1	3	1	..	..	..	5	2	3
	55—59	..	..	4	1	..	..	..	..	5	4	1
	60 and above	..	..	3	1	1	1	..	..	6	4	2
	All ages	**26**	**21**	**15**	**15**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**84**	**45**	**39**

TABLE 112—*contd.*

Community	Age-group	Never married		Married		Widowed		Divorced/ separated		Total population		
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
Tamang	0—4	4	8	..	..	..	..	..	..	12	4	8
	5—9	6	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	6	3
	10—14	10	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	12	10	2
	15—19	2	7	..	1	..	..	..	..	10	2	8
	20—24	3	..	2	3	..	..	..	..	8	5	3
	25—29	1	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	5	3	2
	30—34	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	35—39	..	..	2	4	..	1	..	..	7	2	5
	40—44	..	..	3	1	..	1	..	..	5	3	2
	45—49	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
	50—54	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	55—59	..	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	4	2	2
	60 and above	..	..	2	..	..	2	..	..	4	2	2
	All ages	26	20	14	15	..	4	..	..	79	40	39
Rai	0—4	3	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	3	6
	5—9	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	8	4	4
	10—14	6	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	11	6	5
	15—19	1	7	1	2	..	..	..	..	11	2	9
	20—24	3	4	1	2	..	..	..	..	10	4	6
	25—29	..	..	2	2	..	1	1	..	6	3	3
	30—34	2	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	5	4	1
	35—39	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	40—44	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	1
	45—49	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	2	1	1
	50—54	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	2	1	1
	55—59	..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	2	2	..
	60 and above	..	..	..	..	1	2	..	..	3	1	2
	All ages	19	26	8	9	3	5	1	..	71	31	40

TABLE 112—*contd.*

Community	Age-group	Never married		Married		Widowed		Divorced/ separated		Total population		
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
Sherpa	0—4	8	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	11	8	3
	5—9	7	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	10	7	3
	10—14	4	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	9	4	5
	15—19	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	..
	20—24	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	4	2	2
	25—29	..	..	3	2	..	..	..	..	5	3	2
	30—34	..	..	4	1	..	..	..	..	5	4	1
	35—39	..	..	1	5	..	..	..	..	6	1	5
	40—44	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	..
	45—49	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	50—54	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	55—59	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60 and above	..	..	1	1	1	1	..	..	4	2	2
	All ages	**23**	**11**	**11**	**11**	**1**	**1**	..	..	**58**	**35**	**23**
Kami	0—4	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	3	..
	5—9	5	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	5	2
	10—14	1	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	1	4
	15—19	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	..
	20—24	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	25—29	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
	30—34	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
	35—39	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
	40—44	..	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	3	2	1
	45—49	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
	50—54	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
	55—59	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..	1
	60 and above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	All ages	**14**	**6**	**4**	**4**	..	**1**	..	..	**29**	**18**	**11**

TABLE 112—*contd.*

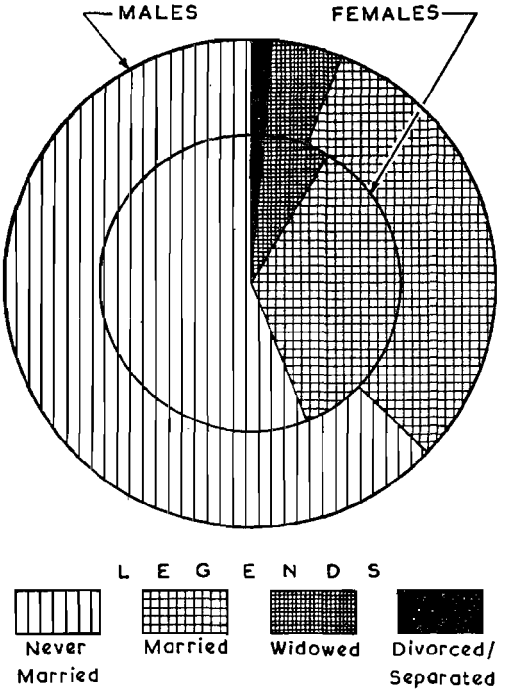
Community	Age-group	Never married		Married		Widowed		Divorced/ separated		Total population		
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
Lepcha	0—4	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	1	2
	5—9	2	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	2	3
	10—14	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	2	2
	15—19	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	3	..
	20—24	..	..	1	2	..	..	..	..	3	1	2
	25—29	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	30—34	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	35—39	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
	40—44	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	45—49	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	50—54	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	55—59	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60 and above	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
	All ages	**8**	**7**	**3**	**5**	..	..	..	..	**23**	**11**	**12**
Limbu	0—4	5	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	5	2
	5—9	2	4	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	2	4
	10—14	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
	15—19	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	2 —24	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	2	..	2
	25—29	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
	30—34	..	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	4	2	2
	35—39	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	40—44	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	1	..
	45—49	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
	50—54	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	55—59	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60 and above	..	..	2	2	..	..	..	..	4	2	2
	All ages	**8**	**8**	**6**	**6**	**1**	..	..	..	**29**	**15**	**14**

TABLE 112—*concld.*

Community	Age-group	Never married		Married		Widowed		Divorced/ separated		Total population		
		Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
Sanyashi	0—4	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
	5—9	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	10—14	..	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	2
	15—19	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	20—24	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	25—29	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	30—34	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	35—39	..	..	2	1	..	..	..	..	3	2	1
	40—44	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	45—49	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	1
	50—54	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	55—59	..	..	.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60 and above	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	2	1	1
	All ages	**1**	**4**	**2**	**2**	..	..	**1**	**2**	**12**	**4**	**8**
Chhetri	0—4	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	1	2
	5—9	4	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	4	3
	10—14	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	2	1
	15—19	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	20—24	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	25—29	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	1
	30—34	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	35—39	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	40—44	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	2	1	1
	45—49	..	..	1	1	1	..	..	..	3	2	1
	50—54	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	55—59	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	60 and above	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	All ages	**7**	**7**	**2**	**3**	**1**	..	..	..	**20**	**10**	**10**

Note: The last seven communities listed together have altogether 10 households consisting of 35 persons comprising 16 males and 19 females. The number of households being small, the marital status of each person according to age-group has not been shown in details—Editor

MARITAL STATUS



being limited to a small universe returning a small quantum of datum, the probability of individual peculiarities influencing the analysis towards one direction or the other is not fully negatived. The data have still been collected on the age at marriage of all villagers, married, widowed and divorced or separated, and then processed and tabulated.

The mean age at marriage has significantly registered an upward trend over years. The trend of the mean age at marriage among the males has been uniform throughout the decades in course of last fifty years or so. In the case of the females, however, there has been a slight reversal in a vertical upgradation of the age at marriage in the period dating back five to ten years.

The mean age at marriage for the males which stood at 19.2 four decades ago has registered a sharp rise of 5.1 and stands at 25.1 years for the last five years or so. The mean age at marriage for the females about four

TABLE 113

PEOPLE AND THEIR MARITAL STATUS

Age-group	Never married			Married			Widowed			Divorced/Separated			Total population		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
0—4	33	30	63	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	33	30	63
5—9	39	36	75	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	39	36	75
10—14	34	26	60	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	34	26	60
15—19	15	21	36	1	5	6	..	..	..	..	..	..	16	26	42
20—24	10	7	17	4	13	17	..	..	..	..	..	..	14	20	34
25—29	5	..	5	10	8	18	..	1	1	1	1	2	16	10	26
30—34	2	..	2	11	8	19	..	..	..	1	..	1	14	8	22
35—39	3	1	4	9	16	25	1	3	4	..	..	..	13	20	33
40—44	..	..	..	10	7	17	1	2	3	..	..	..	11	9	20
45—49	..	..	..	6	5	11	1	1	2	..	1	1	7	7	14
50—54	1	..	1	2	6	8	2	..	2	..	..	..	5	6	11
55—59	..	..	..	7	3	10	1	3	4	..	..	..	8	6	14
60 and above	..	..	..	10	5	15	4	5	9	1	1	2	15	11	26
Grand total	**142**	**121**	**263**	**70**	**76**	**146**	**10**	**15**	**25**	**3**	**3**	**6**	**225**	**215**	**440**

LITERACY

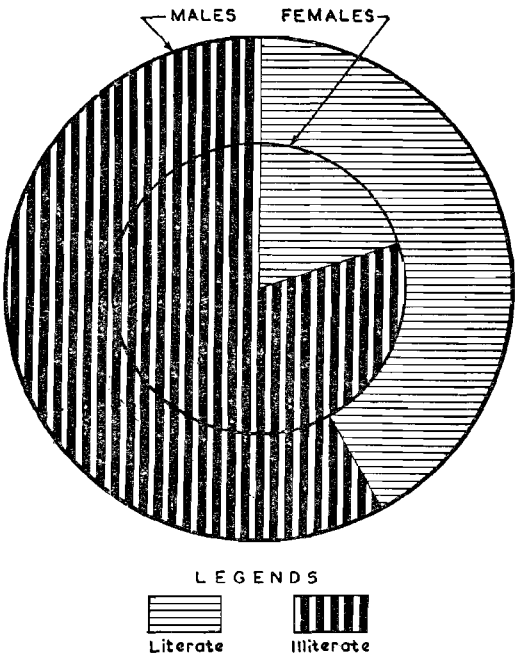


TABLE 114

MEAN AGE AT MARRIAGE

Duration of marriage (in years)	Married males		Married females	
	Number	Mean age at marriage	Number	Mean age at marriage
0—5.0	18	25.1	20	20.7
5.1—10.0	14	24.5	11	20.0
10.1—20.0	19	24.0	31	20.4
20.1—30.0	13	23.7	11	20.3
30.1—40.0	10	22.7	10	18.8
40.1+	9	19.2	11	16.5
Mean age at marriage	**83**	**22.6**	**94**	**19.8**

decades ago was 16.5 and after registering an increase of 4.2 years in the intervening period stands at 20.7 for the last five years.

Literacy

Literacy has been defined as the faculty to read and write. This concept applied as a test has identified quite a large number of people qualified as literates. The higher percentage of literacy in a predominantly tribal village is explained by the ecological factor of the nearness of the village to Kalimpong and the sustained reform measures of a group of zealous missionaries in the village itself. The progress of literacy of the people of Pedong *Khas Mah l*, the larger geographical unit, of which Upper Pedong is a constituent, is worthy of scrutiny.

TABLE 115

LITERACY OVER YEARS

Year	Place	Population	Literates	Percentage
1951	Pedong *Khas Mahal*	1,118	225	20.1
1961	Ditto	1,673	492	29.4
1965	Upper Pedong	440	143	32.5

The progress of literacy in the *Mouza* as a whole is quite impressive, the rate of decennial progress therein since 1951 being 9.1 and the pace of educational advancement in the village since 1961 being 3.1 per cent.

Though the percentage of literacy is quite high, there is striking variation among different communities as also between the males and the females.

Literate males of the village are almost double the number of literate females. Among the males, the Newars have recorded the desired optimum inasmuch as all of them are literates. The position is also quite satisfactory among the Lepcha, Tamang, Rai and Sikkimese Bhutia males, the percentage of literacy of which has crossed the mark of the village average.

But, the Sanyashis, the Gurungs and the Dukpas lag far behind even in attaining the village average for the literacy of the males.

MEAN AGE AT MARRIAGE

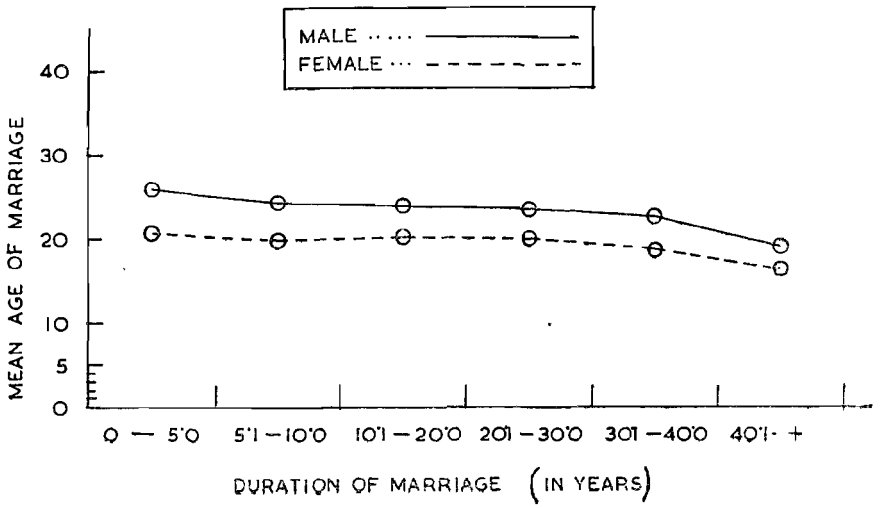


TABLE 116

LITERACY AND ETHNIC GROUPS

Community	Male			Female			Total		
	Persons	Literates	Percentage	Persons	Literates	Percentage	Persons	Literates	Percentage
Sikkimese Bhutia	37	17	46.0	27	5	18.5	64	22	34.4
Dukpa	8	2	25.0	12	3	25.0	20	5	25.0
Tamang	40	24	60.0	39	9	23.1	79	33	41.8
Rai	31	16	51.6	40	8	20.0	71	24	34.0
Sherpa	35	10	28.6	23	..	..	58	10	17.2
Kami	18	6	33.3	11	1	9.1	29	7	24.1
Lepcha	11	7	63.6	12	7	58.3	23	14	60.9
Limbu	15	4	26.7	14	7	50.0	29	11	37.9
Sanyashi	4	..	..	8	1	12.5	12	1	8.3
Chhetri	10	3	30.0	10	1	10.0	20	4	20.0
Gurung	5	1	20.0	5	2	40.0	10	3	30.0
Newar	3	3	100.0	3	2	66.7	6	5	83.3
Others	8	3	37.5	11	1	9.1	19	4	21.1
Total	**225**	**96**	**42.7**	**215**	**47**	**2.18**	**440**	**143**	**32.5**

The village women though in the threshold of enlightenment have not achieved a significant breakthrough in the eradication of illiteracy. Here too, the position is not uniform. While the Lepchas, the Limbus, the Newars and the Gurungs have attained a level of literacy far above the village average, the women of some communities like the Sherpas, the Kamis, the Chhetris, the Sanyashis and a few others are, so to say, prisoners of homes and kitchens and offer little scope for optimism. It is indeed a painful reminder of the fact of educational backwardness of the Sherpa females, a single individual of whom is not even literate.

TABLE 117

LITERACY OF THE SCHEDULED TRIBES

Unit	Level of literacy of the males in percentage	Level of literacy of the females in percentage	Level of literacy of population in percentage
All Scheduled Tribes of Upper Pedong	39.6	20.3	30.9
All Scheduled Tribes of Kalimpong Police Station (Rural)	36.5	9.5	23.2
All Scheduled Tribes of Darjeeling District (Rural)	20.2	4.5	12.7
All Scheduled Tribes of West Bengal (Rural)	11.2	1.8	6.6

TABLE 118

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Community	Males						Females	
	Preliminary or pre-Primary	Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Undergraduate	Graduate	Preliminary or pre-Primary	Primary
Sikkimese Bhutia	3	12	3	1	1	..	3	1
Dukpa	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	3
Tamang	5	15	9	..	..	..	1	2
Rai	3	13	3	..	..	..	..	8
Sherpa	1	8	2	..	..	..	..	..
Kami	2	6	..	..	..	..	1	1
Lepcha	2	6	1	..	..	..	1	6
Limbu	4	2	2	..	..	..	1	4
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Chhetri	3	3	..	..	..	..	1	1
Gurung	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	1
Newar	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	1
Bhujel	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Total	**24**	**70**	**22**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**12**	**29**

The tribal section of the village population constituted by the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dukpas, the Sherpas and the Lepchas compares favourably in literacy with their counterparts not only in the Police Station of Kalimpong or the district of Darjeeling but also in the State of West Bengal.

Standards of education

The level of literacy of the people does not bear any meaning without any corresponding reference to their educational standards. To gauge the advancement of learning of the people, the educational standard of the villagers have been categorised into Preliminary or pre-Primary, Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary Undergraduate and Graduate. Obviousaly the new entrants in the preprimary standard, all illiterate though, are literates in the making.

It appears that about 19.1 per cent of the total persons of the village have yet to become literate and to attain any educational standard, all of them being new entrants in the preprimary stages of the school.

Of the persons with some formal education, 64.7 per cent have education of the primary standard. There among this group 70.7 per

TABLE 118—*contd.*

	Females		Total					
Community	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Preliminary or pre-Primary	Primary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Under-graduate	Graduate
Sikkimese Bhutia	4	..	6	13	7	1	1	..
Dukpa	..	..	..	4	1	..	..	..
Tamang	7	..	6	17	16	..	..	..
Rai	..	..	3	21	3	..	..	..
Sherpa	..	..	1	8	2	..	..	..
Kami	..	..	3	7	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	1	..	3	12	2	..	..	..
Limbu	3	..	5	6	5	..	..	..
Sanyashi	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	..	..	4	4	—	..	..	..
Gurung	1	..	2	2	1	..	..	..
Newar	..	1	..	3	..	1	..	1
Bhujel	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Mangar	..	..	..	..	—	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	..	..	2	1	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	..	1	1	..	..
Total	17	1	36	99	39	3	1	1

cent are males. About 27.5 per cent of the educated villagers have education upto the Secondary or Higher Secondary level.

Educational facilities

Whatever educational amenities Upper Pedong enjoys today and whatever educational standards have so far been attained by its residents have all been due to the contribution of a Primary School and one Higher Secondary School situated in the village and of one more Primary School very near to it. No other factor or agency can have any claim to the achievement of what these educational institutions have brought about. If a predominantly tribal village like Upper Pedong has been proselytised into the order of learning, the success has been achieved by the schools run by a band of dedicated philanthropists who came to the village, far too distant from their home lands in the 19th Century. *People would even now remark, 'Wherever you go, you will always come across two classes of people, the Marwaris and the Catholic priests.' Even though the casual remark is passed as a joke, it holds some truth. The people, referred to above, did not keep away from this place on account of some inconvenience or some hardship. When the first Catholic Mission in the subdivision of Kalimpong, strangely enough, came up in the last century in Pedong, the last tiny Check Post, one could not cross over to Sikkim. At a time when thick forest existed all around and there were also dangers in the area not only from wild animals but thieves too, the Rev. Fr. Desgodins, a French Count, was sent to Tibet by the Society of the Freneh Foreign Missions at Paris as a helping hand to the already existing Mission of Tatsienlou and also entrusted with the responsibility of preaching Christ in Tibet, still a forbidden land to the foreigners. One of the dreams of the French Count was to spread the *Gospel* to Lhasa in the very heart of Tibet. From Tatsienlou he made an attempt to reach Lhasa, but unfortunately he found himself entrapped by an influential *Lama*, who had him beaten by an iron rod and tied down in the pigsty under his house. He, however, managed to escape by night and made a long journey along the river Mekong and went to Singapore *via* Hongkong. Thence, going to Assam he made another unsuccessful attempt to enter Tibet, but he met with total failure in his bid. He finally came on the 10th November, 1882 to Pedong on way to Tibet and having erected a small hut, he lived there till death. A scholar in Tibetan, he opened a Tibetan School where he himself was a teacher. He left to the posterity a thick volume of French-Tibetan Dictionary and many religious books including the Tibetan translation of the Bible. This was the humble beginning of the Catholic Mission in Pedong where more priests from France were afterwards sent to help Fr. Desgodins. A little beyond Pedong, about three kilometres or so, one comes across a giant-sized wooden cross facing Tibet. The one standing there is not, however, the same old cross. Erected some years ago, it is dedicated to the seven Dolours of the Lady. Every year on the 15th September, the priests would go in solemn procession to the Cross on the hill to pray for their Mission to Tibet.

Pedong in those days was forbidden even to the Nepalis. It was inhabited predominantly by the Lepchas and the Tibetans. Rev. Fr. Jules Dounel who was to become the Superior and afterwards Prefect Apostolic of the Mission arrived in Pedong to bring Christ and His teachings to Kalimpong and Sikkim, which in those days were known as Southern Tibet Mission. Rev. Fr. Desgodins died in 1913. The work started by him was carried on by other French priests under the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Jules Dounel. They did not restrict themselves to religious activities only but also took a prominent part in the social work. A Middle

* Based on an interview with Father Rene Singh, the Headmaster of the Local High School—Editor

School was opened to impart education to the local boys. The exact date of establishment of the school remains unknown, as the existing records fail to make a mention of the same. Then was started the Pedong Hospital to serve the diseased people of the area.

A second Mission Station, started on the Hill right opposite Pedong, came to be known as Maria *Bustee* and was entrusted with one of the priests as a reward for his service as a Military Chaplain to the Irish soldiers during the Tibetan Expedition. With the passage of time, the Misson took upon itself multifarious activities which the French priests with limited manpower could hardly cope with. So, in 1937 it was handed over to the Canons Regular of St. Maurice, Switzerland, under the able leadership of Rt. Rev. Fr. A Gianora, a very intelligent engineering scholar, who appreciated the usefulness of adapting an institution to the local culture. The Roman Catholic Church at Kalimpong, planned and constructed by him, along with the Church at Suruk represent the local arts in constructional features. In order to facilitate better communication, Church services are conducted in the vernacular and local customs are thoroughly studied in order to explore how best they may be utilised in the service of the Church. The local Tibetan art has left its imprint on the Church of Pedong which externally remains Gothic with a Norman touch.

The Middle School in Pedong upgraded to the status of a High School under Rev. Fr. A. Schyrr in 1950, recorded further progress under Rev. Fr. G. Hofstetter.

The Primary School, officially recognised in 1913 for the first time, was later converted into the Middle School. The Primary School functioned along with the High School till the 1st August, 1964, when the management of the Primary School was taken over by the Government of West Bengal. As it stands today, the Primary School, named St. George's Primary School, is housed in a *pucca* structure, close to Pedong Bazar on the Pedong-Rishi Road. The roll strength of the school in July, 1965 stands at 323 and out of every five students in the Primary School, two are girls. The general awakening of the people in the hills from a century-old stupor and ignorance is further evident from the percentage of average daily attendance which is very high.

TABLE 119

INDEX OF ATTENDANCE OF THE PRIMERS

Year	Month	Total roll strength of St. George's Primary School	Average daily attendance	Index of average daily attendance in percentage
1965	January	313	Winter vacation	..
1965	February	313	288	92.0
1965	March	322	270	83.9
1965	April	322	269	83.5
1965	May	322	268	83.2
1965	June	323	274	84.8

The teaching staff of the school consists of six members of which two are ladies. The names and educational qualifications of the-then teaching staff of the Primary School may be glanced from the Table 120.

TABLE 120

PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AT A GLANCE

Name	Designation	Educational qualification
Sri Arun Kumar Rai	Headmaster	Diploma in Basic Training
Sm. R. J. Pradhan	Teacher	Matriculate with training in *Gurukul*
Sri Lak Bahadur Deosu	Teacher	Matriculate
Sri A. B. Pradhan	Teacher	Training in *Gurukul*
Sri Surje Kuldeep	Teacher	Matriculate with Diploma in Basic Training
Sri C. P. Bhutiani	Teacher	Senior Training

St. George's High School is housed in a two-storied wooden building, just a few feet above the Primary School and opposite to the hill across the Rishi river. A few *Sal* and

TABLE 121

STUDENTS OF A HIGH SCHOOL

	Roll strength								
				Scheduled Tribes			Other than Scheduled Tribes		
Class	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
V	61	41	20	14	6	8	47	35	12
VI	64	42	22	23	12	11	41	30	11
VII	50	34	16	10	8	2	40	26	14
VIII	35	28	7	12	8	4	23	20	3
IX	17	11	6	5	2	3	12	9	3
X	15	14	1	4	4	..	11	10	1
Total	**242**	**170**	**72**	**68**	**40**	**28**	**174**	**130**	**44**
Percentage	*100.0*	*70.2*	*29.8*	*28.1*	*58.8*	*41.2*	*71.9*	*75.1*	*24.9*

TABLE 122

RECORD OF PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL FINAL EXAMINATION

Year	No. of students sent for the School Final Examination	Number of students who passed the School Final Examination				Number of unsuccessful students	Percentage of successful students
		First Division	Second Division	Third Division	Compartmental		
1953	11	..	..	2	..	9	18.2
1954	9	..	..	..	4	5	44.4
1955	7	..	..	2	5	..	28.6
1956	5	..	..	2	1	2	60.0
1957	10	..	1	5	..	4	60.0
1958	5	1	1	1	1	1	80.0
1959	6	..	..	1	..	5	16.7
1960	4	..	..	1	1	2	50.0
1961	5	..	3	..	..	2	60.0
1962	Nil	..	..	..	..	..	..
1963	6	..	..	2	..	4	33.3
1964	4	..	2	1	1	..	100.0

NOTE: Only four students belonging to the Scheduled Tribes have till 1964 been successful in the School Final Examinations since 1953.—Editor

incense trees lend an air ot grace and dignity to the academic environ of the school. Run and supervised by the local Swiss Mission, aided by the Government of West Bengal and recognized by the Board of Secondary Education, West Bengal, St. George's High School has the roll strength of 242.

Of the male students, 23.5 per cent and of the female students, 38.9 per cent belong to the Scheduled Tribes. The sex-ratio among the students belonging to the Scheduled Tribes is higher than that among the students from other communities. As already pointed out, the High School first received official recognition in the year 1950 and the first batch of students from the School sat for the School Final Examination for the first time in 1953.

The monthly tuition fees for different classes are different, being prescribed at the rate of Rs.6.50 *paise* for students attending Class IX and Class X, Rs.5.50 *paise* for Class VII and Class VIII and Rs.4.00 *paise* for Class V and Class VI. Besides, the School collects subscription from the students of well-off households on the basis of rates assessed by the local people. The subscriptions are charged under the head of development fees.

Boarding facilities are available to the students from the adjoining village in a Hostel attached to the School with accommodation for 61 students. A boarder has to pay Rs. 35.00 *paise* per month as hostel expense for ten months a year, the hostel being closed for two months of winter vacation. A student belonging to the Scheduled Tribe and residing in the Hostel gets an annual subsidy of Rs. 96.00 *paise*.

The School provides facilities for extra-curricular activities. There is a badminton court attached to the School compound where the teachers and the students participate in the games. Occasionally friendly matches are held between the members of the staff of the School and employees of the offices in the adjoining area. The football-ground of the School is in front of the School building on the other side of the road. Besides regular matches, inter-class league matches, organised every year, are played there. Sometimes exhibition matches between the School team and out-station teams are organised too. St. George's Cathedral attached to the School provides the site for a get-together of the boarder students of the School hostel and the teachers staying in the residential staff-quarters of the School twice daily, once in the morning and once more in the evening to offer prayers and chant hymns.

TABLE 123

TEACHERS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL

Name	Qualification	Designation
Sr Father Hofstetter	B. Sc. (Hons.) B.T.	Headmaster
Sri C. B. Sunwar	B. Sc. (Hons.)	Teacher
Sri L. B. Rai	I. A., Senior Basic Training	Teacher
Sri B. K. K. Kumai	B. A.	Teacher
Sm. Lila Pradhan	I. A. and Trained in teaching	Teacher
Sri K. N. Pandey	B. A.	Teacher
Sri B. S. Kargay	I. A. and Trained in *Gurukul*	Teacher
Sri T. M. Mukhi	B. Com.	Teacher
Sri H. J. Pradhan	I. A.	Teacher
Sri S. B. Kargay	B. Sc.	Teacher
Sri J. T. Namchu	B. Sc.	Teacher
Sri D. K. Pradhan	B. A.	Teacher
Sri R. Singh	B. A.	Teacher

The two Schools above are in the village proper. But Upper Pedong does not necessarily, therefore, restrict its freedom to enjoy the amenities offered by other educational institutions outside its limit. In fact, the other Schools, known as Pedong Primary School at Sakyong, situated close to Pedong Bazar and not too far off from the village, enrol students from this

village too. The primary students of the village thus has the option to read in St. George's Primary School and Pedong Primary School. Though primary education is free all over the State, the poorer students prefer Pedong Primary School to St. George's Primary School, as in the latter institution a student is required to contribute 0.50 *paise* every month to the School Fund.

There being no separate school for girls in the village or its neighbourhood, the schools are run on coeducational basis to enable the village girls to have education in larger numbers.

Educational expenses

It is a myth to many that education calls for an investment of money to defray many odd incidental expenses. It sounds more fantastic that primary education, even though free, does not release a guardian from an obligation to meet the requirements of his ward on many scores. The Table 124 on annual educational expense for one student in a High School will be educative.

TABLE 124

COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Item of expenditure	Average annual expense per student ranging From		To	
	Rs.	*Paise*	Rs.	*Paise*
Tuition fee	48	00	120	00
Purchase of books	60	00	120	00
Stationery etc.	50	00	75	00
Sub-total	*158*	*00*	*305*	*00*
Private coaching	200	00	200	00
Total	*358*	*00*	*505*	*00*
Hostel charges	350	00	350	00
Grand total	**708**	**00**	**805**	**00**

The average annual expenditure per student in St. George's Primary School varies from Rs. 30.00 *paise* to Rs. 50.00 *paise*, while that for a student in Pedong Primary School ranges between Rs. 15.00 *paise* to Rs. 30.00 *paise*.

It needs no elaboration that collegiate education cannot be less expensive than education in the schools. The students on completion of schooling go to Kalimpong and Darjeeling, but very few afford the expense. Only one young member of a Newar household has been found to be a student in the B. Sc. course in St. Joseph's College in Darjeeling. The head of the household, a school teacher, has to incur an annual expenditure of more than Rs. 1100·00 *paise* to impart collegiate education to the boy.

TABLE 125

EXPENSE OF COLLEGIATE EDUCATION

Head of expenditure	Annual expenditure	
	Rs.	*Paise*
Tution fee for the college	216	00
Books and stationery	300	00
Board and lodging	600	00
Total	**1,116**	**00**

Retrogression of learning

The presence of three schools in or near the village provides an amenity no doubt, but not all take the opportunity and utilise it. That an institution itself does not induce one to get the minimum education or motivate one to attend a school is amply demonstrated before. A revelation and a shock though it may appear, one can hardly dispute the fact that the extent of wastage of school-going age-group (5-16) for the signal failure to admit all in the school-going age as students in a school is not too insignificant to escape one's attention.

It is rather distressing that all the children of the village are not equally privileged to derive equal benefit from one and the same institution offering them equal opportunities for education. And it is not always for any enthusiasm or eagerness lacking in them or in their guardians to get their wards educated. The educational

opportunities are not utilised to their optimum potential on account of economic inequality largely acting as a damper. The paradox remains that 43.9 per cent of the total number of children of the village in the school-going age do not attend a school. The failure to attend a school may be ascribed to economic reasons for 59.4 per cent of the children not attending a school for some reason or other. While 28.8 per cent of the boys in the school-going age fail to attend a school, 59.7 per cent of the girls in the school-going age are virtually denied the opportunity. In an otherwise gloomy situation the only bright aspect providing the basis of a faint optimism lies in 13 children, aged 5-6 years, who are not admitted to any school for their tender age but may one day join the troupe of school-going children. Among the Newars and the Brahmans, not a single child of the school-going age is denied the opportunity to attend a school. The Limbus and the Lepchas too show signs of nascent love for education, as among those two communities the wastage of the children of the school-going age by deprivation from educational attainments is not so high as among other communities.

TABLE 126

REASON FOR NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL

Community	No. of boys in school-going age	No. of boys of the school-going age but not attending any school	No. of boys in the school-going age not attending school because of					No. of girls in school-going age	No. of girls of the school-going age but not attending any school
			Participation in some economic activity as earners	Poverty	Repeated failure in examinations	Inaptitude	Hope to attend school at a still later age		
Sikkimese Bhutia	11	4	1	..	1	1	1	8	3
Dukpa	3	2	1	..	..	..	1	6	4
Tamang	16	1	..	..	..	..	1	9	5
Rai	11	3	1	..	..	1	1	15	11
Sherpa	12	7	..	4	..	..	3	8	8
Kami	8	3	1	1	..	..	1	6	4
Lepcha	6	1	..	1	..	..	..	4	1
Limbu	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	1
Sanyashi	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	1
Chhetri	6	1	..	1	..	..	..	5	4
Gurung	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1
Newar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	1	..	..	3	3
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**80**	**23**	**4**	**7**	**2**	**2**	**8**	**77**	**46**

Trend of literacy

To examine the question if the present generation fares better than the one senior to it in the eradication of illiteracy, one should view the population a little more analytically. The population of the village, divided into four categories according to age-group, comprise persons in the age-group of (5-19) who have had their school-going age in course of last 15 years since 1950, persons in the age-group of (20-34) with their school-going age having started in 1935 and continued till 1950, persons in the age-group of (35-49) with their school-going age coinciding with the period between 1920 and 1935 and persons, now aged 50 years or more, with their school-going age having had a start in any year prior to 1920.

Rate of literacy is assuredly recording an upward trend in course of the last 50 years or

TABLE 126—*contd.*

Community	No. of girls in the school-going age yet not attending any school because of						No. of boys of the school-going age not attending any school now, though attended one earlier	No. of girls of the school-going age not attending any school now, though attended one earlier	No. of boys and girls in the school-going age not attending school now, though attended one earlier
	Participation in some economic pursuit as earners	Preoccupation with housewifery	Poverty	Inaptitude	Apathy of guardians	Hope to attend school at a still later age			
Sikkimese Bhutia	..	1	..	..	..	2	2	..	7
Dukpa	1	..	2	..	..	1	1	1	6
Tamang	1	..	2	..	..	2	..	2	6
Rai	6	..	3	..	2	..	1	2	14
Sherpa	2	..	2	..	4	..	..	..	15
Kami	..	..	..	4	..	..	2	..	7
Lepcha	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2
Limbu	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Sanyashi	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Chhetri	..	1	3	..	..	..	1	..	5
Gurung	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Newar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	4
Mangar	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**13**	**3**	**14**	**5**	**6**	**5**	**8**	**6**	**69**

TABLE 127

TREND OF LITERACY

Age-group	Male			Female			Total		
	Persons	No. having attended or still attending a school	Percentage of school-going males	Persons	No. having attended or still attending a school	Percentage of school-going females	Persons	No. having attended or still attending a school	Percentage of school-going persons
5—19	89	70	78.7	88	41	46.6	177	111	62.7
20—34	44	29	65.9	38	9	23.7	82	38	46.3
35—49	31	9	29.0	36	6	16.7	67	15	22.4
50+	28	8	28.6	23	1	4.3	51	9	17.6
Total	**192**	**116**	**60.4**	**185**	**57**	**30.8**	**377**	**173**	**45.9**

more. While the rate of school-attendance among the males was only 28.6 per cent about half a century before, now it stands almost three times the same. The proportion of school-attendants among the females was abysmally low (4.3 per cent) about the same time, but now it has improved with a lightning speed. The percentage of school-goers among the general population in course of the last fifty years has shot up from 17.6 per cent to 62.7 per cent. This is a pointer to the phenomenal progress of literacy in the village under study.

Language

In a multi-ethnic village where the people speak in different languages and dialects with the majority being trans-Himalayan, any attempt at an analytical discussion without the orientation or training of a linguist is apt to amount to an unscientific effort of an amateur. Considering the background of the speakers in different languages, one has willy-nilly to admit that the area of spread is much vast but the information too little about the formless moving ant-hordes of dialects. Yet, a very brief reference is made to the language of a number of communities of the village to acquaint the reader with the linguistic diversity which has added one more dimension to the village society with pluralistic features.

Sikkimese Bhutia

Though generally known as Tibetan, the language of the Bhutias, commonly called *Bhotia*, which includes the *Bhotia* of Tibet or *Tibetan*, the *Sherpa Bhotia*, the *Bhotia* of Sikkim or *Da-njong-ke*, the *Bhotia* of Bhutan or *Lhoke* and the *Kagate*, is classified as the language of the Tibetan Group of the Tibeto-Himalayan Branch of the Tibeto-Burman Sub-Family of the Tibeto-Chinese Family of languages.

Of the 13 Sikkimese Bhutia families in the village, heads of 12 households return their mother tongue as *Da-njong-ke*, the original language of the Bhutias of Sikkim. The head of one household, however, has returned *Tibetan* as his mother tongue. Of 64 persons in the 13 Sikkimese Bhutia families comprising 62 Sikkimese, Bhutias, one Tibetan and one Limbu, 57 Sikkimese Bhutias return *Da-njong-ke* as their mother tongue, five Sikkimese Bhutias and one Limbu in one family return *Nepali (Khas-Kura)* as their mother tongue. In the latter family as the head does not know his own language *Da-njong-ke* and has married a Limbu woman, the children have learnt from their mother the language *Khas-Kura*, the latter's mother tongue. The head who has been living as the resident son-in-law in the village, however, knows his mother tongue *Tibetan*.

Of the 58 persons comprising 57 Sikkimese Bhutias knowing the language *Da-njong-ke* and the *Tibetan*-knowing Sikkimese Bhutia, all proficient in the mother tongue of the original language of their own ethnic group, 49 persons return *Nepali (Khas-Kura)* as a subsidiary language. Of the rest not knowing any language of the region other than their mother tongue, eight are children under the age of five years and one person happens to be the head *Lama* of the Sikkimese monastery. It is interesting to recall the way in which the *Lama* was interviewed. The investigation was conducted with the help of an interpreter knowing only *English* and *Nepali*. But the *Lama* necessitated the requisition of the service of another interpreter knowing *Bhotia* and *Nepali* (no person knowing *English* and *Bhotia* being available). The question in *English* to the first interpreter was translated by him in *Nepali* to the second interpreter who retranslated the same in *Bhotia* to the *Lama*. The answer was communicated in the same cumbrous manner involving translation in *Nepali* from *Bhotia* and retranslation in *English* from the Nepali version. Needless to mention, the interview evoked plenty of amusement among the onlookers.

The Sikkimese Bhutias are thus found to be bilingual, being attached passionately to their own language which they learn as their mother tongue and speak in at home most of the time. But multi-lingualism is the linguistic feature of the minority, as only five Sikkimese Bhutias are proficient in *Hindi* which they can write and speak in and only two Sikkimese Bhutias can write and speak in *English*.

Dukpa

The language of the *Dukpas* or the *Drugpas*, the inhabitants of Bhutan, is *Lhoke*. Of the five *Dukpa* families of the village, all the heads return *Lhoke* as their mother tongue. All the 20 persons in the five families, comprising 19 Dukpas and one Sikkimese Bhutia, return *Lhoke* to be their mother tongue and of them, 18 persons know *Nepali (Khas-kura)* as their subsidiary language. The two persons, proficient only in their mother tongue but not in the regional language, are below six years of age.

Sherpa

Sherpa is one form of *Bhotia* language spoken largely in north-eastern Nepal. Of nine Sherpa households of Upper Pedong, all heads return *Sherpa* as their mother tongue. The experience of the probe into the mother-tongue of the individual members of the same households is rather interesting. Of 58 Sherpa members of these nine households, only 24 persons return *Sherpa* as their mother tongue, *Nepali (Khas-kura)* being the mother tongue of the rest who belong to age-groups higher than these of the *Sherpa* speakers.

TABLE 128

MOTHER TONGUE OF THE SHERPAS

Mother-tongue	No. of speakers	No. of Sherpas belonging to the age-group					
		0-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51+
Sherpa	24	..	2	8	10	..	4
Nepali (Khas-kura)	34	23	7	4	..	..	..
Total	**58**	**23**	**9**	**12**	**10**	..	**4**

The majority (93.7 per cent) of the Sherpas, aged 20 years or below, return *Nepali* as their mother tongue, whereas of the Sherpas above 20 years of age, the majority (84 6 per cent) have acquired proficiency in *Sherpa* as their mother tongue. No Sherpa young boy, aged 20 years or below, returns his own language as his mother tongue. It requires no emphasis that the Sherpas are picking up the regional language of *Nepali* as their mother tongue in the present generation in very recent years, while their own language is being pushed to the background as a subsidiary language. The elderly Sherpa informants point out that about two decades ago most of them, working in the plantations of tea and cinchona, lived together in areas with clusters of a large number of

people of their own ethnic groups and speech families and had an excellent opportunity to cultivate their own language which was often the medium of expression in intra-family and inter-family conversations. In sharp contrast to those halcyon days, now the Sherpas live in small enclave of nine families, surrounded by other communities speaking largely in *Nepali* at home and outdoors. The Sherpa children along with their *Nepali*-speaking playmates attend schools where medium of instruction is *Nepali*. For shopping their daily needs they come to the local markets and business centres where *Nepali* is very often the language spoken and understood by all to transact their trade and commerce. But a generation back, the parents of some of the elderly Sherpas would insist on the young members' learning their own language first, whereas the senior members would make a serious effort to learn the local regional language of *Nepali*. The trend is reversed now. The children now start learning their own language at an age of ten years or after.

This should not, however, prompt one to make a wrong surmise that *Sherpa* as a language is even lost to the senior members of the Sherpa families in their private conversations of family life. In fact, obverse is the situation. The senior members of the family converse in *Sherpa* within the family, those aged 25 years or above speaking in their language among themselves. It has been observed that an aged Sherpa woman, speaking in *Sherpa* to her husband, has had to switch over to *Nepali* when conversation starts with the young Sherpas of the same family. Thus the dialogue is continued simultaneously in two languages within the family on one or the other topic in *Nepali* while speaking to the youngsters. Then the husband, knowing *Sherpa*, seems to be at a loss. The very next moment when attention is turned to the *Sherpa* husband, when the junior people stare wide-eyed at their mother, wondering if the latter discusses certain private matters of importance under the veil of a closely guarded secret. All the 24 Sherpas returning *Sherpa* as their mother-tongue are conversant with colloquial *Nepali (Khas-kura)* which they can speak fluently. Of them again, one person can speak in *Hindi* too. But of the remaining 35 persons knowing *Nepali* as their mother tongue, only 18 persons have learnt to speak in their own *Sherpa* language. The rest of the unilingual persons, however, belong to minor age-groups.

Tamang or Murmi

The *Tamang* language belongs to the Himalayan Group of Tibeto-Burmese Sub-Family of the Tibeto-Chinese Family. Of the 17 Tamang families, most of which have a confused idea about whether their mother-tongue is the same as their tribal language and dialect, only nine claim *Murmi* or *Tamang* to be their mother tongue. Of these nine families again, only the heads can speak in and understand their own language, whereas other members of the same household cannot. Eight other families admitting their ignorance of their own traditional language return *Nepali* as their mother tongue. Of 78 Tamang individuals, only 12 persons can converse fluently in *Tamang*. All of them except a couple of Tamangs belong to the age-group of 60 years and above. Only six Tamangs can claim to be bilingual because of their proficiency in *Hindi* which they understand and can also speak in. One Tamang, however, is a polyglot, conversant with *Tamang*, *Nepali*, *Hindi*, *Bengali*, *Assamese*, *Urdu* and *Punjabi* as he happens to be a retired *Junior Commissioned Officer* of the Indian Army with experience of service, travel and sojourn in many places among many more persons of diverse linguistic groups and regional cultures.

Gurung

Gurung belongs to the same linguistic classification as *Tamang*. Of half a score of Gurung individuals in three Gurung families, none returns *Gurung* as the mother tongue. All of

them except one married woman claim *Nepali*, on the other hand, as their mother-tongue. Only two persons, aged 53 and 56 respectively, who have some knowledge of *Gurung* which they can understand and speak in, admit the waning importance of *Gurung* even as a subsidiary language within their community. Only one of the nine Gurungs can speak in *English*. A married woman of one Gurung household, however, being a Sherpa before her marriage, *Sherpa* is very justifiably returned by her as her mother tongue.

Mangar

Mangari, the original language of the *Mangars*, belongs to the same group of languages as *Gurung*. Though supposed to be closely akin to the Tibetan dialect, it often agrees with *Newari* the old official State language of Nepal. Still not abandoned by the Mangars as their mother tongue in areas with some concentration of the Mangars, the young Mangars learn the language as their mother-tongue from their very chilhood. An old sexagenarian Mangar of a single-membered household returns *Mangar* as his mothertongue, abandoned by him long ago in favour of *Nepali*, the *lingua franca* of the region.

Newari

The old state language of Nepal, *Newari* belongs to the same linguistic classification as any other language of the Himalayan Group in the Tibeto-Himalayan Branch of the Tibeto-Burman Sub-Family of the Tibeto-Chinese Family. According to scholars like B. A. Hodgson, old Newari books comprise mostly translations and commentaries from earlier *Sanskrit* texts. It was only in the 14th Century that the Newars discovered their own language in the present form with the script changed to *Devanagri* to print *Newari* books.

Two *Newari* households with six members return *Nepali* as the mother-tongue, none having any knowledge of *Newari*. Of the six Newaris, two persons who teach in the local High School can speak in *English* and *Hindi*.

Lepcha

Rong or *Lepcha* as the original language of the Lepchas or the indigenes of Sikkim is considered by scholars and linguists to be very old with traditions of its own. It is indeed interesting that the language has not lost its life-force, as it is still spoken by many. Of the 22 members in four Lepcha households of Upper Pedong, three married females comprising a Rai, one Limbu and one Sikkimese Bhutia respectively do not return *Lepcha* as their mother tongue for obvious reasons. Of the rest of the members who are offsprings of Lepcha fathers, 11 Lepchas return *Rong* as their mother tongue, five Lepchas claim *Nepali (Khas-kura)* as their mother tongue and three persons return *Da-njong-ke* as their mother-tongue. *Nepali* has been adopted as the subsidiary language by 14 Lepchas who do not claim *Nepali* to be their mother tongue. In only one household in which both the husband and wife are Lepchas *Rong* is not only the mother tongue of all its members but also continues to be the medium of conversation among the members of the family. But, in speaking to a person of a different community *Khas-kura* becomes the language-medium. In two other Lepcha families in which the heads have married girls from outside their communities, namely, the Limbu and the Rai, the children have learnt *Khas-kura* as their mother-tongue from their mothers of whom the same language also happens to be the mother tongue. In these two Lepcha households *Khas-kura* is the medium of conversation within the family too. Here, the two Lepcha heads are linguistically real aliens within their own family, as none of the other members speaks to them in *Rong*, the mother, tongue of the two. So, the two Lepchas under the compulsion of circumstance have had to learn *Khas-kura* to enable them to converse freely with the members of their own family.

The case study of the fourth Lepcha household is no less interesting than those of the other three. The old head of the household married a Lepcha woman. But she divorced him, because he was a 'dwarf and a deaf too.' For sometime life was really dull and monotonous for the person. He knew *Bhotia* and fell eventually in love with a Sikkimese Bhutia woman whom he married later. The second wife restored to the Lepcha the interrupted melody of his life but at the cost of his own mother tongue, for his three sons converse with their parents in *Da-njong-ke*, incidentally the mother tongue of their mother too, from whom they learnt their mother-tongue which was, the subsidiary language of their Lepcha father. But, the head had to lose his mother tongue in any case to make up the loss of his first wife.

Limbu

Of the 29 members (in four Limbu households) comprising 27 Limbus, one Lepcha and one Newar, three Limbus aged 69 years, 70 years and 78 years respectively, return *Limbu* as their mqther tongue. Of the rest, 24 Limbus, aged 48 years and below, return *Khas-kura* as their mother tongue. *Rong* is the mother tongue of the Lepcha female, aged 32 years. *Newari* is returned as the mother tongue of the Newar female, aged 80 years. All the five persons who return a language other than *Khas-kura* as their mother tongue can speak and understand *Khas-kura*. Two Limbus claim to know *English* too and one more Limbu, an ex-armyman, knows *English*, *Hindi* and *Italian*. Obviously, he is the only villager with knowledge of foreign languages.

Internal organisation

Bhutia

The Bhutias, whether Sikkimese or Bhutanese, as a tribe constitute an endogamous group among themselves. Any connubial relationship with any person outside their tribal structure is, therefore, prohibited generally.

But within the broad endogamous group the Bhutias are divided into a number of exogamous septs or clans which somewhat resembles the *Gotra* divisions of the caste system of the Hindu social polity. Though the social mores are fast vanishing, because the majority of the Bhutias conform to none for their lack of awareness of the different septs, the elderly people still remember the exogamous septs, known as *Ryui* in Tibetan. *Ryuis* are taken into account during a negotiation for marriage and usually but not always a man cannot enter into marital relation with any person of the same *Ryui*.

Of the eight *Ryuis* mentioned by the Sikkimese Bhutia informants of the village, namely *Chyengey*, *Geyiraba*, *Hungree*. *Kachhyop*, *Phemphu*, *Phyanako*, *Ripo* and *She-nga*, *She-nga*, said to have a higher social rank, brings the kings and landlords within the fold of this sept. Because *She-nga* is believed to have elevated social status, it is said to be governed by the rule of sept-endogamy, for the purpose of which the *Ryui She-nga* is divided into a number of sub-septs, such as, *She-nga Guru-tashi* (believed to be the sept of the kings), *eethe-she-nga* etc. and marriages are negotiated among there sub-septs. Another sept ranking high in the social hierarchy is *Hungree*, to which most of the *Lamas* are said to belong.

The Dukpas (Bhutanese Bhutias) of the village mention 13 *Ryuis* among them, namely *Andap*, *Bindulum*, *Chong jyup*, *Euthyen*, *Gyansap*, *Lam-chhey*, *Lha-hop*, *Pathing*, *Phempu*, *Phenshya*, *Pshyana*, *Rebam*, *and She-nga*.

It appears that septs like *She-nga* and *Phempu* are common to both the Dukpas and the Sikkimese Bhutias (and reportedly among the Tibetans too). But otherwise the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas have otherwise some distinct *Ryuis* of their own.

Among the Dukpas too, some septs are stratified. Thus, *Lam-chhey* is believed to rank quite high, as the *Lamas* belong to this sept.

Bindulum, *Phenshya* and *She-nga* have also higher status than other septs. Governed by the rule of sept-exogamy, marriages among the persons belonging to septs having higher social status are confined to those septs. Thus, a man of *Rebam* or *Pathling* sept cannot usually marry a girl of *Phenshya* or *She-nga* sept. To the Bhutia commoners of the village, however, sept-wise social division is a barrier against better social intercourse and communion. It has been observed that some septs have a number of sub-septs. Thus, the sept *She-nga* has a number of sub-septs, namely, *She-nga Guru* (the sub-sept ranking very high), *She-nga Kamkum*, *She-nga Kiru* and *She-nga Pachha*.

Likewise the sept *Phempo* has subsepts like *Phempo-Chasa*, *Phempo-Goka* and *Phempo-Nhadik* etc.

On an examination of the names of some of the septs, it appears that at least some of them are pointers to particular professions. *Phempo* reportedly indicates the medicineman. Again *Rebam* and *Pathling* are reportedly names of places and the septs classify the people living there.

Tamang

The Tamangs form an endogamous group among themselves and, therefore, marriage outside the group is generally prohibited. The tribe is also divided into a number of *Thars* (Exogamous septs). All the Tamang households of the village are aware of their respective *Thars* and in contracting marriages they observe the rules of exogamy. Some Tamangs now-a-days drop their tribal names and adopt the name of their particular *Thar* as surname. Thus, a Tamang, named Man Bahadur Tamang, would return his name as Man Bahadur Moktani and another, named Pirthiman Tamang, would return himself as Pirthiman Ghising.

The Tamangs of the village are divided into a number of *Thars*, namely, *Baju*, *Bal*, *Bomjan*, *Bulan*, *Chhumi*, *Domjan*, *Dong*, *Gabag*, *Galan*, *Gerang dan*, *Ghale*, *Ghising*, *Galan*, *Goley*, *Gothar*, *Jimba*, *Lama-Khar*, *Lo*, *Lopchan*, *Mekchan*, *Moktan*, *Narba*, *Negi*, *Nyashyur* (*Nesur*), *Pakhrin*, *Phumba*, *Rumba*, *Shang-dan*, *Sheng-bo*, *Singar*, *Thing*, *Thokur*, *Titung Waiba*, *Yangjo* and *Yanjan*.

Sir H. H. Risley in writing about the Tamangs mentions all the *Thars*, mentioned above, except *Phumba*, *Waiba*, *Yang-jo* and *Yanjan*. But, he refers to a number of *Thars* in addition to those already described. They include *Baiba*, *Baltong*, *Chapen Khor*, *Ganthen*, *Gomdan*, *Gongba*, *Hopthen*, *Jongan*, *Khami Khor*, *Khugba*, *Kitung*, *Kulden*, *Marmunba*, *Sanga*, *Sherba Khor*, *Singden* and *Tuban*.

The elderly Tamang informants report that quite many *Thars* have been improvised in their lifetime with the urge to accommodate the illegitimate children born in their community. The *Thars* like *Phumba*, *Yang-jo*, and *Yanjan*, not mentioned by Sir H. H. Risley, may probably have been recent additions to the traditional ones.

TABLE 129

CORELATION OF THE *THAR* WITH *THUM* OR *KIPOT*

Name of the *Thar*	Name of *Thum*/*Kipot* correlating the *Thar*
Bal	*Tamar*
Bom-Jan	*Nam-lang*
Ghising	*Mati-mirge* *Talaja*
Lopchun	*Salgan*
Moktan	*Mar-khani* *Markhani-Antarbhun* *Andra-Bunge*
Pakhrin	*Chhoutara* *Sauley*
Thing	*Chhu-war*
Yan-jan	*Dha-dinge* *Ri-syengu-dari*

The Tamangs have an unfailing memory to recall their ancestral places, wherefrom they started their migration in all directions. The native places are termed by them as *Kipot* and *Thum*, the former refering to their ancestral place and the latter mentioning the adjoining locality where they had settled immediately after migration. Again, a *Thar* associates itself with one or two *Thums* or *Kipots*.

Rai

As a community, the Rais are divided into a number of *Pachhas* (Subcastes), each of which, in its turn, is divided into a number of exogamous *Thars*. The different *Pachhas* with their constituent *Thars*, into which the *Rais* are divided and of which the Rais of the village are aware, may be evident from Table 130.

The name of other *Thars* of the Rais are *Balali, Bahing, Boyong, Butepachha, Chemboo-jung, Dhukun, Dilpali, Dumi, Dungmali, Eaktin, Kambung, Kangdel, Kebang, Kembang, Khesang, Kewa, Khamba, Koojung, Kuasanchha, Kulung, Kumboo, Laksum, Lamoichhong, Likum, Lunggun, Lung-gun Maikang, Mulukuas, Nachhereng, Namdung, Nembung, Paloonga, Phapoo, Pheka, Phurkeli, Pooroonboo, Poutak, Rajabin, Ra-jaling, Rimching, Rodong, Samling, Sangpungla, Sheba, Sirma, Songpang, Sotang, Tamkhole, Tanglua, Thulung, Tilikchum, Wahsali, Wesing, Wiling, Yougia,*

The Rais are broadly subdivided into two *Gotras*, namely, the *Lhasa Gotra* comprising the Rais belonging to the septs of *Bangdel, Khaling, Kulung, Muklng, Thulung* etc. connoting a mixed blood with one of the strains belonging to the Tibetan stock and the *Kashyapa Gotra* consisting of the Rais in the septs of *Balali, Gheba, Kasi, Moktan, Tamkhole*, etc. Beef is a prohibited item of food to the Rais of the *Kashyapa Gotra* but not so to those belonging to the *Lhasa Gotra*.

TABLE 130

SUBCASTES AND SEPTS OF THE RAIS

Subcastes of the Rais	Septs of the subcastes
Bontawa	*Mang pang* *Tang lowa* *Lugun*
Bung-chhen	*Su-kita-chhen*
Cham-ling (*Cham* means leather. Hence the members of this subcaste are believed to be orginally leather-workers)	*Lipu-son-chha* *Ba-da-chha* *Mero-tippa* *Wa-ba-hong-chha* *Yong-chhen* *Khulak-pa* *Kho-rai-chha* *Dibu-chhu* *Lipochha*
Du-khon	*Hang-rena* *Hun-ga-na* *Hang-rim* *Hang-woba*
Hang-khim (Royal place. Hence the members belonging to this subcaste are presumed to be the descendants of the king)	*Subi* *Kha-ru-rom* *Rong-thong* *Ho-po-gowa*
Kha-ling	Not known
Nakchhung-pachha	Not known
Neoang	Not known
Tang-lak-wa	*Yang-tempa* *Yang-sa-bhen* *Diwa-raja* *Di-bungra* *Khuk-nu-rang* *Chettum* *Dang-men*

The Rais of the village under survey have expressed doubts as to whether a Rai belonging to the *Lhasa Gotra* would disclose his real *Gotra*. They believe that a Rai in such a case invariably camouflages the identity of his *Gotra* as *Kashyapa* with the express desire to conceal the traditional beef-eating habit of the Rais of his *Gotra* and to avoid the attitude of disposal shown by the Hindus in general and by the Rais of the *Kashyapa Gotra* in particular towards them.

Limbu

The Limbus are divided into a number of endogamous subtribes, each with a number of

Thars. The subtribes in their turn belong either to the *Kashyapa Gotra* conforming to the tenets of Hinduism or to the *Lhasa-Gotra* comprising the teritorial group having within its fold the immigrants from Lhasa. The *Antharal, Chaibisa, Chhothar, Panthare* and *Yangorup* subtribes belong to the *Kashyapa Gotra*, while the *Charkhola, Maikhola, Phedab, Tamrakhola* and *Terothar* subtribes belong to the *Lhasa Gotra.*

The *Thars* of the Limbus comprise *Lingden* (comprising the Lepcha entrants), *Papson, Phawahong* (indicating the name of a village), *Pomo, Puktebu, Sangma (Kashyapa Gotra* with the totem of buffalo, the meat of which is a taboo), *Toktiham, Yithung* (Hunter), belonging to the *Kashyapa Gotra*, and *Isbo* (indicating the name of a village), *Lokmahung, Manbu, Nanlibo, Senihang, Singogpa, Sothung* belonging to the *Lhasa Gotra*, and *Kandangwa, Khapung, Kheoa, Luxum, Ningle-kuma, Pong-yangu, Phedangma, Samba, Sho-demba, Sitling, Songpangway, Telengu*, and *Thebe.*

The origin of the Limbus has a fascinating anecdote. The primogenitors of the Limbus were ten brothers who originally lived at Benares. Once they were out on an adventure to the north. After a journey for some distance, they bifurcated into two groups, each with five brothers. In course of time one group reached Lhasa and another group reached Kathmandu. The two fraternal parties later met each other accidentally. The descendants of the five brothers who had been to Lhasa are believed to belong to the *Lhasa Gotra*, and the offsprings of the other five brothers passing through Kathmandu are said to belong to the *Kashyapa Gotra.*

Yakha

The three subtribes of the Yakhas are the *Phagu*, the *Lhorung* and the *Tamphu.* Some of the septs of the community consist of *Khamchang, Koyohang, Linkha, Manem-ma, Okrabo, Putlunghang, Songyokpa, Yak-kyukpa* and *Yokhang.*

Sherpa

Like the *Bhutias*, the Sherpas are also divided into a number of exagamous *Ryuis*, some of which correspond to identical septs among the Bhutias. The *Ryuis* having a distinct identity of their own are *A-Kar, Chaba, Chhe-se, Chhugyee-mi, Chukate, Dong-ba, Dyuwa, Go-parma, Haluri, Jing-ba, Kalunge, Lama, Minag-pa, Nan-pa, Nga-ba, Non-pa, Nayase, Odam-ba, Pankarmu, Paya, Rikta, Salaka, She-nga, Shi-se, Takto, Ye-khenand* and *Ye-se.*

Kami

The Kamis have innumerable *Thars*, some of which strictly prohibit inter-group marriages. The Kamis belong to the *Thars* of *Baraili, Bekey-rasaili, Bhere-rasaili, Darnal, Devapathi, Dhamala, Diali, Dural, Gadal, Gadhailee, Gahatraj, Gajmer, Gham-ghotle, Ghatani, Ghimrey, Jar-Kami, Kairalo, Kati-chiore, Khatti, Lamgade, Lohagun, Lohar, Lokandri, Mangrati Pokhrel, Portel, Rahapal, Ramudan, Rasaili, Rujal, Sapkota, Sasankhar, Seto-Surual, Singorey, Sunchiuri, Thapangi* and *Tirua.*

Mangar

Though some scholars have recently pointed out that the Mangars have seven clans, namely, *Ale, Bura or Burathoki Gharti, Pun, Rana, Roka,* and *Thapa*, one informant Mangar household of the village reports that there are three Mangar claus belonging to three subtribes, namely, *Rana, Thapa* and *Ale* or *Alaya.* The exogamous septs of the tribe, however, are numerous.

The *Ranas* have the septs of *Arghounle, Aslami, Bhusal, Byangnasi, Charmi, Datt, Durra Lami, Gacha, Gyungmi, Kyapchaki, Lamichaya, Maski, Phyuyali, Pulami, Pusal, Sar, Thada* and *Yahayo.*

The septs of the *Thapas* consist of *Bereya, Chitourian Chumi, Gelung, Granja, Jhangdi Jhari. Keli, Marsyangdi, Namjali, Rijai, Saru, Sinjali, Sunari* and *Yangdi.*

The *Ale* or the *Alaya* comprises the septs of *Cheermi, Dukhchaki, Gharti, Gonda, Khali, Khaptari, Kyapchaki, Lamjal, Lanakpa, Meng, Pachain, Panthe, Pung, Sarrangi, Sijapati Sithung, Surya-Vansi, Suyal, Thokchaki* and *Yangmi.*

Gurung

The Gurungs are said to have two broad subdivisions, the *Char Jat* and *Sora Jat,* the *Char Jat* having four distinct clans, namely, *Ghale, Ghotane, Lamchhane* and *Lama* and the *Sora Jat* reportedly having sixteen clans, the names of which could not be collected. All the clans are divided into a number of septs.

The *Ghale Gurungs* are said to rank superior to all others. The septs of the Gurungs comprise *Bagalya, Barani, Bulung, Byapri, Chandu, Charki, Dan Lama, Dhakaren, Dharen Ghale, Gharti, Ghoonya, Ghundane, Gohori, Golangya, Gonduk, Gosti, Gotni, Guaburi, Jimel, Karamati, Khangya, Khaptari, Khati, Khulal, Kohli, Koki, Kurangi, Lama, Lamichanya, Lhepo-Lamsani, Leh-Lama, Loghang, Lopate, Madan, Meghi, Mengi, Palami, Paindi, Pengi, Segmang, Ranul, Shakya Lama, Siddh, Surya Vansi Lama, Tange, Thathung, Themjani, Tolangi, Urunta* and *Vumjan.*

Chhetri

The Chhetris have a number of subdivisions like *Adhikari, Baniah, Bhandari, Bishnyat, Bisut, Dani, Karki, Khattri, Khawka, Sunwar* and *Thapa.* Another subdivision of the Chhetris is *Khuttris* (Fallen Chhetris), said to be the progenies or descendants of a Chhetri having a wife of a lower Mongoloid caste. There are numerous septs among the Chhetris, the rule of sept-exogamy being rigorously enforced at the time of negotiation of marriage even now. The septs of the Chhetris comprise *Alphaltopi, Am Gai, Arjal, Baghail, Baj Gai, Balya, Batyal, Bikral, Chalatani,, Dahal, Dangal, Deakota, Deoja, Dhami, Dhongyal, Gagliya, Ganjal, Garntola, Gijal, Goti, Kanhal, Kanwar, Khadsena, Kilathoni, Khati, Kurminia, Lamichanya, Loyal, Mundala, Musiah, Naopanya, Palami, Pamar, Pande, Parajuli, Phanyal, Pokrial, Porseni, Raghubansi, Rana, Rupakheti, Satouya, Satya Gai, Sijapati, Sirnia, Subarnia, Surwar, Suveri, Suyal, Tarwar, Tekha, Tumrakot* and *Twari.*

Brahman

Like the Chhetris, the Nepali Brahmans too have many septs and they observe the rule of sept-exogamy very meticulously. The septs of the Nepali Brahmans include *Acharya, Adhikari, Arjal, Bagalya, Banjara, Baral, Bargai, Bharari, Bhatt, Bhattwal, Bikral, Champa Gai, Dagi, Dangal, Davari, Devakotya, Dhakal, Deoja, Gaithoula, Gajniyal, Gotarya, Guru Gai, Homya Gai, Kandariah, Khandyal, Katyal, Khanal, Khativara, Koirala, Lamsal, Lotyal, Nirola, Pakonyal, Pandit, Parajuli, Phunwal, Pokaryal, Poudyal, Regmi, Rijal, Rimal, Risyal Satola, Sattyal, Simkhara, Sipan Kotya, Soti, Suberi, Teva Panya, Ukniyal* and *Utkulli.*

Lepcha

The Lepchas have ten exogamous *Agits* (Clans), namely, *Britmu, Garlokmu, Itommu, Kukrumu, Olongmu, Simbumu, Songpumu, Tamsangmu, Yoksomu* and *Zeribumu.*

Newar

The Newars are said to be divided into many subcastes in accordance with their occupation and religion. But as there are only two households in the village, the details of the community could not be collected.

Structure of family

The families of all the communities are patrilineal, members taking father's line of

descent. The seniormost member of the family, generally the father, becomes its head, the charge of which is handed over by the father on his superannuation to his eldest son. In some cases, on the sudden death of the husband, the widow is called upon to steward the headship of the family. The head of the family is its guide and also its arbiter. Whether to coordinate the activities of all the members, to serve the interests of the family best or to ensure that the norms of the larger body politic, the secular village society, the religious community, the linguistic community or the ethnic group are not transgressed, the superintending head has a responsibility of his own over other members of his family. In case of any breach of the social convention or in case of violation of the ethical codes of the community by any individual, the head of the family is called to account. Continued aberration is never let off by the village society without a penalty on the truant member of a family or in his absence or default on its head. All the families except one Sikkimese Bhutia household are patrilocal in residence. Kinship pattern and morphological consideration have cast the households of the village to five different typological structures, each denoting some variation from the other and represented by classification of the households as the *Nuclear*, the *Intermediate*, the *Joint*, the *Irregular* or the *Incomplete*.

TABLE 131

FAMILY-TYPES

Typological structure	No. of families	Percentage
Incomplete	20	23.0
Nuclear	50	57.5
Intermediate	9	10.4
Joint	7	8.0
Irregular	1	1.1
Total	**87**	**100.0**

Nuclear or *Simple* families are the preponderant type. *Joint* and *semi-Joint* families constitute nearly one-sixth of the total families of the village. Some of the families are *Incomplete* because of unmarried individual therein. Such families constitute a little less than 25.0 per cent of the total families of the village.

Nuclear families consisting of the husband and his wife with or without any issue is the dominant type in the village. The *Nuclear* families are, on analysis, found to be the product of the gradual disintegration of the extended or *Joint* families. In support, instances may be cited of 50 *Nuclear* families which have remained *Nuclear* for a fairly long period of time. As many as nine families, originally *Incomplete* because of the absence of regularly married couples, are all single-membered units. The marriage of one of the members transforms an *Incomplete* family into a *Nuclear* one. Again, 14 existing *Nuclear* families were originally *Intermediate*. They have turned *Nuclear* in structure either for the death of one of the parents or on account of the separation of the married brother, unmarried brother or one of the parents. In half a score of families the death of one of the parents has metamorphosed an *Intermediate* into a *Nuclear* family, while in the case of four *Nuclear* but erstwhile *Intermediate* families various factors have operated behind the conversion. The remaining 16 *Nuclear* families, before their inception, constituted an integral part of some parent *Joint* families from which they later seceded for various reasons. The factors responsible for the dismemberment of the *Joint* or *semi-Joint* families into fragmented *Nuclear* families are diverse. Of the total number of present *Nuclear* families, eleven households maintained their *Nuclear* structure for a rather fairly long period. Of the rest, nine *Nuclear* families owe their present structure to the morphological change brought about in nine *Incomplete* families after the marriage of the solitary bachelor member-heads of the respec-

tive single-membered households. Of the remaining 30 *Nuclear* families, born of the break-up of the *semi-Joint* or full-fledged *Joint* families, the respective heads ascribe different reasons to their secession from their original families. In the case of ten families, death of one of the parents has turned the *semi-Joint* families into *Nuclear* types. In the case of nine families, separation was precipitated by domestic dissensions and disputes and ill feelings were bred of intermittent domestic quarrels and differences of opinion between mother-in-laws and daughter-in-laws. In the case of five households, disparity of earnings and inequality of income of the constituent members sowed the seeds of separation. The members drawing higher incomes seceded from the parent families for personal comfort and happiness instead of distributing the income on egalitarian principles. In three families, the disintegration of the *Joint* or *semi-Joint* families is accounted for by immigration of the married couples to the village under survey leading to the break-up of the parent families. In the case of two families, litigation about property between brothers and subsequent feuds led to the emergence of the *Nuclear* families of the present. In another case, the separation from the *Joint* family has its genesis in immigration of a married couple to the village under survey on grounds of service.

Rules of avoidance

Among the Brahmans, the Chhetris, the Sanyashis, the Newars, the Rais, the Limbus, the Gurungs, the Mangars, the Yakhas etc., the members of the families thereof have to abide by the rules of avoidance laying down the custom that a married woman should not touch the person of the elder brother of her husband. But the rules of avoidance are not very strictly observed by all members of the Kami, and the Yakha households because of their comparatively lower position in the caste-hierarchy of the Nepalis in the village. Among the Buddhist Nepalis, such as the Tamangs, the rule of avoidance operates likewise. It holds among the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas so that a married woman is forbidden to touch her husband's elder brothers and *vice versa*. One can neither touch one's brother-in-law's wife.

Name-taboos

Some Nepali communities, especially the castes occupying a high position in the caste-hierarchy, observe the rule of name-taboo. A married woman as a rule does not utter the name of her husband, that of her husband's elder brothers or elder sister or for that matter not even that of her father-in-law or mother-in-law. The rules are not, however, strictly observed by the relatively lower castes. The rules of name-taboo, especially in respect of the father-in-law and the mother-in-law of a married woman, are said to be relaxed among the Bhutias and the Lepchas, but she can never utter the name of her husband.

Joinkg relationship

Among the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas joking relationship is permitted to a degree between a person and his wife's brothers and sisters and also between a married woman and her husband's younger sisters if they are of the same age. But a grandson or granddaughter does not stand in joking relationship with his or her grandfather or grandmother. Among the Nepali communities in general, joking relationship between a grandson or a granddaughter and his or her grandfather and grandmother and also between a person and his wife's brothers and sisters is permitted.

Affinal relationship

Affinal relationship fostering friendship between any two males of females not related to each other by ties of blood or marriage cuts across all types of conceivable social barrier and transcends the divisions of castes and creeds among the people of the

Nepali ethnic groups. The ritual friendship of this form, known as *Mitori Saino* to the Nepali people, has an associate sanctity with it, as some religious rites are required to be onserved to initiate the relationship. A Brahman priest, generally called in on the occasion of founding an affinal relationship, chants incantations during the performance of the *Yajna* (Sacred fire) and directs the persons entering into the ritual friendship to exchange gifts or presents with each other which are treasured as mementos throughout the continuance of the newly-established ritual friendship, kept alive all over the period of one's lifetime. Affinal bonds are regarded as sacred ties, no less strong and real than the consanguineous or the connubial relationship. The rules of prohibited degrees of marriage are operative sometimes in the case of affinal relationship so as not to permit the offsprings of ritual friends to contract a marriage between them.

Inheritance and succession

The rules of inheritance and succession among the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas do not follow the codified statutes of the country or the customary rules and personal laws of the Hindu society. Sanctified by traditions and conventions of their own society, the rules of inheritance laying down the prescribed methods of division of property among one's sons and daughters do not conform to the system, prevalent elsewhere in the country, nor do they bear the impress of guidance or influence of the *Dayabhaga* or the *Mitakshara* system of succession and inheritance. The rules of inheritance among the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas do not entitle their daughters to any share of the property of their parents. Property is inherited exclusively by the living sons of a person after his demise. Bhutia society, however, recognises daughters for the purpose of division of paternal property as non-entities but accepts their requirements for some assistance to a very limited extent inasmuch as concedes the point that daughters are entitled to the expenses for their marriage. The widow's right to the property of her deceased husband is admitted by the Bhutias on condition that the right is conditional on express observance of the term that she forfeits her right as soon as she has any connivance at her elopement by or her second marriage to any person. This gain, however, prompts many people to marry their brothers' wives for the second time.

Among the Lepchas, the sons alone are entitled to their share in the property left by their deceased fathers. In the absence of any son, daughters enjoy the concession, otherwise granted to the offsprings in the male line of succession. But married daughters are excluded from any share in their father's property.

The Nepali communities are in general guided by the system of *Dayabhaga* in case of division of their property, in compliance of which the sons inherit the property of their fathers on the same terms promising an equal share in the patrimony and paternal property.

Marriage, society and morals

The different communities of the village appear basically to be monogamic in their practice. Polygamy, even though sanctioned by customs, is rarely practised now by the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas. Economic reason has urged the Bhutias to be pragmatic in their approach to the institution of monogamic marriage.

The regular form of marriage consists of the marital union of an unmarried man and an unmarried woman to give rise to *Nuclear* family after the wedlock. The marital union between a widowed, divorced or separated male and a widow, a divorced or separated females or between an unmarried female and a widower or a divorced or separated male is deemed as remarriage, more or less by all the communi-

ties except the Brahmans and the Chhetris, the two castes ranking high in the hierarchy of the Hindu social structure. Remarriage is also fairly widely practised by the households of the Buddhist and the Christian followings.

Marriage prohibitions

Cross-cousin and parallel-cousin marriages are strictly prohibited among all the ethnic groups and religious communities in Upper Pedong. Senior sorrorate, permitting the husband to marry the elder sister of the deceased wife, and senior levirate under which system the elder brother marries the widowed wife of his deceased younger brother are also prohibited. But, junior sorrorate and junior levirate are socially sanctioned.

Among the ethnic groups recognised as Hindus, such as the Brahmans, the Chhetris the Newars etc., the rule of sept *(Thar* or *Ryui)* exogamy prohibits any connubial relation between members of the same sept. Thus, among the Chhetris, a person belonging to the *Dahal Thar* cannot marry a girl also of the same *Thar*. Likewise, among the Mangars a person belonging to the *Saru* sept is not usually allowed to marry a girl of the same sept.

Age at marriage

The mean age at marriage for all the males in the village stands at 23.6, while that for the females is found to be 19.8. As already discussed, an upward trend in the age at marriage of both the males and the females is overt. Thus, the mean age at marriage of the males married four decades back, was only 19.2, in contrast to 25.1 for all the males, married in course of the last five years. Likewise, the average age at marriage of the females, married about four decades back, recorded only 16.5 as against 23.7 for the women, married in course of the last five years. Child marriage, the most common characteristic in earlier times among the Hindu castes, like the Brahmans, the Chhetris etc., does not feature in the present profile of the society of the village communities or its segments.

Institution of match-maker

One finds an absolute void of institutional match-maker in the village. To initiate negotiations for marriage of a marriageable person of any community, the parents take the initiative and evince interest. Sometimes, relations and kinsmen are vitally important persons in the mission to a person's marriage. Often they act as public relations personnel to collect basic information about the marriageable person and to communicate the same to the opposite party interested in the bio-data. At times, friends also act as go-betweens. Among the Christians, the prelates of the Church perform the initial act of ushering one interested party to another at the opportune moment.

Bride-price

One cannot choose but pay the price, set by the father or the guardian of a bride or a bridegroom, for payment to his counterpart as a necessary term of marriage, lest the unwritten civil contract of marriage should dissolve for a breach of contract. The unidirectional transaction in the payment of the bride-price or the bridegroom-price in the form of dowry comes to fruition when the cash is paid to the father or guardian of the bride or the bridegroom before the marriage ceremony gets an all clear signal from all the parties for a start. The payment is not made by both the parties, as it is not a two-way traffic. The tradition lays down that the union of hearts calls for a payment of some money in cash. The system of payment of the bridegroom-price or dowry is prevalent among the Brahmans and the Chhetris. In the marriage ceremony in the solitary Brahman household the Brahman bridegroom received the bridegroom-price amounting to Rs.100.00 *paise* in cash. Among the Chhetris, three cases of marriage of the males have been studied to

TABLE 132

QUANTITATIVE MEASURE OF BRIDE-PRICE

Religious group	Ethnic group	No. of cases of marriage studied	No. of households having paid or received the bride-price of (in Rs.)								
			1-25	26-50	51-75	76-100	101-125	126-150	151-175	176-200	201+
Buddhist	Sikkimese Bhutia	4	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
	Dukpa	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
	Tamang	4	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Sherpa	3	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Christian	Lepcha	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Limbu	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
	Gurung	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Unspecified	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
	Rai	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Hindu	Kami	4	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Limbu	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Bhujel	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total		**24**	**8**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**2**	..	..	**3**	**2**

TABLE 133

EXPENDITURE ON MARRIAGE

Community	No. of cases of marriage studied	No. of cases of marriage with expenses of (in Rs.)										
		Nil	0-100	101-150	151-200	201-250	251-300	301-350	351-400	401-450	451-500	501+
Sikkimese Bhutia	5	1	..	1	1	..	1	..	1	..	..	..
Dukpa	4	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Tamang	9	..	3	..	1	1	..	..	2	..	..	2
Rai	6	..	..	..	1	1	..	..	2	..	..	2
Sherpa	11	..	..	..	2	2	1	1	3	..	2	..
Kami	4	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	2	..	1	..
Lepcha	3	..	1	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	..
Limbu	2	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Gurung	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Total	**48**	**2**	**9**	**2**	**6**	**5**	**2**	**1**	**11**	..	**5**	**5**

observe that the amount of bridegroom-price received by the respective guardians or parents amounts to Rs. 30.00 *paise*, Rs. 50.00 *paise* and Rs. 75.00 *paise* respectively.

The custom of payment of the bride-price by the bridegroom or his father to the bride finds support from almost all the communities. The majority of the households have a poor memory for figures, poorer still when it calls for recapitulation of bride-price paid or received by them on the occasion of the marriage of any male or female member of the household. Therefore, it is futile to attempt at the collection of data on the bride-price in all the cases of marriage.

The amount of bride-price, paid or received by the households and mentioned with a definite figure has been collected and tabulated.

Religion does not change the conventions of the different ethnic groups relating to marriage. The payment or receipt of bride-price has involved all the three religious groups Conversion has changed the religion of one Limbu to Christianity. But, the Christian Limbu household maintains the tradition of the payment of brideprice of his Hindu counterpart. Of 17 cases of marriage with bride-price limited to Rs. 100.00 *paise* or less in each, ten cases have involved the Buddhists, five cases have some relevance to the Hindus and two cases concern the Christians. The bride-price amounting to Rs. 101.00 *paise* or above, whether received or paid, concerns mostly the Christians (four cases), then the Buddhists (two cases) and lastly one solitary Hindu.

Expenditure on marriage

Whether marriage is a legal, a social or a religious institution or not, one may be enmeshed in cobwebs of loquacious arguments. But, one can hardly dispute the proposition that marriage is an economic institution. Even a bride has her price. One has already seen how much she costs. But, that is not all. A marriage is hardly made in heaven. In the earth it entails a cost and the bridegroom has to incur some expenditure, even when he makes it quite simple and austere.

It goes without saying that expense was nil in a couple of marriages which forwent any rituals. Of the rest of the 46 cases of marriage, the majority (a little more than 50.0 per cent) show the expenditure limited to Rs. 300.00 *paise*. Of the remaining 22 cases of marriage with expenses on marriage exceeding Rs. 300.00 *paise* in each individual case, a little above 54.6 per cent restrict their expenditure to Rs. 400.00 *paise* or less.

Types of marriage

It is universally acknowledged that whenever a single man is in want of wife, he marries a wife. What count most is the way he marries her or rather the manner how he chooses his wife. The types of marriage in the village Upper Pedong offer interesting diversities, though all the communities and religious groups do not uniformly conform to one or the other type of marriage. Regular marriage by negotiation appears to be the traditional form of marriage among all the communities, indicating thereby the key role played by the parents or the guardians in the negotiation and settlement of the marriage contracts. Among the Buddhists, one comes across all types of marriages, the regular marriage by negotiation explaining 51.9 per cent of the total number of cases studied. Among the Christians and the Hindus, regular marriage by negotiation accounts for 71.4 per cent and 77.5 per cent of the marriages among them. Of the total marriages studied, those by negotiation alone stand for 64.8 per cent.

Next to marriage by negotation, remarriage, the second predominant type of nuptiality, constitutes 23.4 per cent of the total cases of marriage studied.

UPPER PEDONG

TABLE 134

TYPES OF MARRIAGE

Religious group	Community	No. of cases of marriage studied	No of cases of: Regular marriage by negotiation	Re-marriage	Matri-local marriage	Marriage by choice	Marriage by service	Marriage by change	Junior sorro-rate	Marriage by elopement
Buddhist	Sikkimese Bhutia	15	8	4	1	1	..	..	1	..
	Dukpa	6	2	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Tamang	19	13	4	..	..	..	1	1	..
	Sherpa	13	5	6	..	..	1	..	..	1
	Lepcha	1	..	..	..	1(R)	..	..	..	..
Total		*54*	*28*	*18*	*1*	*2*	*1*	*1*	*2*	*1*
Christian	Sikkimese Bhutia	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Lepcha	4	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Limbu	3	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Gurung	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
	Newar	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Chhetri	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Unspecified	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total		*14*	*11*	*1*	..	*2*	..	..	..	..
Hindu	Rai	18	16	..	..	1(R)	..	..	1	..
	Kami	5	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Limbu	4	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Sanyashi	5	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	1
	Chhetri	3	1	2	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Gurung	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Mangar	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Brahman	2	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total		*40*	*31*	*6*	..	*1(R)*	..	..	*1*	*1*
Grand total		**108**	**70**	**25**	**1**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**3**	**2**

(R) Indicates remarriage – Editor

A remarriage may be contracted between a bachelor male and a widow, between a bachelor male and a divorced or a separated woman, between a widower and a widow, between a widower and a divorced or a separated woman, between a widower and an unmarried woman, between a divorced or a separated male and a divorced or a separated woman, between a divorced or a separated male and a widow, between a divorced or a separated person and an unmarried woman.

Remarriage is permitted among all the three religious groups, namely the Buddhists, the Hindus and the Christians. Though remarriage as such is not prohibited among the Hindus, the higher castes, such as the Brahmans and the Chhetris, observe restrictions on the remarriage of a widow. But, interestingly however, a widower is permitted to remarry. Hence, remarriage among the Brahmans and the Chhetris is generally contracted between a widower and an unmarried woman. In Upper Pedong, however, the restriction has been observed in its breach by a Chhetri widower, remarried to a widow.

There is only one instance of matrilocal marriage which concerns the household of a Sikkimese Bhutia who, being too old to look after cultivation, has married her only daughter to another person of his own community on the express term of the latter being a resident son-in-law.

Of the five cases of marriage by choice after a romance, two concern the Buddhists, two cases relate to the Christians and one case to the Hindus. One such marriage has taken place between a Sikkimese Bhutia and a Tamang. In another case, a young Rai, working in the army, has married a Newar girl. Of the couple of instances of marriage by choice, both concern the Christian Gurungs. In one case, a Gurung young man fell in love with a Sherpa girl. The parents of the youth had first put up a stiff resistance and refused to approve the proposed marriage. Later, the

TABLE 135

NATURE OF REMARRIAGE

Community	No. of cases of remarriage studied	No. of remarriages of the head of the household *a* and his wife *b* as shown by							
		1a & 2b	*2a & 1b*	*2a & 2b*	*3a & 1b*	*3a & 2b*	*3a & 3b*	*4a & 2b*	*5a & 2b*
Sikkimese Bhutia	4	..	1	..	1	1	..	1	..
Dukpa	4	1	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	4	1	2	1	..	..	..	..	..
Rai	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Sherpa	6	2	..	1	..	2	1	..	..
Lepcha	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1
Limbu	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	3	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	2	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**27**	**6**	**9**	**5**	**1**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**1**

NOTE : In the case where the husband or his wife has been separated, the number of times his or her last partner its married has been taken into account—Editor

Pastor of the Church, to whom the members of the Gurung family go for prayers, intervened as a mediator and used his good office to plead for the youth. The marriage was consecrated in the end. In another case, a young Rai woman, a resident in Darjeeling, came to the village under survey in the company of her parents to finalise the marriage of her brother. During her stay in the village she happened to come in close contact with a Gurung youth, working in the army, who was then on leave and fell in love with him. The marriage followed in the end.

In one particular case of marriage by service, one Sherpa, an orphan since his childhood, could not afford to spend any amount as the bride-price nor could he defray any other expense associated with his marriage. He was attracted by the terms offered by another Sherpa household which readily welcomed him as a resident son-in-law.

In another solitary case of marriage by exchange among the Tamangs, the son and daughter of a Tamang household of the village were married respectively to the daughter and son of another Tamang household of a different village.

Of the three cases of junior sorrorate, whereby the widower married the younger sister of his deceased wife in the village, one took place among the Sikkimese Bhutias, another among the Tamangs and the third among the Rais. Again, in the single case of junior levirate, a Tamang widow married her deceased husband's younger brother soon after her husband's death in the village. Last but not the least, mention might be made of two cases of marriage by elopement having taken place among the Sherpas and the Sanyashis respectively. A Sherpa villager was deeply in love with a Sherpa girl of his locality for a long time, so much so that the episode came to the knowledge of all and sundry. But, for reasons best known to the parents of the girl, the romance did not suit the liking of the girl's parents who used to reprimand the girl often. The girl in her turn used to entreat to her parents to permit her to marry the Sherpa youth. But, the parents carried on negotiation for the marriage of their daughter to another Sherpa, residing in the neighbouring locality and had almost settled the marriage. The girl came to know of the proposal. One day the girl and her chosen husband were found absconding from their houses. The news of her elopement spread far and wide in the village and her friends and relatives of the Sherpa boy started abusing the parents of the girl for their refusal to accord permission to the marriage. The pressure of public opinion yielded the desired result at last, when the girl's parents changed their views and approved the proposed marriage. The news was conveyed to the young lovers who had fled to an adjoining village and was residing in the house of the young man's friend. The young lovers staged a return to their village-home where they were warmly received by their friends and relatives. Subsequently, they were married according to the traditional customs and social rites.

Separation

All the marriages are not happy and many people remain unhappy about their marriage. Though a marriage brings forth a family ordinarily, it may also lead to its dissolution on separation or divorce of either of the partners. A family, being virtually disbanded, is in such an eventuality dismembered into fragmented units as an aftermath. Separation or divorce provides one with the index of instability of the conjugal life of the households, being also a pointer to the loose social organisation in the micro-level of a family and in the micro-level of the disjointed society of a community or an ethnic group. Separation being different from divorce inasmuch as

the marital ties between the spouses remain still live, one may be logically interested in the cases. In Upper Pedong six persons comprising three males and three females have been living a life separated from each other's spouses. In all, 24 cases of separation have been studied and in 18 cases, one partner of the couple has remarried after separation. It is indeed a notable feature, common to all the 24 cases of separation, that no legal divorce has been sought by the separated parties, even in an event of a remarriage. Separation, ensuing from severance of marital connections, comes into effect as soon as the wife leaves her husband's house for good to live in her father's home or elsewhere when she remarriages. The norms of the local society envisage that in case of any unilateral severance of the ties of nuptiality by one of the spouses and in the event of her remarriage with another person, the partner wanting dissolution of conjugal bonds is required to pay a sum of the amount varying from Rs. 60.00 *paise* to Rs. 100.00 *paise* to the opposite party under a custom, locally known as *Jarikal*. But, under this system the payment is made to the party from whom separation has been sought by the spouse or the partner interested in the separation. The compensation seeks to defray the cost of the marriage expense, partially covering the amount to the extent of the bride-price.

Of the six cases of separation among the Sikkimese Bhutias, three cases happened to one youth who married thrice, one after another, and all the time he was forsaken by her wives who preferred separation to co existence with a drunkard and a gambler. In another household one Sikkimese Bhutia sought separation from all the three wives he had married, one followed by another in the event of separation from the wife married earlier. He left his first wife on grounds of her unconcern and apathy for his well-being and also for inefficient management of the household. The second wife, having been considered a careless woman with palpable laxity in her work, was separated. The separation was followed by a marriage for the third time. But, the third wife not found very responsive in her sex-behaviour was consequently separated. The person concerned had not, however, lost his heart like Robert Bruce. He married for the fourth time and with his indefatigable optimism for a happy life continued to live hopefully for a conjugal life with the correct poise and balance between the partners, however delusive the hope might be.

Among the Dukpas, three cases of separation have been reported. In one case, a Dukpa woman left her husband for his misbehaviour, infidelity and addiction to gambling. The second case of separation reports a Dukpa young man to have snapped his marital ties with his wife for her questionable character. A Dukpa woman in the third and last case of separation left her husband and remarried, as she had no child by the first husband.

Among the Tamangs, two women lived away from their partners because of maladjustment, for the husband did not conform to their choice and likes. In another case, a Tamang left his wife on grounds of alleged immoral behaviour.

A young woman of the Rai community had left her husband on account of her absolute dislike for her spouse. In three cases of separation among the Sherpas, the wives had taken the initiative in dissolving the marriage by separation. One woman found her husband an idle as well as an absentee worker and so, she deserted him. Maltreatment of the woman by her husband was a ghastly sight to the woman's mother who, on her visit to her daughter's husband's house, decided to take away her daughter to rescue her from an inhuman torture by her husband. Another Sherpa woman, in

love with another person, abandoned her husband to enable herself to be united with her paramour. A Lepcha was married thrice and separated three times by his first, second and third wives allegedly on account of his short stature and uncomely appearance. There is one instance of separation among the Limbus. Here the woman left her husband and re-married another who, according to the *Jarikal*, had to pay an amount of Rs.95.00 *paise* to his proposed bride's former husband. Four cases of separation have been reported by the Sanyashis. In the first case, the husband is said to have abandoned his wife on ground of her negligence to take adequate care of her husband. In the second case, the wife left her husband on the allegation of inhuman maltreatment. In the third case, the wife left her husband for his questionable morality. In the last case, a couple had been living separated for frequent frictions and quarrels between the husband and the wife.

On a review of the cases, it comes to light that the women wanted separation in the majority of cases. The causes of separation in most cases appear to be incompatibility and lack of adjustment, moral lapse, barrenness, infidelity and maltreatment. Economic factor is found to have provoked a separation and precipitated a crisis in only one case. The social control on sexual aberrations does not appear to be very strong in the village for the obvious reason of its multi-ethnic and multi-lingual character, an impediment to the homogeneity of the village-society with powers of social control vested in some persons or others. The absence of any forum to formally sanction a separation makes family life more vulnerable to a loose association than amenable to a socially cohesive unit of integrated living on an inculcation of the standard social or moral values in the family-level or in the community-level. One is, therefore, apt to miss a prestige-oriented tradition of the family.

Remarriage

Marriage in the village in some cases bears no assurance of a stable family life and a normally happy conjugal life. Remarriage does not, therefore, assume any significance simply in contrast with marriage and on the score of numerical cases only. Even though limited in number, remarriage conveys one a different picture, when one examines the issue in some depth to find that remarriage has occurred in the life of an individual several times in succession. As and when one remarriage turns unhappy, it is dissolved shortly after and soon followed by another. The remarriage in the case of these few unhappy individuals have failed to achieve their desired ends. In a wild race of gold-rush the individuals are often found to have been cursed by a nemesic decree for their conjugal unhappiness. In explaining the nature of remarriage in the present discussion, it is necessary to show how many times each partner in the case-study of a remarriage has married, with the help of numerical combination, in which the first number indicates the number of times the husband has married, while the second number indicates the number of times the wife has married. Thus, a remarriage showing the numericals 1*a* and 2*b* would connote the first marriage of the husband *a* but the second marriage of the wife *b*. Likewise, a combination of 5*a* and 6*b* signifies the fifth marriage of the husband *a* and the second marriage of his wife *b*.

In this connection mention might be made of the two instances of remarriage in the life-time of two villagers, one Lepcha and another Sikkimese Bhutia.

Remarriage of a Sikkimese Bhutia

There is one instance of remarriage among the Sikkimese Bhutias in which the husband has married for the fourth time. The husband is aged 55 years, while his wife is 48 years old.

First marriage of the Sikkimese Bhutia took place with a Sanyashi woman, aged 18 years, with whom he had spent six years together. The antecedents of the Sanyashi woman's life before her marriage are not available. Once during the illness of her husband, the Sanyashi wife did not sufficiently care for his nursing nor did she pay much attention to his treatment. So, on his recovery, he deserted his Sanyashi wife. He married for the second time at the age of 31 a Tamang woman and lived together for a year and a few months. A daughter, born to them, expired a few months after her birth. The woman, said to have been very lazy and a frequent absentee from casual labour, was finally deserted. The third marriage of the husband took place at the age of 33 with a Tamang widow with whom he lived for about a year. But she was separated on grounds of her questionable character. The Sikkimese Bhutia married for the fourth time a Sikkimese Bhutia widow of 28 years. The marriage had lasted 20 years and bore several children to them. The Sikkimese Bhutia had at last derived the long cherished conjugal happiness from the unbroken marital life of 20 years.

Remarriage of a Lepcha

The remarriage of a Lepcha, aged 60 years, with a Dukpa woman of 45 years is, in fact, the fifth marriage of the Lepcha male and the second marriage of the Dukpa female. The first marriage of the Lepcha took place at the age of 32 with a Rai widow of 26 years. The Rai widow had her first marriage at the age of 22 years with a Sikkimese Bhutia who had died after four years of marriage. The Lepcha, on the other hand, was left by his Rai wife after three years of their married life, because of her husband's short stature and unattractive appearance. Soon after separation, the Lepcha married a Limbu girl and lived with her for two years. But, she too, like the Rai widow, left him after she was disenchanted of her charmless husband. The Lepcha, even despite two setbacks, was least dispirited. He resolved to marry again for the third time a Tamang woman and spent one year and a half with his wife. But, the conjugal life here too was short-lived, as the Lepcha became a widower after the sudden demise of his third wife. Six months after his bereavement, the Lepcha chose a Rai woman and married her. But, the choice did not prove very judicious nor very correct as she too forsook him and left him free to remarry another woman. The fifth marriage at the age of 42 with a Dukpa, aged 27 years and a separated woman for that matter, however, was a bliss to both. The marriage lasted for 18 years in happiness and peace. It also proved fruitful in bringing several children to the couple.

Step-children

A remarriage of a separated person with either a widow or another separated woman is linked with the ticklish problem of the custody and guardianship of the step-children of either the husband or the wife or of both. Where a widow remarries, the custody of her children by her first husband does not in that case pose any serious problem, though the treatment meted out by her second husband towards the step-children may not always follow an ideal course. The problem with the children assumes a really intractable nature, when a separated woman with children is married. In case the woman separates herself from or is separated by her husband, she takes with her the minor children also. But, the husband's claim for the grown-up issues is settled mutually. In most cases of remarriage, the children along with their mother usually leave their father to live in the house of their mother's new husband.

Remarriage of a Tamang

The case of remarriage in a Tamang household between an unmarried male and a separated woman with one son and one daughter

by her former husband has been studied. The son, aged 23 years, works as a domestic cook in Delhi and the daughter is a maidservant in a Sikkimese Bhutia household of the village. Both the children have severed connections with their real father. The son during his visit to the village comes to the house of his present step-father. The daughter occasionally visits the same house to stay there for a number of days together.

But, in another case of remarriage of a Tamang male, five children by his first wife are nursed and brought up by their step-mother.

In the third case, a Tamang woman, on her separation from her first husband, remarried and brought her one-year old son by her former husband to her second husband's house. The son has become the head of the household after his step-father's death and now lives with his widowed mother. But, he has not lost contact with his own father living in a different household which is visited by him occasionally.

In the fourth case of remarriage, the second marriage for both the Tamang husband and his wife, five children of the husband's first wife, three children of the wife's first husband and one child of the present marriage live together and are reared up by the couple.

In the fifth case of remarriage, the Sherpa husband's first marriage but his wife's second, two children by the wife's former husband and one issue born of the couple live in the same household.

In the sixth case of remarriage, one daughter by the Sherpa wife's first husband and three sons born of the present marriage are brought up together.

In the seventh case of remarriage, the Sherpa husband's second marriage but his Sherpa wife's first, two children of the former marriage of the Sherpa husband and one issue of the present one live under the same roof together.

Again, in another case of remarriage among the Sherpas, the Sherpa husband's first marriage but his wife's second, the daughter brought with the Sherpa wife happens to be the only issue of her first Sherpa husband.

Husband's age vis-a-vis his wife's

The study of the age-pattern of the respective spouses reveals one striking feature, enough to catch one's attention. In some cases the wife happens to be older than her husband and in some the husband and his wife are of the same age, while in some other cases the husband is senior to his wife by only a couple of years or so. In the majority of cases, however, the husband is senior to his wife. Among the Sikkimese Bhutias, the husband is senior to his wife in age. But among the Dukpas, the wife is older than her husband in two cases by 10 years, while in two other cases the wife is junior to her husband in age. Among the Tamangs, in all but two cases the husband is senior to his wife, while in two other cases both the spouses are of the same age. Out of eight couples under study among the Rais, the husband is senior to his wife in six cases while in two other cases the wife is senior to her husband. Among the Sherpas, the husband is senior in age to the wife in seven cases, whereas the wife is older than her partner in three cases and in one case both the spouses are of the same age. Among the Kamis, the husband is older than his wife in three cases but in one case the pattern is reversed. Among the four Lepcha couples, the husband is senior to his wife in two cases, the wife is older than her husband in one case and both the spouses are of equal age in the remaining case.

In all but one case among the Limbus, the husband is older than his wife, but in only one case the wife is senior to her husband. Among the Chhetris, the husband is senior to his wife in one case, while the wife is senior to her husband in another.

Summing up, it appears that out of the 71 couples under study, the husband is not senior to the wife in 25 cases, and in five cases both the spouses are equal in age.

Inter-community marriage

Of 23 cases of marriage among the Sikkimese Bhutias, the rules of endogamy have been followed only in 15 cases in which the marriage is confined to the community. In all other cases, the convention and the customary rule of the community have not been followed. The marriage of a Sikkimese Bhutia girl with a Tibetan, the two cases of marriage between the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas, three cases of marriage between the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Tamangs, the marriage of a Sikkimese Bhutia with a Limbu and that of another Sikkimese Bhutia with a Sanyashi illustrate how the norms are relaxed or observed in breaches.

Of eight cases of marriage among the Dukpas, five conform to the rules of endogamy, while three others have been contracted with the Sikkimese Bhutias.

Of 20 cases of marriage studied among the Tamangs, 18 cases attest to the observance of the rules of endogamy. Of the two non-conformist rebels not in a mood to break the hearts under the wheel of the heartless social custom, one marriage has been contracted with a Rai and another with a Sherpa.

Of the 20 cases of marriage among the Rais, 16 cases are confined within the community. Of the rest, a couple of marriages have taken place with the Tamangs, one with the Chhetri and another with the Kami.

All the 15 cases of marriage among the Sherpas and five cases of marriage among the Kamis are not found to have transgressed the endogamous rules of the communities.

The Lepchas appear to be not all tradition-bound in matters of marriage. Of nine cases of marriage, only two are confined within the community, while seven others have been attempted at matrimonial relation with other communities. In three cases, the marriage has been contracted with the Rais, in two cases with the Limbus, in one case the marrige had taken place between a Lepcha and a Tamang and in another between a Lepcha and a Dukpa.

Of the seven cases of marriage studied among the Limbus, four are confined within the community, while three other cases have been negotiated outside, one with the Lepcha, one with the Tamang and the third with the Newar.

Of the four cases of marriage studied among the Sanyashis, three have been negotiated within the community but one has been contracted outside.

Among the Chhetries, three marriages are confined to the community itself, while one has taken place with the Kami.

Among the Gurungs, two marriages have been negotiated with the Rais and one with the Sherpas. The remaining cases of marriage comprising two among the Newars, two among the Brahmans and one each among the Bhujels and the Mangars have not transcended the barriers of endogamy of the respective communities.

On a resume, it appears that of the 124 marriages of different communities, 94 cases conform to the rules of endogamy, while 30 cases relate to inter-community marriages. The

inter-community marriages have taken place in households of different ethnic groups professing Christanity as their religion which professedly cuts across all social divisions and barriers and does not treat the ethnic group as an insurmountable barrier against connubial relation with another ethnic group.

Some inter-community marriages have also been negotiated among the Buddhists which include the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dupka. the Tamangs, the Sherpas and the Tibetans. A few inter-community marriages also have been contracted by the Hindus.

Marriage and religion

As the different ethnic groups strive for observance of the rules of endogamy, so do they desire marriages to be contracted in the same religious group. But, there have also been exceptions to the rules, when the practices are studied. Of the 70 cases of marriage studied among the Buddhists, 65 cases reveal the marriage to be contracted between the Buddhist bridegrooms and the Buddhist brides. In five cases the marriage is found to be solemnised between the Buddhists and the Hindus. Thus, a Sikkimese Bhutia Buddhist bridegroom has married a Hindu girl of the Sanyashi community, a Buddhist Tamang male has selected a Hindu Rai girl as his partner, two Buddhist Lepcha bridegrooms have been united to a couple of Hindu girls of the Rai community and one Buddhist Lepcha male has married a Hindu girl of the Limbu community. Unfortunately the marital union has been cut short by death. On enquiry it has been gathered that such marriages do not necessarily mean conversion of the husband or the wife to the religion of one partner or the other. The spouse has every freedom of his or her religious pursuit, faith and belief. There has not been any coercion on or interference with the religious profession of any one partner of the couple by the other.

Remarkably, however, there has not been any case of marriage between the Buddhists and the Christians reported by any villager of Upper Pedong. The Buddhists in their mariage have not always conformed to the narrow confines of the rules of endogamy as laid down by each ethnic group.

Marriage between two ethnic groups professing Buddhism has been found to have taken place among the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dukpas, the Tibetans, the Sherpas, the Lepchas and the Tamangs.

No Christian has been found to have married any person outside his or her religious community.

Among the Hindus, 39 marriages out of 41 cases, have been negotiated among the members of the same religious group. Only in two cases, two women in two Rai households, returning them as Hindus, have been married to two Buddhist Tamang young men of two separate households. It has been found that the two Hindu Rai girls after marriage in the two Buddhist households profess both the creeds. They participate in both the Hindu and the Buddhist festivals. Thus, during their stay in the house of their husbands, they observe the Buddhist festivals and visit the monastery in the company of other inmates of the households. But during the observance of the Hindu festivals they come to the house of their parents and visit the temples.

Premarital and extra-marital sex-life

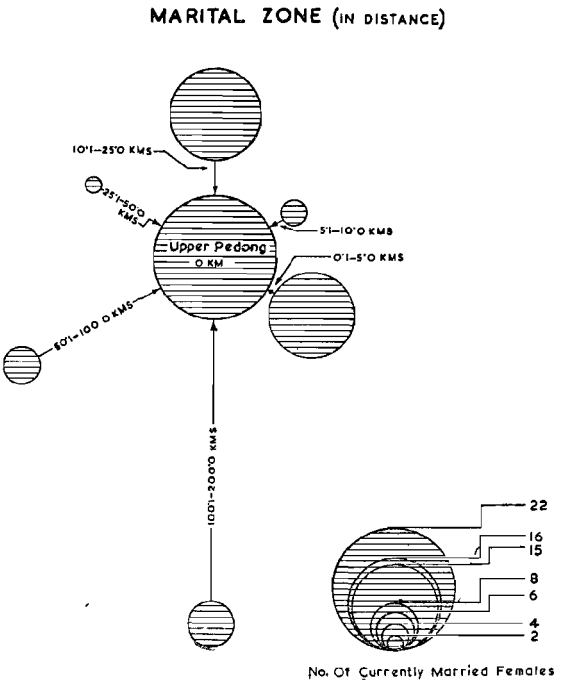
Premarital and extra-marital sexual relations are strictly prohibited among all the communities of the village, being highly disapproved and contempted. On detection of any undesirable relation, the offender is brought to book by the elders and fined, if possible. He is also compelled to marry the girl, in case she is unmarried. A few years ago, in case of abduction of a Tamang belle

from her village to the house at Kalimpong of the relatives of the Tamang offender, the boy was brought to the village and asked to marry the girl in question. They have since been living peacefully after marriage in an adjoining village.

Extra-marital sexual lapses, though strictly prohibited and deemed highly objectionable, are, however, not quite uncommon. The illegitimate sexual relation usually leads to the separation of the spouses, on detection of the offence by either of the partners. The instability of conjugal life due to separation has been the outcome of the social offence. Multiple remarriage has been indirectly bred of the breach of sexual norms by one of the spouses. Eight years ago, a married Tamang male and a Rai widow had between them an intimate relation which went into wide circulation after the widow had become parturient and borne a male child. The offence was not lost sight of by the villagers. The Tamang had to pay one hundred rupees to the widow to get himself exonerated from the charge. The child, now seven years old, is being brought up by her mother and has not been abjured by the village society as an illegitimate child.

Marital zone

By marital zone it is intended to convey to the readers an idea of the places wherefrom the brides have come to this village. In other words, the residential areas of the brides indicating indirectly the habitats of the father-in-laws of the bridegrooms who are at present residents of the village. This indicates the zone of matrimonial alliances of a section of the people, if not of the whole, within which the socio-cultural intercourse the village with areas outside and of the connection of the village households is established. Needless to mention, the social orbit of the people, whether husbands, wives or children, for the purpose of travel for pleasure or errands for social call is also reflected in the delineation of the marital zone. No relation can ordinarily be more dear than one's own spouse. Married female members of the family, even after marriage continues to have a strong longing for their parental homes. It is quite obvious, therefore, that the husbands have to visit their father-in-laws' house or to send their wives to their parents' house even infrequently, if themselves unwilling to make the visit frequent. Methodologically, only the currently married women (signifying married women with husbands alive) have been studied for the Tables 136 and 137 on the marital zone. The zone has been demarcated in geo-political terms namely P. S., District and also in terms of spatial distance from the case-studies of the married women who have *responded positively to the question*



about their habitats prior to their marriage. Roughly 30.1 per cent of the married women who have responded positively to the question about their habitats prior to their marriage have reasons to be contented on the ground that marriage has not isolated them from their parents. Marriage for them really has spelt a change of home but not that of place. As regards the girls who have been imported to this village as brides, roughly seven out of every 10 such married women have been dwellers in areas within a commutable distance, for none of these seven married women has ever been residents before marriage at a place more than 25 kilometres of distance.

As mentioned earlier, Upper Pedong does not suffer from either lack of good communication or means of good transport. As a result, the villages, however distant they may appear, are not really so because of their communicability with and accessibility to Upper Pedong. Six marriages out of 35 confined within a distance of 25 kilometres are, however, urban areas. The culture-contact about which a detailed discussion has been made in Chapter III in connexion with hidden contact is further reinforced by the fact that messages of change do also come from places far and near along the connubial channel. The hymeneal links are perhaps the strongest bonds uniting two places. More so, when

TABLE 136

MARITAL ZONE (DISTANCE)

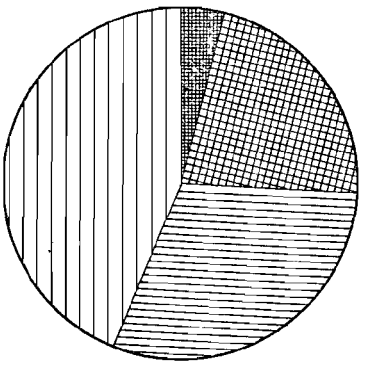
Community	No. of households	No. of cases of marriage studied	No. of marriages taking place within						
			Same village	0.1-5.0 kilo-metres	5.1-10.0 kilo-metres	10.1-25.0 kilo-metres	25.1-50.0 kilo-metres	50.1-100.0 kilo-metres	100.1 and more
Sikkimese Bhutia & Dukpa	18	15	5	3	..	2	..	2	3
Tamang	17	15	7	6	1	1	..	..	..
Rai	11	9	5	2	..	2	..	..	..
Sherpa	9	11	..	2	1	4	1	2	1
Kami	6	4	1	..	1	1	..	..	1
Lepcha	4	4	1	..	1	1	..	..	1
Limbu	4	6	1	1	..	2	1	1	..
Sanyashi	4	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	1
Chhetri	4	3	1	..	..	1	..	1	..
Gurung	3	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	1
Newar	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**73**	**22**	**15**	**4**	**16**	**2**	**6**	**8**

they concern the husbands and wives, children of whom visit their maternal grandfathers in urban areas and come back as carriers of the leavening ideas of change.

Three more married girls have had their parental homes in urban areas, two from Darjeeling town and one from Kurseong, all within 50 kilometres to 100 kilometres of distance from the village. A little more than 15.6 per cent of the married women from outside the village have the longest distance to traverse, if they ever wish to visit their parents. They hail from places more than 100 kilometres away from Upper Pedong. Incidentally, all of them come from outside India and they comprise four girls from Nepal, three from Bhutan and one from Sikkim. Geo-politically, however, all the married women living outside do not have their parents' homes at a distance exceeding 100 kilometres. Even a shorter distance has established better rapport and matrimonial harmony between this village and countries outside India. In all, 16 married girls have resided in their premarital days at homes of parents outside India. Nine women belong to different places in Sikkim, three at the shortest distance of 20 kilometres, from Upper Pedong, two women at a distance of 50 kilometres, one 80 kilometres away, two at a distance of 100 kilometres and one even far more away. All the four women belonging to Nepal hail from places beyond more than 130 kilometres from Upper Pedong. Three women from Bhutan all come from areas far beyond (more than 100 kilometres). Sikkim being at the border at a distance of only 20 kilometres, a larger incidence of marriage of women from outside India has involved Sikkim. Though of the girls, resident in the village and married to covillagers, the Tamangs account for about one third of the total number of such married women, the Sikkimese Bhutias as well as the Dukpas together explain 22.7 per cent of the cases of the married women.

Of all the married women except those belonging to the same village, 62.7 per cent have come from places in the same police station of Kalimpong in the jurisdiction of which falls the present village and 5.9 per cent hail from places outside present village or its police station but within the district of

MARITAL ZONE
(IN AREA)



CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN FROM

OUTSIDE THE P.S. BUT WITHIN THE DISTRICT
OUTSIDE IN INDIA
INSIDE THE VILLAGE
OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE BUT WITHIN THE P.S..

Darjeeling. In other words, 68.6 per cent of married males of the village have gone beyond the village but have not crossed the bounds of the district to seek their consorts. Of all the currently married males, the majority (78.1 per cent) have not travelled beyond the bournes of the district of Darjeeling. But, those who have had to visit places outside the district for their brides have not sought them from other districts within the State of West Bengal or even India but have brought their wives from countries outside India, namely, Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan.. This substantially proves the point that the socio-cultural valley carved out as a result of marital zone along which matrimonial alliance is established between the son of the village and the damsel of another place extends beyond the village and the district to lands outside West Bengal and even India and connects the hill tracts of Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan. The forces of cultural integration of the hillmen of the village, despite their being citizens of India and residents of the village or the police station, of the district or for that matter, the State of West Bengal, emanate from countries outside India. If that be so, it is because the people have more in common in matters of ethnic characteristics, language, religion, culture or tradition, customs of the society or social

TABLE 137

MARITAL ZONE (PLACES)

Community	No. of households	No. of cases of marriage studied	No. of marriages taking place within			
			The village	Outside the village but within the same police station	Outside the same police station but within the same district	Outside India
Sikkimese Bhutia & Dukpa	18	15	5	4	1	5
Tamang	17	15	7	8	..	..
Rai	11	9	5	4	..	..
Sherpa	9	11	..	6	..	5
Kami	6	4	1	2	..	1
Lepcha	4	4	1	1	..	2
Limbu	4	6	1	3	1	1
Sanyashi	4	2	..	1	..	1
Chhetri	4	3	1	1	1	..
Gurung	3	2	..	1	..	1
Newar	2	..	..	..	..	..
Bhujel	1	1	..	1	..	..
Mangar	1	..	..	..	..	..
Yakha	1	..	..	..	..	..
Brahman	1	..	..	..	..	..
Unspecified	1	1	1	..	..	..
Total	**87**	**73**	**22**	**32**	**3**	**16**

organisation with the people of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan from the parent stock of which the villagers in some earlier times came to settle down in this region. Hence, they feel a sense of communion with them rather than the people of the plains of West Bengal or India.

The brides from places outside the police station of Kalimpong but within the district of Darjeeling have their parental homes in the range of 72 to 80 kilometres. It, therefore, appears that the marriages have been contracted with brides of the same police station within the range of 70 kilometres. Eleven brides have come from urdan areas, five from Kalimpong, two from Darjeeling, one from Kurseong, one from Gangtok in Sikkim and two from Paro in Bhutan. The rural-urban linkage has also been established by marital ties apart from other types of bonds founded by other human agencies.

Of the married girls whose confinement within their village homes has not been shattered by marriage with outside people, the maximum number belongs to the Tamang community, followed next in identical proportion by the Sikkimese Bhutias and Dukpas together as also by the Rais. But, speaking community-wise, the largest proportion (55.6 per cent) of the Rai married women belong to the village. Next in position, come the Tamang married women, 46.7 per cent of which have their parental homes in the village.

Of the married girls who have come from outside the village but within a radius of 25.0 kilometres, the Tamangs are numerically the largest group, followed by the Sherpas. The farthest to travel for the maximum number of brides are, however, the Sikkimese Bhutias. Similarly, the largest number of married women from outside India belongs to the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Sherpas. All the communities except the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dukpas, the Sherpas, the Kamis, the Lepchas, the Limbus, the Sanyashis and the Gurungs have negotiated marriage of their own male members within the boundary of the same police station. The Sherpas and the Sanyashis have also failed to restrict their marital zone within the village. Both have not only extended beyond the limits of the village but have crossed the boundary of India in search of a bride. The nuptial mission to urban areas has enabled two Chhetris and three Limbus to unite their hearts with women of sophisticated towns like Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Gangtok.

Health and sanitation

Majority of the villagers live in houses with walls and floors made of wood, and roofs thatched with straw or covered with corrugated iron sheets. Most of these houses are built so as to withstand the chilly Himalayan cold, having in the majority of cases adequate number of windows fitted with glass panes. Houses are largely east-facing, having thereby the advantage of unobstructed sunlight. Neatness dresses the tidy look of the houses. Garbage is thrown outside down the slopes. Though general housing condition seems to be hygienic apparently, the sanitary condition is disturbed by the cowshed, goatshed and the pig-sty, not always situated quite far from the dwelling house. In all, there are 57 households with cowsheds and 19 households with pigsheds. But from the point of public health, the proximity of the pigsheds to the dwelling houses, with pigs wallowing in dung, urine, malodorous filth and scum cannot be treated as a hygienic environ.

Only 17 households in the village possess latrines. The members of the remaining 70 households use open meadows and jungles beside the *Jhora* along the slope for evacuation. The *Jhoras* providing the main source of water for the majority of the people, the possibility of pollution of drinking water from human waste is very high. The amenity of protected water-supply in pipeline is restricted to a minority, there being only five such

taps in the village. Naturally, therefore, the *Jhoras*, the main source of water throughout the year, are contaminated in the protracted rainy season of the hills with the night-soil, refuse, garbage and other excretionary waste, human and animal, washed away in the rain-water to get mixed up with the water of the natural *Jhoras* which turn into a veritable source of the carrier of a good number of diseases, parasitic and bacterial, infecting the digestive system. Water borne diseases like dysentery, hill-diarrhoea and other gastro-intestinal disorders are very common, diarrhoea and dysentery being diseases of almost daily occurrence and high incidence.

As pointed out earlier, the members of an average household have each a set of two dresses. Members in some of the very poor households, belonging to the Sanyashi and the Tamang communities, possess only one piece of woven apparel. Regular wash of the clothes is a rare event, especially so among the Bhutias and the Sherpas who do not normally even put off and change daily their traditional dresses, *Fago* and *Bakhu*. They are substituted, when completely soiled. Washing soap is used by households of all the communities of the village, to clean their dress, though infrequently. Use of the toilet soap is restricted to 50.0 per cent of the villagers. Thus, eight of the 13 Sikkimese Bhutia families, one of the five Dukpas, seven of the 17 Tamangs, nine of the 11 Rais, one of the nine Sherpas, one of the six Kamis, three of the four Lepchas, three of the four Limbus, none of the Sanyashi, two of the four Chhetris, one of the three Gurungs, all the two Newar households and all the households of other communities use toilet soap. Only four households comprising two Sikkimese Bhutias, one Tamang and one household of the unspecified community regularly send their clothes to the washerman.

Because of whipping cold and scarcity of water, the villagers take bath very irregularly. A bath once a week is a luxuy to many, but a fortnightly one is the practice of the majority. Even while taking a bath, oil is rarely used on the body or the hair. As a result, hair gets matted, especially among the womenfolk and becomes good breeding ground for lice. Disregard of personal hygiene and cleanliness leads to various infectious and skin diseases like itches, ringworms etc., the incidence of which is quite high among most of the people.

For treatment of diseases though all the households claim to depend on allopathy, it would be a gross error to presume popularity of scientific methods of treatment. They do depend on allopathy as much as they do rely on their indigenous methods of treatment by magic and charm. The elderly persons, with a belief in supernatural elements ripened into a faith, have lived by it as one fanatical in their faith in devils, demons, witchcraft and so forth. And none can alter the commonplace of their beliefs that disease and death are not the result of natural causes, but are the work of malevolent spirits, witches, ghosts and other uncanny designs of the supernatural underworld. Proximity of the village to the semi-urban Pedong Bazar and long association of Upper Pedong with the missionaries have only partially helped the young understand the efficacy of modern methods of scientific treatment of diseases.

The establishment of the Primary Health Centre at Pedong Bazar has also provided the village with para-hospital facilities of treatment of diseases by modern methods of diagnosis and life-saving drugs, all free of cost. The young generation tak to allopathic treatment though, magical cure too is embedded in the life of the common people, not to be converted by a rational approach so soon and with so much of ease. A section of the people still ardently cherish their faith in magical cure by use of charms and amulets. When a person among the Bhutias, the Tamangs, the Rais or the Sherpas becomes ill, the tradition and practice would impel him to consult the *Jhakri* (Medicineman) whose treatment comprises

the use of divination water or mustard seeds etc. At the onset of any disease others usually come to the Primary Health Centre first. If the disease is not cured thereafter or turns to be a protracted one, they take recourse to the magical treatment.

The disease, reported to be most common, is goitre or the inflammation of the thyroid glands on account of deficiency of iodine in the body caused by the intake of insufficient iodine through water and vegetables. Water of the *Jhoras* flowing down slope causes decomposition of the herbs, shrubs and other vegetation and reportedly minimises the dose of natural iodine in water to a very low level. Vegetables grown in the hills constitute the essential items of food in the meals taken by the villagers. In the opinion of the local Medical Officer attached to the Health Centre, the local vegetables of the hills contain lesser percentage of iodine than those in the plains. The iodine-deficiency both in water and in the local vegetables is believed to be responsible for the high incidence of goitre. According to a rough estimate, 15 to 20 per cent of the people in some areas suffer from goitre. It has been reported by 28 persons, out of a total population of 440, that they had suffered from the disease during the last ten years. During the survey, 16 person have been found to be suffering from goitre. The incidence of diseases and ailments from infection by worms is quite high. In the opinion of

TABLE 138

DISEASES AT A GLANCE

Disease	No. of occurrences in course of last ten years	No. of patients chronically suffering	No. of cases cured after treatment	Events of mortality from the disease
Goitre	28	16	12	..
Small-pox	17	..	13	4
Dysentery	17	5	8	4
Hyper-acidity	16	6	7	3
Tuberculosis	9	3	4	2
Rheumatism	8	6	2	..
Anaemia	9	2	6	1
Pneumonia	10	..	2	8
Bronchial asthma	6	5	1	..
Typhoid	6	..	4	2
Cardiac disorders	10	2	2	6
Malaria	6	..	4	2
Neurotic disorders	1	1	..	..
Rickets	1	..	1	..
Jaundice (Hepatitis)	1	..	1	..
Urinary ailment	1	..	1	..
Female diseases	4	1	2	1
Miscellaneous	4	..	..	4

the Medical Officer attached to the Health Centre, the high incidence of diseases caused by infection is attributed to contamination of drinking water as an after-effect of the general practice of defecation by the villages near the source of water-supply. Of the diseases caused by worms, that by hookworm is the most common. The parasitic diseases are also caused by the intake of raw meat lying conserved for some time and also by the consumption of semi-boiled meat. It has already been discussed how most of the villagers, especially the Bhutias and the Lepchas, relish the carrions of pork and beef, preserved by hanging over the fire for a long stretch of time, even for a month or two at times. The dishes prepared from the semi-decomposed carrions, not fully boiled, cause enteric disorders and worm-infections. Pigs are believed to take night-soil as their main food, while grazing in the open, and as such, pork causes worm-infections, especially tape-worm infections. Another factor contributory to the higher incidence of worm-infections in the village happens to be the lack of adequate knowledge of the people about measures of sanitation and disinfection.

The major ailment, commonly affecting the people, is a type of gastro-intestinal disorder, coupled with hyper-acidity and gastritis or gastric ulcer, locally known as *Gano*. This disease is etymologically ascribed to the exceses of tea-habit and also to the old practice of frequent intake of raw decoction of tea. Tea is universally taken by all the members in a household, but the tea consumed here is of a different preparation. Lump of raw tea, tied into a bundle with a piece of linen, is boiled in a kettle throughout the day. Milk is rarely added to the infusion. But, salt is used more often than sugar. The tea thus brewed is very strong. Yet, taken in an empty stomach, it causes acidity and dyspepsia. Excessive consumption of distilled spirit and liquor also causes gastro-intestinal disorders. In course of the survey, 10 cases of acute acidity, reported to have occurred in 10 years, have resulted in the mortality of three patients. Six persons have beeen found to be suffering from the disease at the time of the survey.

Rheumatism, also another common disease in Upper Pedong, is said to be probably caused by the cold climate. Besides, the people have not sufficient garments to protect themselves against cold. As many as eight cases of rheumatism have been reported to have occured in the decade last and six persons have been suffering from the disease at the time of the survey.

The very high incidence of hill diarrhoea and hill-dysentery, the former being a disease of almost daily occurrence in the rainy season, is explained by the fact that the water-borne diseases are caused by the use of contaminated water of the *Jhoras* (near which people usually defecate) for purposes of drinking and cooking. The abundance of flies also poses a problem and causes a nuisance. Water used for drinking is boiled hardly by any villager. The hill diarrhoea sometimes breaks out in an epidemic form of cholera. The villagers wash their utensils and clothes near the *Jhoras*, supplying water for use in cooking and drinking. Silicon particles and micaceous minerals in water also aid to the spread of diarrhoea. In course of last ten years, 17 cases of acute dysentery, resulting in four cases of mortality, have occurred.

Of the diseases of the blood, anaemia deserves special mention. The high incidence of hill-diarrhoea and hill-dysentery and chronic ailment from these diseases lead to anaemia, which is also caused by malnutritional diet and chronic diseases of infection from worms.

Of nine cases of anaemia, reported in course of last ten years, one case has resulted in mortality. Again, two persons have been suffering from anaemia at the time of the

survey. Anaemia here has not yet assumed a severe form nor has it taken till now a malignant turn, because of natural physiological advantages of the metabolism of accelerated formation of haemoglobin in high altitudes.

Cardiac diseases too are fairly common, being caused by the arduous strain from movements up and down the hill. Ten cases of cardiac diseases have been reported in the decade last, with two cases of mortality. Two persons have been suffering from diseases of the heart at the time of the survey.

If the heart is weak among some people, lungs too are not quite healthy for all. Wasting diseases like pulmonary tuberculosis, accentuated by chronic malnutrition, hard labour and absence of facilities of segregation, are, therefore, common. Nine such cases have been reported in course of last ten years, resulting in two cases of death. Three persons have been ailing from the disease at the time of the survey. Bronchial asthma is also reportedly very common. Six such cases have been reported in course of last ten years and as many as five persons have been suffering from the disease at the time of the survey.

Certain physical and ecological factors have paved the way for the outbreak of the diseases, economic factor has stimulated their incidence and the seasonal factor has heightened their incubation and complications and reinforced their virulence. If rains bring in the gastro-intestinal disorders, summer harbingers the cough and the phlegm and the cold bleak winter is armed to the teeth to affect the people with infections of pneumonia, bronchitis and bronchial asthma, whereas the year in all the seasons demotes the general health.

To get an account of the principal diseases from which the villagers have suffered in course of the last ten years, the households have been asked the question, "From what principal diseases members of your family have suffered or have been suffering in course of the last ten years ?"

In quite a large number of cases, the diseases have been returned correctly with the diagnosed names. The symptoms of some diseases, also collected from the villagers who proved unable to name the diseases in particular, have been helpful for a diagnostic case-study in consultation with a qualified and registered medical practitioner.

Admittedly a very risky venture, the attempt unearths invaluable data on some of the principal diseases or on some of the diseases which occurred more than ten years ago. The probability of the loss of such information otherwise is very high in the face of absence of any published record or classified register.

In collecting the data about the incidence of the diseases, the particulars of the minor aliments like cough, fever, influenza and diarrhoea have not been collected deliberately. Because such cases are fairly numerous, no household can give any correct information.

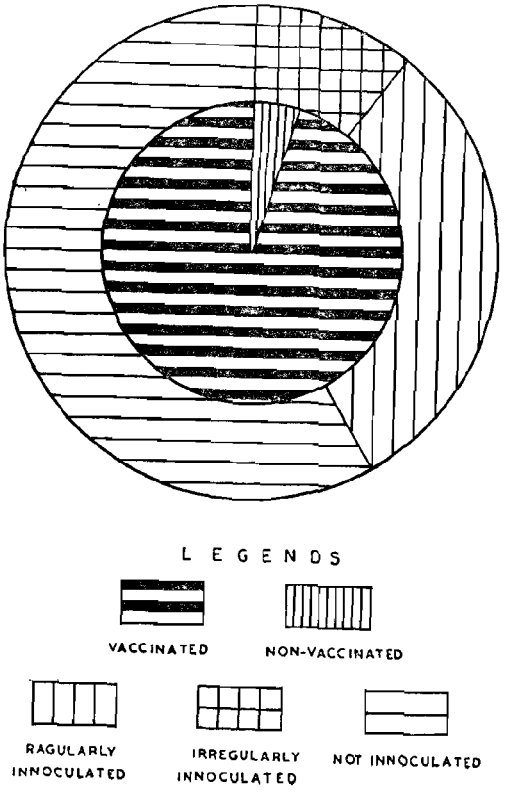
No case of leprosy has been detect in course of the survey. Though an attempt has been made to collect the history of venereal diseases, people have hardly given a correct story and no appraisal has been made about these diseases.

The villagers are very much afraid of diseases like cholera and smallpox. The incidence of smallpox is more than that of cholera. In course of the last 10 years, 17 cases of smallpox have been reported along with four cases of mortality.

The awareness of preventive measures of public health against epidemic diseases like cholera does not appear to have reached a high pitch in view of more than fifty nine per cent of the total number of households of the village evading inoculation.

It appears rather puzzling that in a village where a number of households has braved bullets and courted death for ribbons and bouquets, some others stay away from the inoculator to evade the prick of a needle, being ready to succumb to the deadly disease, as if to pay the toll for a gross human negligence.

VACCINATION AND INOCULATION



The utter ignorance of the people about the hazards of maternity is reflected in the fact that only 6.3 per cent of the cases of maternity have been referred to the Health Centre. The majority rely on the know-how of the elderly women within the family or the community.

One has strong reasons to be terribly shocked by the fact that location of the Health Centre within the village does not enthuse the people sufficiently to avail themselves of obstetrics and other scientific methods of midwifery in attending to a maternity case with the latest obstetrician's know-how and the current medical inventions in the field of pediatrics. It is also a record of positive failure of communication and public health education when one reviews that even trained midwives and Public Health Assistants are not taken into confidence inasmuch as in only two cases of maternity, out of fifteen, the parturient women have been attended by a trained midwife. The negligence is costly, as the toll of six human lives has been paid as the price of failure of the people to move with the changing time. Six cases of maternity mortality at the time of delivery have been reported to have occurred in course of last ten years and five cases of mortality of women during labour have been reported to be caused by mismanagement of labour at home. If the people are reluctant to move to the Health Centre, it is not because of their apathy to it. The reason lies in the inadequate number of beds for maternity cases in the local Health Centre.

The situation has become worse more by the absence of any medical practioners, qualified or unqualified, in the village for private consultations and medical advice. The people are, therefore, forced to come to the Pedong Primary Health Centre situated in Pedong Bazar. The Health Centre, within a distance of two kilometres from any place in the village, is housed in a *Pucca* structure with the roof of asbestos sheet. The residential quarters of the staff of the Health Centre are at a slightly higher altitude. A qualified medical practitioner, a Graduate in Medicine and Surgery, helped by two qualified pharmacists, trained nurses as well as trained midwives, and other ministerial and menial staff is in charge of the Health Centre with an indoor and

TABLE 139

VACCINATION AND INOCULATION

Community	No. of households	No. of households getting themselves vaccination	No. of households getting themselves inoculated	No. of households inoculated		No. of households not inoculated
				Regularly	Irregularly	
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	13	..	4	..	9
Dukpa	5	5	..	1	..	4
Tamang	17	17	..	4	1	12
Rai	11	11	..	4	1	6
Sherpa	9	7	2	5	..	4
Kami	6	6	..	1	3	2
Lepcha	4	4	..	3	..	1
Limbu	4	4	..	1	1	2
Sanyashi	4	3	1	..	1	3
Chhetri	4	4	..	..	1	3
Gurung	3	3	..	1	..	2
Newar	2	2	..	2	..	..
Others	5	4	1	1	1	3
Total	**87**	**83**	**4**	**27**	**9**	**51**

TABLE 140

CARE OF NATALITY

Community	No. of maternity cases	Cases confined in		No. of cases confined at home and attended by			
		Health Centre	At home	Doctor	Midwife	Untrained *Dai*	Elderly women in the family or in the community
Sikkimese Bhutia	3	1	2	..	..	..	2
Dukpa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	5	..	5	..	1	..	4
Rai	3	1	2	..	..	..	2
Sherpa	4	..	4	..	..	..	4
Kami	1	..	1	..	..	..	1
Lepcha	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	1	..	1	..	1	..	..
Others	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**18**	**3**	**15**	..	**2**	..	**13**

outdoor sections. Patients come from the neighbouring villages to the outdoor section of the Health Centre for free medical advice and also for a free supply of medicine. The indoor ward has 20 beds for both general in-patients and maternity cases. All the 87 households depend primarily on allopathic form of treatment and appear to be reasonably satisfied with the medical facilities offered by the Health Centre.

TABLE 141

HEALTH CENTRE

Period	Treatment		Public health				Maternity		Child welfare	
	Indoor	Outdoor	Child injection	Typhoid injection	Primary vaccination	Regular vaccination	Ante-natal cases	Post-natal cases	Infants visited	Infants treated
1963	228	6,328	..	..	524	8,789	460	674	750	104
1964	280	10,576	2,390	2,390	297	3,729	260	626	748	939
1965										
January	43	617	..	.	6	52	22	48	37	70
February	41	610	..	..	17	497	22	51	57	64
March	45	728	51	51	24	858	35	51	34	34
April	42	961	92	92	..	..	27	62	54	56
May	50	1,126	..	..	..	246	23	53	62	109
June	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	36	46	60	112

TABLE 141—*contd.*

Period	School health		Anti-malaria		Anti-T.B.		Vital statistics		Family-planning	
	Number of pupils examined	Number of pupils treated	Blood slides taken	Detection	Detection	Treated	Birth	Death	Persons demonstrated	Persons under plan
1963	279	279	96	..	12	12	83	NA	44	77
1964	457	986	293	..	26	26	79	54	55	128
1964										
January	..	18	..	..	5	..	2	..	15	9
February	..	24	2	..	..	..	7	5	7	4
March	..	69	1	..	3	9	17	3	4	12
April	29	58	4	..	3	10	..	3	1	11
May	30	66	1	..	2	11	4	4	3	6
June	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	2	8

NA indicates data not available—Editor

Family-planning

No separate Family Planning Centre serves the village. The amenites of family-planning measures are provided by the local Health Centre. That the facilities of family-planning are provided by the local Health Centre is known to the heads of 36 households. The awareness of the villagers is conveyed by the fact that the heads of 38 households are aware of fact that a husband and his wife can prevent conception of a child by deliberate means.

The villagers seem to appreciate the utility of family-planning measures. But, some of the Bhutia households of the village express their apprehension of the ultimate results of family-planning devices to keep the size of a household quite small. They point out that already a numerically insignificant group as they are now, they can ill afford to take recourse to the measures of family-planning to keep down their natural growth which in the long run may affect their position adversely and make them numerically unfavourable *vis-a-vis* other communities. The attitude of the married heads of households to a disposition of having more children as an indirect test for their reactions and responses to family-planning measures has been ascertained.

One does not wait for any argument to understand why heads of four households without any male issue or those of six households each with one issue want more children. But, of the heads of 45 households (75.0 per cent) each with three children or more, heads of 34 households (75·6 per cent) do not want any more issue. But, heads of 11 households, each with three children in the minimum, yet want more. Of the heads of 23 households wanting more children, a little more than 50.0 per cent are perfectly justified in their desire to have more children, because they do not have more than two. Heads of 34 households appear to be positively averse to any more issue, because they have in the minimum the limiting size of three children.

There is no dispute that the inherent desire to limit the size of a household emanates from multiple socio-economic, demographic, medical and psychological factors. Perhaps, the age of the child-bearing woman too is an important factor to stimulate or inhibit the response of the head of the household to the question of having more issues or not. The heads of households with their married women in the age-group of 50 years and more do not want any more issue, partly because of the social inhibition of age and also partly because of the medical questions of menopause of the women and the virility of the men. All the heads of the households except one with the child-bearing women in the age-group of (41-50) do not favour the idea of having any more issue. One woman also in the same age-group, proving an exception, does not have any issue even at the age of 42 years of her age and hence, the desire of the head of her household wanting a child is quite logical and human.

All the heads of 24 households with duration of their current marriage lasting 16 years or more are reluctant to have any more issue. Of the heads of 23 households with duration of the current marriage being six years or more but less than fifteen years, those of ten households desire to have no more child. Of the heads of 13 households with duration of current marriage lasting five years or less, those of three households want no more issue.

The first case concerns second marriage to both the husband and his wife in a Tamang household, already having five children by the first marriage. The head of the household is reluctant to have any more issue but his consort, incidentally his second wife, hurriedly vetoes her husband's opinion, herself expressing a strong desire and positive willingness to have

TABLE 142

NO. OF ISSUES AND FAMILY-PLANNING

Community	No. of married heads of households	No of households wanting more children	No. of households wanting more children: Having four children	Having three children	Having two children	Having one child	Having no issue
Sikkimese Bhutia	10	2	1	..	..	1	..
Dukpa	4	1	..	..	..	..	1
Tamang	13	6	..	1	2	1	2
Rai	5	2	..	2	..	..	..
Sherpa	8	4	2	1	..	1	..
Kami	3	1	..	..	..	1	..
Lepcha	4	2	..	1	..	1	..
Limbu	3	2	2	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	2	1	..	..	..	1	..
Chhetri	3	1	..	1	..	..	..
Others	5	1	..	..	..	..	1
Total	**60**	**23**	**5**	**6**	**2**	**6**	**4**

TABLE 142—*contd.*

Community	No. of households wanting no more issue	Number of households wanting no more issue: Having more than five children	Having five children	Having four children	Having three children	Having two children	Having one child	Having no issue
Sikkimese Bhutia	8	2	2	3	..	1	..	..
Dukpa	3	..	1	..	1	1	..	..
Tamang	7	3	3	..	1	..	..	..
Rai	3	2	..	..	1	..	..	..
Sherpa	4	1	1	1	1	..	..	..
Kami	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	2	1	..	..	1	..	..	..
Limbu	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Others	4	1	1	..	1	1	..	..
Total	**37**	**13**	**9**	**6**	**6**	**3**	..	..

TABLE 143

AGE OF THE WOMEN AND FAMILY-PLANNING

Community	No. of heads of households wanting more children	Number of heads of households wanting more children, the age of the child-bearing woman being				
		Less than 20 years	21 to 30 years	31 to 40 years	41 to 50 years	Above 50 years
Sikkimese Bhutia	2	1	1	..	..	..
Dukpa	1	..	..	..	1	..
Tamang	6	2	3	1	..	..
Rai	2	..	2	..	..	..
Sherpa	4	..	2	2	..	..
Kami	1	..	1	..	..	..
Lepcha	2	..	2	..	..	..
Limbu	2	..	1	1	..	..
Sanyashi	1	..	..	1	..	..
Chhetri	1	..	1	..	..	..
Others	1	1	..	..	..	..
Total	**23**	**4**	**13**	**5**	**1**	..

TABLE 143—*contd.*

Community	No. of heads of households wanting no more issue	Number of heads of households wanting no more issue, the age of the child-bearing woman being				
		Less than 20 years	21 to 30 years	31 to 40 years	41 to 50 years	Above 50 years
Sikkimese Bhutia	8	..	..	2	4	2
Dukpa	3	..	..	..	2	1
Tamang	7	..	..	3	2	2
Rai	3	..	..	2	1	..
Sherpa	4	..	1	2	..	1
Kami	2	..	..	2	..	..
Lepcha	2	..	..	..	2	..
Limbu	1	..	..	..	..	1
Sanyashi	1	..	..	1	..	..
Chhetri	2	..	..	1	1	..
Others	4	..	3	..	..	1
Total	**37**	..	**4**	**13**	**12**	**8**

TABLE 144

DURATION OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY-PLANNING

Community	No. of households wanting more children	No. of households wanting more children, the duration of the latest marriage being						
		Less than 5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	Above 30 years
Sikkimese Bhutia	2	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Dukpa	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Tamang	6	4	2	..	..	..	..	..
Rai	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
Sherpa	4	1	1	2	..	..	..	..
Kami	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lepcha	2	1	1	..	..	..	..	..
Limbu	2	..	2	..	..	..	..	..
Sanyashi	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..
Others	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**2**[illegible]	**10**	**10**	**3**	..	..	..	..

TABLE 144—*contd.*

Community	No. of households wanting more issue	No. of households wanting no more issue, the duration of the latest marriage being						
		Less than 5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	Above 30 years
Sikkimese Bhutia	8	..	1	1	3	2	..	1
Dukpa	3	..	1	..	1	..	..	1
Tamang	7	1	..	1	2	1	..	2
Rai	3	1	..	1	..	..	..	1
Sherpa	4	..	..	3	..	..	..	1
Kami	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Lepcha	2	..	..	..	2	..	..	..
Limbu	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Sanyashi	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
Chhetri	2	..	..	..	1	1	..	..
Others	4	1	1	..	1	..	..	
Total	**37**	**3**	**3**	**7**	**12**	**4**	..	**8**

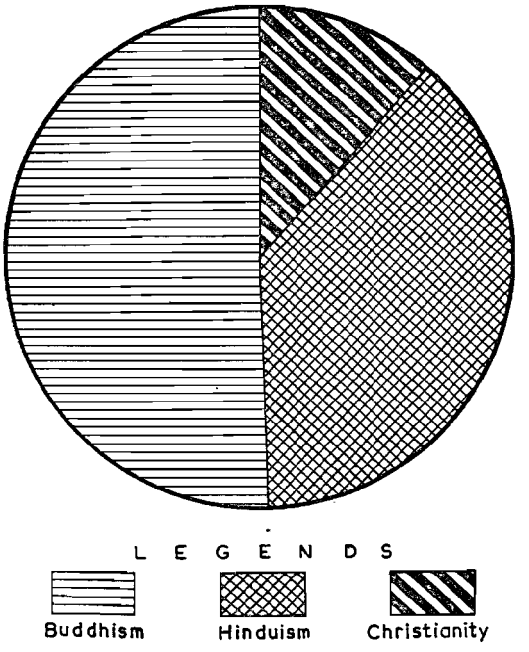
more issues, all born of her and by her second husband. In the secand case of re-marriage to both the couples in a Rai household, already having nine children by the first wife of the present head and one by the second wife of the present head, the second marriage, though just a little more than a year, does not favourably influence the head of the household to be a father of further issues by choice and not by an accident.

In the third case relating to a school teacher, though the duration of marriage is just a little over four years, the head of the household already with three children is willing to take recourse to family-planning devices to limit the size of his household.

Religious institutions and festivals

In Upper Pedong not only ethnic and linguistic groups are numerous, creeds are also multifarious. In the main, the people embrace three principal religions, Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity. The majority (50.0 per cent) of the households are Buddhists, 37.9 per cent of the households are Hindus and 11.5 per cent of the households Christians.

RELIGIOUS GROUPS



Religious institutions of the Hindus

Numerically the second largest group, the Hindus enjoy the freedom of their creed, faith and service to worship their immortal Gods in their own way in the twin temples of worship, one being the shrine of *Satyanarayanji* and another shrine, situated beside it and dedicated to *Sankarji*. The temple of *Satyanarayanji*, housed in a massive building, is the main place of worship, the place of worship of *Sankarji* being a tiny temple.

The temple of *Satyanarayaji*, first established in 1899 by an anonymous Brahman priest, had not the present form and structure. Housed in a structure with roof of corrugated iron sheet and walls of wood, the images consisted of the Supreme Triad (*Brahma, Vishnu* and *Siva*) of the 'shining ones' and a few pieces of sacred stones', known as *Salagram Sila* (Spiral ammonite stone sacred to *Lord Vishnu*). The same year, one late Chandra Sekhar Sarma, a Nirala Brahman by caste, came to the temple at Pedong on his way to Shillong and came across the Brahman priest who was then ill. Sarma was requested by the priest to stay in the temple to hold the daily worship of the deities and observe the daily rituals of the temple in his absence till his recovery. Sarma complied with the request of the priest and held the worship of the Gods installed in the temple. The ailing priest having succumbed to his illness, Sarma remained entrusted with the charge of the temple ever since.

Three decades after the temple was founded, the Hindu villagers first realised the need of a public temple in the village and accordingly set up in 1931 a *Temple Fund Committee* compri-

sing some leading member of the Hindu community of the locality, mostly the tradesmen of Pedong Bazar. Subscriptions were raised from the residents of Pedong, the neighbouring villages and also from Kalimpong. Sarma himself visited the neighbouring towns of Kalimpong. Gangtok etc. to collect subscriptions for the temple. By 1935 the public collected subscriptions for the temple amounting to Rs. 700.00 *paise* which was spent in 1936 for the construction of the temple in the present structure under the supervision of *Subedar Major* Jashlal Rai. The main building of *Satyanarayanj's* temple today has roofs of corrugated iron sheets, walls of stone and a cemented floor. The main temple has an inner chamber made of wood for the deities installed in the temple. There are three arches in the inner wooden chamber, the images of *Lord Satyanarayana* and *Goddess Lakshmi* being installed in the central arch. *Lord Satyanarayana* has four hands, one holding a conchshell, one holding a *Chakra* (Whorl), one holding a *Gada* (Club) and another a lotus. Below the images of *Lord Satyanarayana* and *Lakshmi*, a *Salagram Sila*, images of *Radha Krishna* and *Ganesh* may be found installed. To the right hand arch of *Lord Satyanarayana* stands the image of the mythical *Hanumana* and to his left stands the image of *Gandheswari*, having four hands, and also an image of *Ganesh*.

TABLE 145

RELIGION

Community	Total no. of households	No. of households professing		
		Hinduism	Buddhism	Christainity
Sikkimese Bhutia	13	..	12	1
Dukpa	5	..	5	..
Tamang	17	..	17	..
Rai	11	11	..	..
Sherpa	9	..	9	..
Kami	6	6	..	..
Lepcha	4	..	1	3
Limbu	4	3	..	1
Sanyashi	4	4	..	..
Chhetri	4	3	..	1
Gurung	3	1	..	2
Newar	2	1	..	1
Bhujel	1	1	..	..
Mangar	1	1	..	..
Yakha	1	1	..	..
Brahman	1	1	..	..
Unspecified	1	..	..	1
Total	**87**	**33**	**44**	**10**

In contrast to the main temple of *Satyanarayana*, the temple of *Sankarji* is relatively a small temple with roof of corrugated iron sheet and walls of stone. The main attraction in the temple is provided by the image of *Lord Sankara*. There are also small images of *Hanumana*, *Nandi* and *Kumara*, having six faces. A small metal water-pot with a hole at its bottom remains suspended over the head of the image of *Sankara* on which water trickles in drops through the bottom of the water-pot.

The priest performs the daily worship in both the temples in the morning with the ritual materials comprising paste of sandalwood, *Durba*, *Tulsi*, flowers, water collected from the Ganges and stored in pitchers, *Panchamrita* (Mixture of milk, curd, *Ghee*, honey and sugar) and sweetmeats. The twilight service follows the worship in the morning and comprises performance of the *Arati* (Waving of lamp) ceremony and offering of flowers to the deities. The worship at night is rounded off by the solo performance of the *Arati* only. But on the occasion of the observance of the Hindu festivals like the *Janmasthami*, the *Durgapuja*, the *Diwali*, *Sivaratri* and the *Ramnavami*, special religious services and worship are held in the temples attended by Hindu villagers from far off areas to witness the celebration of the special festivals and ceremonial worships. No animal is sacrificed in the temples or outside their precincts on any occasion as an offering in dedication to the deities.

Temples are open to all Hindu visitors and devotees, no member of any caste or tribe or sect professing Hinduism being subjected to any restrictive measures controlling entry into the temples to which the Buddhists have also a free access. The temple-priest, however, points out that only the Muslims and the Christians are forbidden from entering into the temples. The Gurungs, the Newars, the Mangars and the Chhetris among the Nepalis, the Bihari Hindus, the Marwaris and some handful of Bengalis constitute the frequent visitors into the temples. The general administration is discharged by the *Temple Committee*, constituted by the influential local elite among the rich Hindus who liberally subscribe to the *Temple Fund* from time to time, the rate of subscription being not fixed. The expenses on account of the daily worship of the deites and for celebration of other seasonal festivals are defrayed from the *Temple Fund*. The priest is also paid a monthly honorarium of Rs. 15.00 *paise* for his daily services out of the *Temple Fund*.

Festivals of the Nepali Hindus

The Hindu villagers among the Nepali communities are very conservative and conventional in their approach towards the observance of their traditional festivals. Devoted to the extreme, they hardly miss to organise any festival which they do not celebrate and observe privately at home. The ways and means of observance of the festivals and ceremonies only differ in minor details among the different castes and communities of the Nepalis. Some of the festivals are instituted and observed with the offering of animals sacrificed on the occasion, marked by prayers, fasts and self-purification by penance. They deviate very seldom in methods and practices from those observed by their counterparts in Nepal.

Tihar or Teohar

Tihar is the greatest festival observed by the Nepali Hindus, not only for the pomp that attends it but also for the duration of the period of its celebration. The festival is awaited by one and all throughout the year. The villagers set to decorating their houses many days ahead of the scheduled date of the festival. Walls, windows and doors in the house are painted and varnished even once annually, immediately before the festival, for a face-left. Even the poor would save partially from his meagre income to build a festival fund to provide the

expenses of the observance of *Teohar* in the household.

This festival starting one week ahead of the new moon of *Aswin* in the month of (September-October) is observed in several stages. The early part of the festival, highlighted by the adoration of the birds and beasts on its commencement, it known as *Kag-Teohar* (Adoration of the crow). The scavenger bird, resembling the 'night's black agent' has no point in its favour to endear itself to a hill-man. Whereas normally it is despised by the plainsman, it is an object of veneration to the villagers in Upper Pedong. It is not quite out of place to mention that in the Hindu tradition the crow personifies the soul of the deceased and to offer food to the bird with its black plumage, as the villagers do during the *Kag-Teohar*, is looked upon by a section of the Hindus as equivalent to the propitiation of the manes with food. Atkinson[1] in describing the hill legends mentions how a crow carried one of the bones of *Karma-Sarma*, killed by a tiger in the forest, to the shrine of *Tungakshetra* and emancipated *Karma-Sarma* to the heaven of *Indra*. So, on the day of the *Kag-Teohar*, the villagers in every house offer some food to the crows. The festival is followed by *Kukur-Teohar* (Adoration of the dog) or *Khichapuja* on the occasion of which even the dogs, neglected and humiliated by all and sundry, and having no bones from the cupboards of the housewives at other times, now see their better days and have their little bits. Little children search for dogs on the day of this festival when poor stray dogs roaming in pathways now get a caressing love. In all Gurkhali households the womenfolk bedeck the necks of the dogs with garlands of marigold and give them a good feed. The belief goes that the dog and the crow stand as sentinels at the gateway to the world of *Yama* (God of Death) in Hades. If the dog is associated with the spirit of the dead, its worship reminds one of the episode in the *Epic Mahabharata* relating to *Yudhisthira* and *Yama* in the guise of a dog. Atkinson, referring to a legend of the hunter *Shambuka* and his sacred dog, mentions how the dog on being thrown to the sacred water of *Uradh* in the Himalayas by his master, comes out dripping and shakes some of the water on his master who by virtue of the partial ablution receives after his death a summons to *Siva's* heaven along with his pet. *Kog-Teòhar* is followed by *Lakshmipuja* or the worship of *Goddess Lakshmi* (Goddess of Plenty and wealth) and the festival of *Bhailo* on the day of *Deepanvita* (Festival of light) and the worship of the *Goddess Kali*. Early in the morning every Hindu household worships the cow as an incarnation of *Lakshmi*. The house is then thoroughly cleaned and decorated with flowers, foliages and garlands of *Sayapotri*, a local flower, and marigold. In the evening earthen lamps and candles are lighted in honour of the *Goddess Lakshmi* and the household performs the worship of coins, symbolically propitiating the Goddess of Plenty. Most of the households invoke the services of their respective household priests to perform the worship. In some households, however, the worship is performed by an elderly woman in the household. It is also customary for the womenfolk in every Hindu household to prepare *Selroti*, a variety of sweet bread, resembling *Jilipi*-like sweets of the plains. The same night the womenfolk, especially the young girls, whether married or unmarried, start singing *Bhailo-geet*, a specimen of which is quoted below.

Bhaileni Ayon Angana
Barari kunrari rakhana
Orsui ko din
Gaitiharo Bhailo

The girls move about from house to house

[1]Himalayan Gazetteer, Vol.II, pp. 329, by E. T. Atkinson, Allahabad, 1882-84

singing in a chorus the auspicious *Bhailo* songs throughout the night, accepting small amounts of money as tips from the households. Worship of the *Lakshmi* and that of the cow are followed in their trail by worship of the ox the following day, on which occasion the young children decorate the oxen with garlands and feed them on plants and grass.

Deosi

Simultaneously with the worship of the bovine stock begins the festival of *Deosi* which constitutes a part of the *Teohar* festival. In the festival of *Deosi* young boys and young men form small groups of carol-singers and move around the houses in the village, accepting tips in small amount. The word *Deosi*, according to a section of the villagers, originates from the word *Debasri* and the festival of *Deosi* is believed by them to be a commemorative festival recalling the conquest of Ceylon by *Ramchandra*, the Hero of the *Epic Ramayana*. But, the majority would, however, hold *Deosi* or *Deosri* to have a mythical reference to the *Puranic* legend of of the immortal *Demon King Bali*, the grandson of *Prahlad*. The legend goes that an indefatigable fighter, *Bali* had vanquished the *War-God Indra* as also other gods and goddesses of the Heaven and proclaimed himself the Lord of the Earth and the Heaven. Dispossessed of their abodes, the fugitive Gods went to *Vishnu* and exhorted Him to reconquer the lost Paradise. *Vishnu* in the guise of a dwarf Brahman appeared before *King Bali* who during the performance of a sacrificial fire ceremony was bestowing gifts on all. *Vishnu* besought three foot-ful of land from *King Bali* who sanctioned the prayer a little amused. *Vishnu* thereafter began to expand his body and soon assumed the figure of a formidable colossus with one foot on earth, the whole of it at his command and occupation, placed another foot on the heaven which was then virtually at his mercy and found no place for the third foot emanent from the navel. *Bali* could then recognise the Brahman's identity and entreated him to place the third foot on his head, *Deo Sire* (Put your foot on my head) In the party of hymnody one person opens a line of the song and the others sing *Deo Sire* in a chorus.

The party is entertained with sweetmeats, drinks, and cigars and also given some token present of fifty *paise* to one rupee.

Bhai Tika

As in the plains, so also in the hill village of Upper Pedong, do the men agree that there is no friend like a sister in either a calm or a stormy weather, and to observes the *Brothers' Day*. the virtuous sister celebrate the ceremony of *Bhai Tika* which also marks the conclusive phase of the *Teohar* festival on the second day after the new moon in the month of *Kartika* (October-November), the day following the *Deosi* festival.

In the *Bhai Tika* ceremony the sisters anoint a mark on the foreheads of their brothers, praying for a long life. The festival has a distinct sanctity of its own with a sentimental appeal to the brothers, so much so that even from far-off places they respond to their sisters' invitations to get the sacred *Tilak* or *Tika* (Anointing mark) on their foreheads. On the festive day, the brothers and their sisters take an early bath. The sisters observe fast till the ceremony is over. At the propitious hour the sister asks her brother to take his seat on the ground and moves around his seat thrice, holding a waterful pitcher containing flowers and foliage. She then performs the vital part of the ritual in ceremonially crushing a piece of walnut, symbolically representing the head of *Yamaraja* (God of death). The practice, symbolically supposed to place thorns at the gate of the abode of *Yamaraja*, illustrates a form of

sympathetic magic. A piece of walnut kept on the threshold of the house is crushed by the sister with one blow of the hammer. The crushed walnut is then thrown away in a projected trajectory over the roof of the house. The sister by her action nurses the belief that she has immunized her brother from the evil look of *Yamaraja* and held back the icy hands of death from her brother's person. She puts marks of sandalwood-paste on the forehead of her brother and anoints *Tika* of *Nir* (Vermilion), *Abir* (Red powder) and *Kesari* (Paste of ground rice). She also throws a garland of *Sayapatri* round her brother's neck. Incidentally it may be mentioned that the use of the red colour, garlands of *Sayapatri*, paste of sandalwood and rice are used as charms to scare evil spirits. Rice is a sacred grain. Sandalwood is a ceremonial protective. Thus, if paste of powdered rice in curd is used in the *Tilak*, the brother reciprocally puts on the sister's forehead, it is because curd is believed to be efficacious in scaring demons. The brother gives his sister some present and bows down at her feet in case she happens to be senior to him. At the end of the ceremony the sister treats his brother heartily with sweets, *Sagun* (A preparation of meat) and *Selroti*.

Dasai

Another important festival among the Nepali Hindu communities relates to the observance of *Dasai* which commences with the performance of *Sola-Sradh* (Annual worship of ancestors with offerings) on the day of new moon antedating the worship of *Durga*. The senior members of the household pray to the gods and the sainted dead as also to the deceased ancestors, worshipping the deceased souls (*Pitri*) with offerings of rice cooked with milk and sugar.

On the seventh day following the new moon, the Nepali Hindu households worship the *Goddess Durga* offering her fruits and sweets. The Rai and the Limbu households, however, offer ducks, cocks or birds to their *Kuls* (Family deities) to propitiate them. On the day following, many households sacrifice goats and sheep to the *Goddess Durga* in whose praise hallelujahs, known locally as *Malsiri*, are sung on the occasion. The same day, the Newars hold the worship of *Bhimsena* (the third *Pandava* brother of the *Mahabharata*), the symbol of strength, vigour and courage, when cocks are sacrificed as an offering to the *Heroic Godling* and popular *Malsiri* songs are sung. In Nepal *Bhimsena* is an object of worship because of a legendary association with the mysterious *Saint Gorakhnath*. On the tenth day (*Dassehra*) following the new moon, the villagers in fighting attires assemble at their houses even from far-off places. The eldest member in the family puts *Tika* (Marks) of sandalwood-paste on the foreheads of the younger ones at the auspicious *Gait* (Moment) and gives them a token of present in cash. The younger members thereafter pay respect to their superiors and relatives. The people go to their friends and relatives on a visit of goodwill to exchange greetings till the day of full moon. The period of *Dasai* is marked by devotional songs (*Malsiri*) and popular dance (*Maruni Nach*).

Til festival

The *Til* festival, basically confined to women of the Brahman, the Chhetri and the Sanyashi households, draws the married daughters to their paternal houses in the month of *Sravana* (July-August). They take light refreshments in the evening and at midnight they take *Mutki* (Condensed milk), the rest of the night being spent without a wink of sleep by singing *Rateli Geets*, dancing and jocking. The next day the women observe fast and the males entertain them with a variety show of songs and dances (*Balad*).

Chaiti Dasai

During the month of *Chait* (March-April) the Nepali Hindus celebrate the *Chaiti Dasai* in an identical manner as the *Dassehra* with the difference that *Tika* is not used.

Nepali agricultural festivals

On the 15th of *Asar* (June-July), a seasonal festival, known as *Asar-Ko-Pandrah*, is observed by the Nepali Hindu agriculturists. Before cultivation is taken up, the people pray to the household-deities *(Kul)* for adequate rain and a good harvest. Curd, flattened rice *(Chiwra)* and maize are taken by the households observing the festival.

In the month of *Sravana* (July-August) a festival, known as *Sanne Sankranti*, is observed on the last day, after the first phase of agricultural operation is over.

Religious institutions of the Buddhists

As pointed out earlier, the Buddhists of the village belong to five communities, *viz.*, the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dukpas or the Bhutanese Bhutias, the Tamangs, the Sherpas and the Lepchas. Of them, only the Sikkimese Bhutias have their own *Gompa* (Monastery) in the village proper, while others visit their respective communal temples in other villages.

Sikkimese Gompa

The Sikkimese *Gompa*, situated near the entrance of the village from the side of Algarah on the Algarah-Pedong Road, bears the name *Kagyu-Chholing Mani Gompa, Pedong.* The exact year of the establishment of the *Gompa* is not correctly recorded, but according to the majority of the local people, the *Gompa* was established in the closing years of the 19th Century under the initiative of the Sikkimese Bhutias of different constituents of Pedong *Khas Mahal* and Sakyong *Khas Mahal* because they had then no *Gompa* of their own. The Dukpas or the Bhutanese Bhutias at that time had one in the Sakyong *Khas Mahal.* The Sikkimese Bhutias of Upper Pedong (Pedong *Khas Mahal*) and Dokiyong (Sakyong *Khas Mahal*) took the leadership in constructing the *Gompa* in an area covering 0.35 acre of land. The exact amount of money in the form of contribution of the local people to the building of the *Gompa* remains unknown. The *Gompa* is housed in a single-storeyed structure with roofs of corrugated iron sheets and walls and floors of wood. The plinth is about a cubit high. The *Lama*, attached to the *Gompa*, has a residential quarter beside the *Gompa.* Within the *Gompa* in the centre stands the statue of *Sangey Chhom Dwen De* (Lord Buddha), the statuettes of *Chereji* and *Guru Rimpoche* being placed beside the former. Besides, there are other images and figurines of bronze, bellmetal, terracotta and other metals, representing the deities of *Chhyuting, Gou je, Jisum Domo, Khalo, Myan De, Nam Se, Narbu, Phyumpa, Pyamo, Ser nya, Tagi Tasey* and *Thyung.*

There are also the figures of *Chen* (Horsemen) and *Gyubo Kongya* (King riding on an elephant) in addition to 108 vessels and a good number of lamps and dishes of various shapes and sizes, all of bellmetal, some sacred scriptures, and several musical instruments of the drum-type and horn-type varieties.

During the daily worship in the *Gompa* every morning, the *Lama* offers 108 vessels of water, some quantity of rice-grains and sweetmeat to *Lord Buddha.* The lamps are lit and incense is burnt. Lighted candlesticks are sometimes offered to the presiding deity. In the evening the *Lama* repeats the same rites as observed in the morning. Special worship is held on the day of *Buddha Purnima* in *Baisakh* (April-May) when a large congregration of devotees assembles in the *Gompa* where the *Lama* recites portions of the sacred texts and hoists *Dhar Chhog* (Sacred flags) all around the *Gompa.*

The present *Lama* of the *Gompa*, one Sri Gompu Lama aged 55 years, is provided with free quarters attached to the *Gompa* in addition to his monthly remuneration of Rs.15.00 *paise* for his daily services. He has been granted the privilege to conduct private religious services in individual households during the socio-religious observances of marriage and death or to preach sermons from the *Holy Texts* to individual households against a daily remuneration varying between Rs.3.00 *paise* and Rs.4.00 *paise* and a free supply of liquor.

The administration of the *Gompa* is run by a Committee, known as *Kagyu-Chholing Buddhist Monastery Committee*, consisting of Sarvashree N. C. Lama, a retired army-personnel of Upper Pedong as the President, T. T. Lama, a resident in the village Dokiyong in Sakyong *Khas Mahal as the* Vice-President, Cheng Cheng Lama, a covillager of the Vice-President as the Secretary, Lhaten Bhutia, a covillager of the Secretary as the Cashier, Rinje Ochho, Khambu Bhutia, Chhering Gampo, Apsu Bhutia, Lobjong Mondal (all covillagers of the Cashier), Sangay Tenzy Bhutia, of Upper Pedong in Pedong *Khas Mahal* with his co-villagers Lobjong Bhutia, Kyaku Chhering Bhutia, Gompu Lama, the present *Lama* of the *Gompa*, Derjee Bhutia, Yong Chen Bhutiani and Phup Kinchhen Mondol as the members.

Each member of the Committee has to donate annually a subscription of Rs. 6.00 *paise* and contribute some quantity of rice and other crops, such as, maize and millet, towards the payment of the salary of the *Lama* and other incidental expenses on the *Gompa*. The donations, collected by the *Lama* himself, are adjusted against his salary in consultation with the Cashier of the *Gompa*. The *Committee* has also a special *Committee Fund*. After the death of any member, the bereaved Sikkimese Bhutia household makes some donation, mostly in cash to the *Gompa* in the name of the deceased with the prayer that the deceased may live in peace in heaven. The money is deposited with the *Committee Fund*. The *Committee* lends the money from the *Fund* to the members in need against an annual interest at the rate of 12½ per cent. The incidental expenses of the *Gompa* along with any deficit in the budget for the *Gompa* are met from the interest accruing to the *Committee Fund*.

Some of the leading members of the *Committee* point out that the *Gompa* had received some financial help from the Government of West Bengal from time to time for the purpose of improvement of the structure of the *Gompa*. But, the exact figure of assistance from the Government could not be ascertained as the relevant papers were not in order. As the devotees belonging mostly to the Sikkimese Bhutia households in the vicinity of the *Gompa* visit the place regularly, its activity does not extend beyond the religious sphere and so the extra-religious activity is constricted to the credit facilities granted to the members of the *Committee* only. The *Gompa* has not attained a glorious height of fame or the reward of a memorable past. Its influence remains, therefore, strictly local and parochial, restricted within the narrow confines of the area in the immediate neighbourhood of the *Gompa*.

Bhutanese Bhutia Gompa

Just a kilometre down the Algarah-Pedong Road, on the 20th Mile in the Sakyong *Khas Mahal* and one kilometre to the south of Pedong Bazar, the spires of the Bhutanese *Gompa* indeed present a picturesque look from a distance. A small pool of water in the form of a tiny lake, very rare in the hill areas around, adds to the attraction of the monastery.

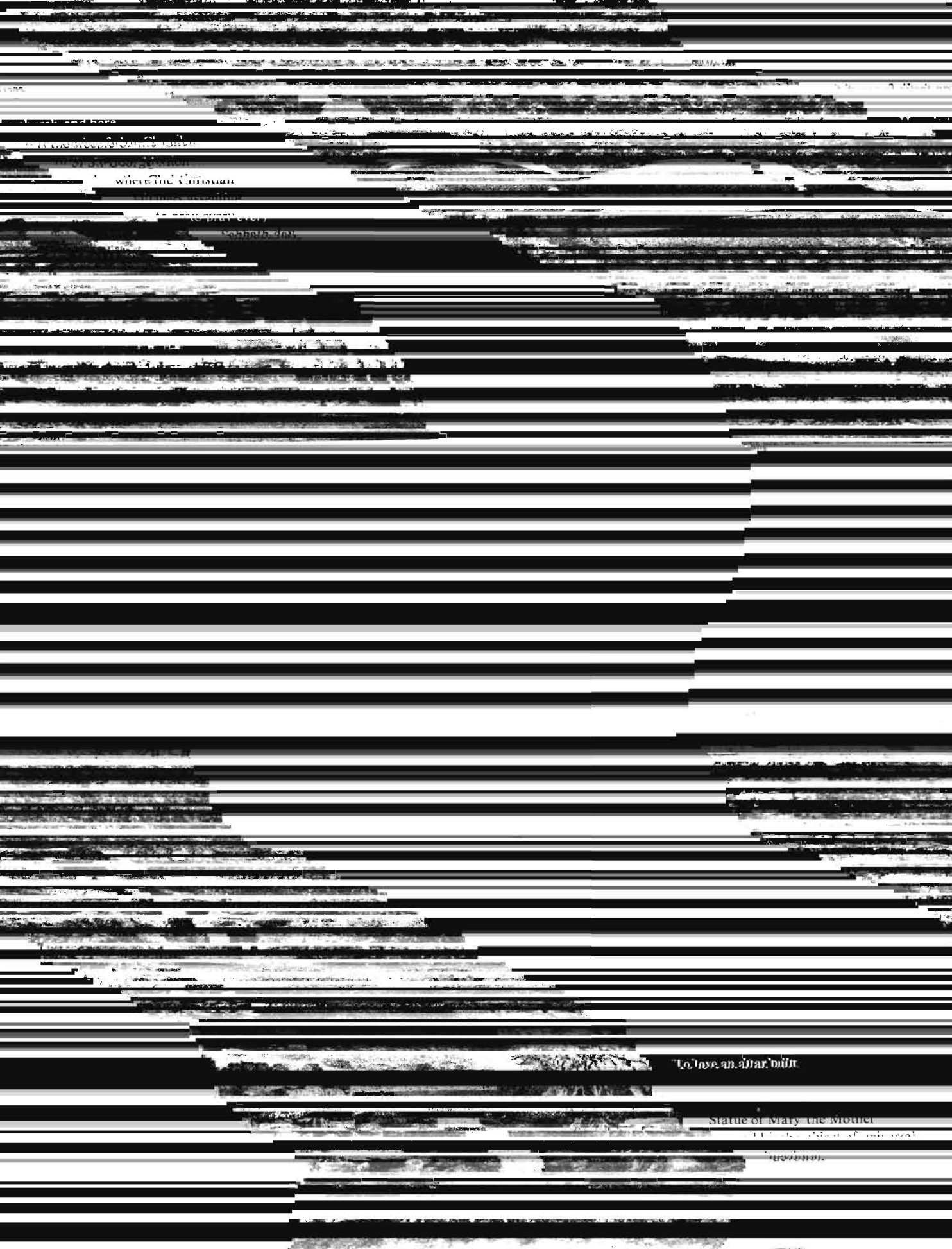
Sanchen Dorjee Monastery, as the *Gompa* is locally named, was established in 1837. The Dukpas claim this to be the oldest *Gompa* in the locality, said to be established by the

Game's a foot

the ball on

in the corridor of infancy

the girls come to play with



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shorn and in flowing robes.



Solemn shade of the God

and the prayers recho

of the modes of their worship

attract the faithful



temple on a rockbed

Dorjee Family of Bhutan whose successors live in Sakyong *Khas Mahal* down to the present day.

The *Gompa*, said to be designed in the Bhutanese style, is a two-storeyed structure with roofs of corrugated iron sheets and the walls and floors of wood of high quality. The basement is used mainly as a store-room, while the upper storey with a circular verandah on all sides is used to house the various deities and images. The main deities in the *Gompa* comprise the legendary triads of Buddhism, namely, *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Sangha*, popularly known as *Sangey-Dkonmchog*, *Chereji* and *Guru Rimpoche*, besides innumerable other images, male and female, with two, four or ten upper limbs and with an identical number of heads. The images having specific Tibetan names are capable of being identified by only expert *Lamas*. Some images, apparently demoniac in look, are esoteric deities. There are 108 bowls of bellmetal of uniform size, used for offering water to the gods. There are also many sacred Buddhist scriptures. The room housing the deities is charged with the sweet aroma of burning incense. A chamber, a little above the room of deities, is forbidden to the laity and even to the ordinary *Lamas* for entry within. The dark chamber serves as the consultation room of the *Guardians of Law*, the cult of which has been the result of the synthesis of *Bon Po* and traditional Buddhism. There are one hundred and eight circular prayer-wheels on all sides of the *Gompa*, each prayer-wheel carrying the hexa-syllabic prayer, *Om Mani Padme Hung*, scribbled 108 times on paper scrolls. Any devotee visiting the *Gompa* moves around the *Gompa*, rotating each of the 108 wheels with the holy inscription therein in the belief that rotation of the sacred wheel earns the same virtue as the incantation of the holy prayer. Innumerable *Dhar Chhogs* (Sacred pennants), bearing the holy inscription of *Om Moni Padme Hung* in Tibetan, stream in the air on all sides of the *Gompa*. On one side of the *Gompa* in some tiny apartments lives a group of octogenarian Buddhist *Bhikshus* (Monastics) on charitable endowments of the *Gompa*.

The Head *Lama* in the *Gompa* is assisted by three junior *Lamas*, one of the assistant *Lamas* being known as *Omzey* and another assistant *Lama* being called *Kudung*. The functions of the Head *Lama* embrace meditation and initiation of devout followers in the Buddhist religious order. The *Omjey* performs the daily chores including worship of the deities, observance of rituals and recitation of *Sacred Texts*. The *Kudung*, said to be the *Monitor* of the *Lamas*, performs the work of the absentees. Besides, a *Chowkidar* is attached to the *Gompa* to act as the watchman, keeping a vigil on the assets of the *Gompa*.

The *Gompa* owns about 100 acres of *Devottar* land which is cultivated under the supervision of the *Gompa Committee*. A portion of the landed area is also cultivated on crop-share basis. The day-to-day expenses of the *Gompa*, the salaries of the priests and the watchman and the expenses on account of the annual festival on the occasion of the *Buddha Jayanti* day are said to be defrayed from the income out of the *Devottar* land. But, according to quite a number of local informants, the landed area of *Devottar* property in the effective ownership of the *Gompa* is far in excess of 100 acres. The management of the *Sanchen Dorjee Monastery* is entrusted to a *Gompa Committee* comprising ten members, Sri S. G. Dorjee, *Mondol* of Sakyong *Khas Mahal*, acting as the President and Hishe Yongma Bhutiani of Sakyong *Khas Mahal* being the Secretary. Sarvasree Thandu Lama, Rinjin Lama, Kyalu Lepcha, all residents of Sakyong *Khas Mahal*, Rinjin Yongchhu, Phup Rinchen *Mondol*, a Sikkimese Bhutia and the *Mondol* of Pedong *Khas Mahal*, Nyun Ghey Bhutia, Kama

Tenzing Bhutia and Tashi Wangdi Bhutia, all residents of Pedong *Khas Mahal* are the other members.

The Committee thus consists not only of the Dukpa members but also of the members from other communities, such as the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Buddhist Lepchas.

Tibetan Gompa

The Tibetans too have at Lower Pedong their own *Gompa*, known as *Kande Chhyuling Gompa*, established about fifty years ago on the efforts of the local Tibetan residents, and housed in an improvised structure. Said to be a private monastery of one Sri Thumu Kisi Rimpochi, the *Gompa* is under the ecclesiastical control of the Tibetan *Gompa* in Kalimpong. The local charge is held by the Resident *Lama*, Lob Tszang Nyima, who performs the daily worship in the *Gompa* himself, cultivating a portion of the private land of the owner of the *Gompa* and appropriating a part of the produce as his salary.

In the *Gompa* the image of the presiding deity of *Lord Buddha* (mentioned as *Sakya Muni* by the *Lama*) at the centre is flanked on two sides by the images of *Tsong Kha Bwa* and *Sanzu Chhyuten*. Portraits of *His Highness the Dalai Lama* of Tibet and *Lama Chhyo Tsin* also adorn the walls

The *Lama* offers water in 43 vessels and one lighted candle in the morning and three candles in the evening to the images. Festivals of special importance are observed in the Tibetan months of *Dawa Thumba, Dawa Shiba, Dawa Thuba, Dawa Ngapa, Dawa Guba* and *Dawa Chhyuba.*

Tamang Gompa

The Tamangs of the village have neither a separate *Gompa* nor their own *Lama* in the village proper. The *Lama* officiating at their ceremonies and festivals lives at a place, known as the 24th Mile, 40 kilometres away. The *Lama* has a miniature *Gompa* of his own in front of his house, similar in appearance as those of the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas. The Tamang Devotees of the village sometimes visit the *Gompa* to give an offering to the deities. In the ceremonies of socio-religious significance, associated with the main events of the life-cycle, the Tamang villagers summon the *Lama* to preside over. The Tamangs also visit the *Gompas* of the locality belonging to the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas.

Sherpa Gompa

The Sherpas too have no *Gompa* for their exclusive use in the village proper, but their *Lama* lives at Birater, some three or four kilometres far from Upper Pedong. The *Lama* there has a private *Gompa* of his own. The Sherpas usually visit the *Gompa* of the Sikkimese Bhutias, in close proximity to their residential area, and call in the *Lama* of the Sikkimese Bhutias, when required.

One solitary Lepcha belonging to the Buddhist faith depends for religious service on the *Lama* of the Buddhist Lepchas, a resident of the neighbouring Sakyong *Khas Mahal.*

Sects of the Buddhists

Various sects among the Buddhists represent different phases of and stages in the development of *Buddhism*. The Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dukpas or the Bhutanese Bhutias and the Tibetans do not all belong to one and the same sect.

Nyg Ma Pa (Rnin Ma Pa)

One of the oldest of the unreformed *Red Hat* sects of *Buddhism* in Tibet, it recognises the great *Saint Padmasambhava* as its propounder. The followers of this sect worship *Padmasambhava* as their founder and preceptor,

The *Lamas* of this sect are not required to practice celibacy.

Bkah-Gdams-Pa

The reformed teachings of *Atisa* based on the *Yogacara* tradition, founded by *Maitreya* and *Asanga*, led to the establishment of the *Bkah-Gdams-Pa* sect by his Tibetan disciple *Hbromston*, who attempted to synthetize the teachings of both the *Hinayana* and the *Mahayana* schools with an orthodox and rigid approach to the monastic order and the life therein. Celibacy is a sacramental prescription for the *Lamas* to maintain their monastic life.

Dge-Lugs-Pa (Dgah-Ldan-Pa)

On the authoritative base of the *Bkah-Gdams-Pa* doctrine, *Tson-Kha-Pa*, the great Tibetan reformer, founded the *Dge-Lugs-Pa* sect in the 14th Century A.D., purified the *Bkah-Gdams-Pa* sect. Extricated from the labyrinth of elaborate ritualism, it dominates Tibetan *Buddhism* of the present form both temporally and spiritually through the religious succession of the *Dalai Lamas.*

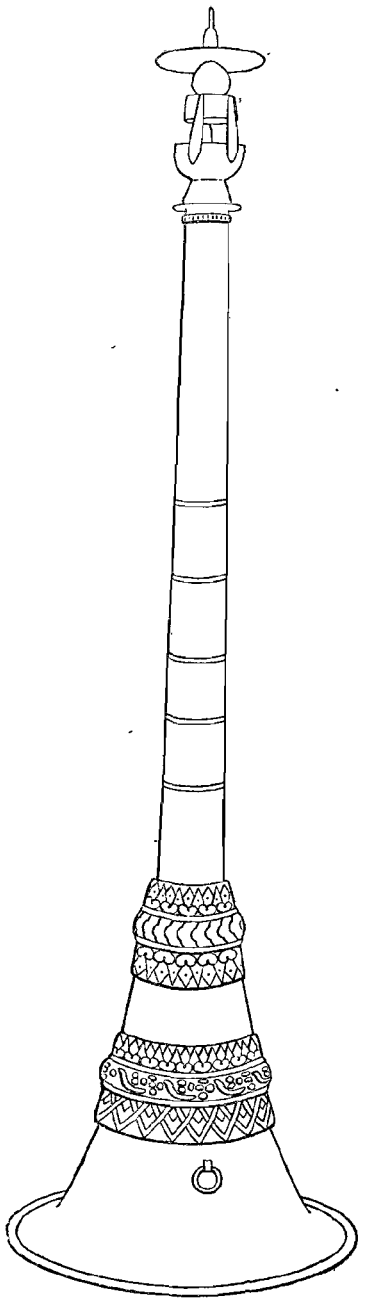
Tson-Kha-Pa himself used to don as his pontifical insignia the *Yellow Hat* and so did his followers to mark themselves out as a distinctively separate group isolated from other sects which had degenerated through their mundane preoccupations. The legend goes that having failed to dye his hat in the colour of his choice and preference, the founder recalled the chaste life of *Gon-Pa-Rab-Se*, the illustrious religious teacher of the 10th Century A.D., who had once used the yellow colour. *Tson-Kha-Pa* with his striking powers of organisation and a comprehensive intelligence dedicated himself to the task of removing all devious superstitious beliefs and founded a well-integrated order of Buddhist monks, based on the principles of sound learning, rigorous discipline and strict celibacy. The order, so instituted, came to be recognised as the *Dge-Lugs-Pa* (School of the virtuous). In monastic and ecclesiastical organisation, the *Dge-Lugs-pas* among all other sects have attained a rare excellence. The *Dalai Lama*, the religious head of the Tibetans, standing at the apex of the monastic organisation of the sect, the triumvirate of the *Dre-pung, Se-Ra* and *Gan-Dan* monasteries rank next in order of power and control, prestige and importance.

Bkah-Rgyud-pa

Mar-pa, the great Tibetan *Lama* and a friend of *Atisa* as well as a disciple of *Naropa*, the famous *Indian Tantricist* of the Nalanda University, is regarded as the founder of this sect, which is said to have some affinity with the *Dhyana-School* to which a section of the Chinese and the Japanese Buddhists of the modern era belongs. *Mi-La-Ras-Pa,* the noted Tibetan hermit poet, is one of the distinguished representatives of the sect. Of many of its offshoots, the *Marma-Pa* and *Hbrug-Pa* particularly deserve mention. The Sikkimese Bhutias mostly belong to the *Karma-Pa* sub-sect of the *Bkah-Rgyud-Pa-School,* while the *Hbrug-Pa* (Thunderer) with a good number of followers in Bhutan is so firmly rooted in the culture of the country that it adopted a Tibetan name for the people of the same country.

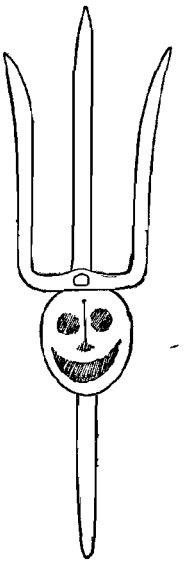
Sa-Skya-Pa

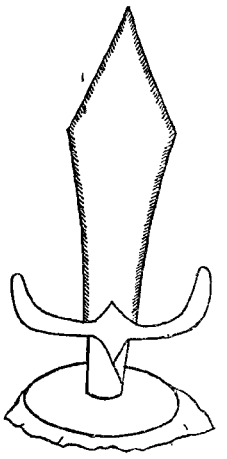
The sect meaning *grey earth* derives its name from the colour of the soil in the land where the first monastery of the sect was built in 1071 A.D. on the site of the present *Sa-Skya-Pa.* Affinally closer to the *Ruin-Ma-Pa* than the *Bkah-Rgyud-Pa*, the sect did not enforce the rule of celibacy on its monks originally. The *Sa-Skya-Pa* strove for a compromise between the old and the new forms of *Tantricism.*



Jaling—a horn

Chisum—a trident





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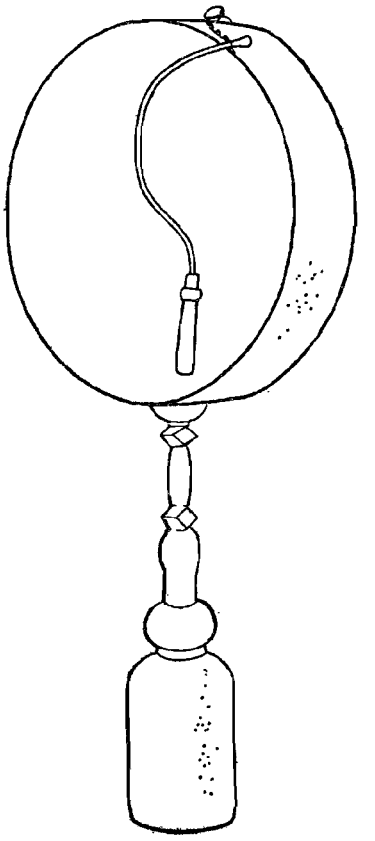
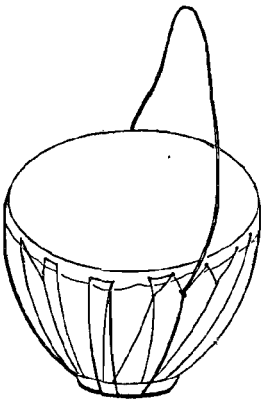
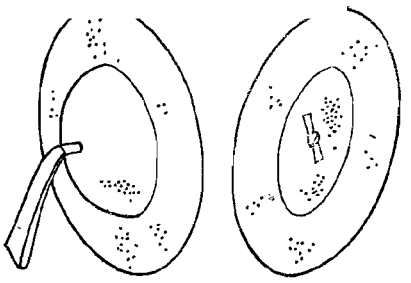


Ngato—a drum



Songa
—a small drum



Rremo—a type of cymbal

Rdsogs-Chen

One of the branches of the *Nyg-Ma-Pa School* of Tibetan Buddhism, it has a large followlng in Sikkim and Bhutan practising the tenets of the *Atiyoga* type.

The majority of the Tibetans of Upper Pedong belong to the *Dge-Lugs-Pa* sect. Most of the Sikkimese Bhutias are within the fold of the *Nyg-Ma-Pa* sect, some belonging to the *Rdsogs-Chen* branch of the *Nyg-Ma-Pa* sect and a few others are covered by the *Karma-Pa* sub-sect of the *Bkah-Rgyud-Pa School.* The majority of the Dukpas belong to the *Nyg-Ma-Pa* sect, while others constitute the *Rdsogs-Chen* sect and the *Hbrug-Pa* sub-sect of the *Bkah-Rgyud-Pa School.*

The Buddhist Triad

As the Hindus, have their Supreme Trinity represented by the *Brahma*, the *Vishnu* and the *Maheswara,* the Buddhists too have in their pantheon the *Kon-Chhog-Gsum* representing their *Holy Triad. Kon* means in Tibetan the word *rare* and *Chhog* stands for the word *best.* Hence *Kon-Chhog* denotes the rarest object, implying thereby the *Supreme Being* in a veiled suggestion, the jargon being used in common parlance to indicate the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* and the *Sangha* jointly constituting the *Buddhist Triad.* In Tibetan *Sans-Rgyas-Dkong-Mchog* stands for the *Buddha* (most rare), *Dam-Chos-Dkon-Mchog* for the *Dharma* (*Holy Doctrine*), most rare, and *Dge-Hdun-Dkon-Mchog* for the *Sangha* (*Monastic Order*), most rare.

To the Buddhist laity and the *Lamas* comprising the ordinary clergy, *Buddha* (Sangey *Guru*), *Chen-Re-Zi* and *Guru Rinpoche* represent the Buddhist pantheon in the three most important presiding deities, the images of which are placed side by side in the Buddhist monasteries and in the houses of the devout Buddhists. As *Chen-Re-Zi* and *Guru Rinpoche* are not very well-known to the non-Buddhists, a short account of each deity is given.

Guru Rinpoche

The honorific title of *Guru Rinpoche* is ascribed to *Padmasambhava*, the great teacher in occultism. *Padmasambhava* has a unique place in the history of Tibetan culture and religion for his significant role of a proselytizing preacher to popularise the tenets of Buddhism in Tibet during the reign of *Kri-Sron-Lde-Btsan* (775-797 A.D.) who notwithstanding the stiff attitude of the powerful Phon[1] officials, invited the *Saint Santarakshita,* the learned scholar of Nalanda, to Tibet to preach the teachings of *Buddha* among the people. But the eloquent sermons of the *Saint Santarakshita* fell flat on the *Phon* followers.

It was indeed unfortunate for *Santarakshita* that natural calamities like storms, thunder, lightning and epidemics coinciding with the period of his visit to Tibet were interpreted by his antagonists as the inauspicious aftermath of the perverse preachings of a heretic. His task remained, therefore, incomplete, but he had the clairvoyance to realise that a teacher, well-versed in esoteric methods and *Tantric* beliefs, could only be a successful missionary. *Padmasambhava*, the powerful apostle of *Tantricism*, was invited to humble the protagonists of *Phon.* It was *Padmasambhava* who could ultimately usher in the new faith in Tibet and who has been held in high esteem ever since and ascribed a place by the side of *Lord Buddha.*

[1] *Phon* (*Bhon*), the ancient religion in Tibetan practising fetishism, demon-worship and magic. *Chho* (Religion) is the antithesis of *Phon.* It connotes a type of *Shamanism*, followed by the Tibetans before their initiation to the Buddhist faith.

Chen-Re-Zi

The fourth *Dhyani Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara* has been given the appellation of *Chen-Re-Zi*. He was the *Patron Saint* of Tibet, the *Vice Regent* of the *Dhyani Buddha Amitabha*. He is incarnated perpetually in each successive *Dalai Lamas* of Lhasa and popularly known in Tibet as *Chen-Re-Zi*. He is generally represented by an image with eleven faces, each having different colours, and with arms varying between six to 1000. According to the *Mani Bhaktam* (Chapter 2), *Chen-Re-Zi*, twice-born on earth, first appeared from a ray of white light issued forth from the left eye of *Amitabha* and for the second time as a youth of 16 from out of a budding lotus.

Tantric Buddhism

The *Buddhism* followed by the Tibetans, the Sikkimese Bhutias and the Dukpas of the village Upper Pedong do not conform to that professed by Indian Buddhists. The two differ in details. The *Lamas* as well as the laity attach more importance to the esoteric manifestations in *Buddhism*. Magic and sorcery, mystic rites and rituals, *Mantras* (Incantations) and symbolic diagrams with geometric designs and motifs are freely used. The *Mantras* are supposed to be nothing short of magic. Though *Buddha* in his teachings was non-religious and godless, the *Buddhism* practised here is not simply theistic but polytheistic with emphasis on prayer to superhuman powers of the pantheon for salvation and perfection as well as redemption from sorrow and suffering. Though *Buddha* did not contemplate any ritual and in his preachings permitted the gods to have any function, he could perhaps little eradicate the human impulse to prayer. His image in the *Gompas* can nowhere be found without the company of numberless deities. *Tantric Buddhism* is neither an offshoot of *Hindu Tantricism* nor is *Saivism* its precursor, as the popular misconception would lead one to believe. Bhattacharya[1] considers it possible to declare without fear of contradiction that the Buddhists were the first to introduce the *Tantras* into their religion, and that the Hindus borrowed them from the Buddhists in later times, and that it is idle to say that later *Buddhism* was an outcome of *Saivism*.

Buddhists of the village

All the Buddist households in Upper Pedong have in their houses the images of *Lord Buddha*, *Chen-Re-Zi* and *Guru Rinpoche*, in a wooden structure, worshipped every morning with an offering of seven vessels of water and with lighted candles in the evening.

Besides, the Buddhists observe the festival of *Chhee Shyung* during which the *Lamas* of respective households are invited to their houses once every year according to the convenience of the households for the recitation of portions of texts from the *Holy Scriptures* throughout the day and sometimes even for days together. This part of the festival, known as *Damang*, is believed to usher in good days for the household. The observance of *Byum* is an expensive affair, for during this prayer the *Lama* reads out all the *Sacred Books* of the Buddhists for several days. This is necessitated by a special occasion and observed with a special objective namely, the recovery of a member of the household from a protracted and fatal disease. For a day's religious service a *Lama* is usually paid for his vicarial profession the remuneration of Rs.3.00 *paise* or Rs 4.00 *paise* a day in addition to a full meal and as many bounteous draughts of liquor as required. Besides, the Buddhists observe a ceremony, known as *Thyak Fee*, soon after harvesting a crop to offer a portion of the same to their deities as a token of gratitude.

[1]An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism by Benoytosh Bhattacharya, pp 147

To hoist the pennons of faith is the essential feature of the religious activity of a devout Buddhist. Every Buddhist household has to unfurl the *Dhar Chhog* at least once annually on the occasion of *Chhee Shying*, when the *Lama* hoists the flags reciting some incantations. The flags are fastened to long bamboo poles, each 30-40 feet in linear measurement. Though the maximum number of flags to be hoisted is not prescribed by the *Holy See* of the Buddhists, the minimum number is fixed at three ordinarily. But a bereaved household, after the death of any of its members, has to hoist 108 *Dhar Chhogs*. A different type of streamer, known as *Eugnta*, is also hoisted in the belief that such an act extends the normal expectancy of life of any member in the household. But, in no case flags have only two efficacies to produce. The flag has a number of prophylactic uses too. It has the protective power to secure a household against calamities, natural and supernatural, because it wards off evil spirits. It also ensures the speedy recovery of an ailing person. It brings in good luck to a helpless person. It can propitiate all the nine planets of the solar universe and bring about the general well-being of the household. When age with stealing steps claws a devout Buddhist within its clutch, he recalls that beads and prayer-books are not simply the toys of age. So, he seriously sets himself to the muttering of *Om Moni Padma Hung* (Hail ; Oh Jewel of the Lotus) ceaselessly for days and nights together. The popular belief goes that a person capable of chanting the holy prayer one hundred thousand times in his life-span finds his prayer answered, for from the prayer rises a better man who is transported to the abode of *Buddha* and can attain the transcendental bliss through salvation. With the prayers muttered, the devotee turns the prayer-wheel clock-wise in the right hand (*Thyu Chhem Pu*). The prayer-wheel is usually made of silver and helps one reckon how many times the prayer is muttered. In addition to the counting device of the prayer-wheel, the garland of 108 rosary beads (*Fyim* in Lepcha and *Thinga* in Tibetan), held in the left hand, is also rotated. With 108 rotations of the prayer-wheel, the bead in the garland moves for an identical number of times to return to the first bead. There are ten smaller silver rings in the lower end of the garland and 10 larger ones in the upper end. In one full course of the count of 108 beads a ring is moved from one end to the other and all the ten rings pass from one end to the other, after a bead has been counted 1080 times. Likewise, one larger ring on the other side is taken from one end to the other after a bead's counting for 10800 rotations of of the prayer-wheel with the aid of the garland.

Buddhist calendar and beliefs

There are four Tibetan seasons in the Tibetan Buddhist calendar. *Gun-Ka* (Winter) corresponds to the 11th, 12th and the first Tibetan months of the calendar. *Chika* (Spring) starts from the second to the fourth months of the Tibetan calendar, *Dbyar-Ka* (Summer) commences on the fifth Tibetan months and continues till the seventh month and *Ton-Ka* (Autumn) comprises the eighth, ninth and the tenth months of the Tibetan calendar. A week consists of seven days, Sunday being known in Tibetan as *Nyima* (Sun), Monday as *Dawa* (Moon), Tuesday as *Migma* (Mig meaning the eye), Wednesday as *Lhagpa* (Windy day, *Lhag* meaning *wind* and *Pa* meaning *of)*, Thursday as *Phurba*, Friday as *Passang* (Planet Venus) Saturday as *Penpa* or *Penba* (Saturn).

The twelve *Dawas* (Months) in the Tibetan calendar comprises *Daangpa* (First), *Nyipa* (Second), *Thumb* (Third), *Shipaa* (Fourth), *Ngapa* (Fifth), *Dhrukpa* (Sixth), *Dunpa* (Seventh), *Gyepa* (Eighth), *Gupa* (Ninth), *Chhyupa* (Tenth), *Chuchipa* (Eleventh) and *Chu-Nyi-Pa* (Twelfth). The *Chu-Nyi-Pa* (Twelfth month) is the month of prayer and as

such, most auspicious when the Buddhists would perform all auspicious work. A large number of *Lamas* from all *Dge-Lugs-Pa Gompas* congregrates to chant prayers, listen to religious discourses and participate in seminars.

Lo in Tibetan means year. *Lo-Khor* is the twelve-year cycle, the first Tibetan year being known as *Jhiwa* and the twelfth one as *Phag*. The twelfth year is followed by *Jhiwa* again. Every year in twelve-year cycle has its own significance. *Jhiwa* (*First year*) signifies the year of rats, when rats steal and preserve whatever is stolen away. So, a person born in this year is believed to be niggardly. *Lang* (Second year) is the Bull's year when bulls plough the land. One born in this year is supposed to lead a peaceful life in plenty and prosperity. *Tag* (*Tiger Year*) is the third year in the twelve-year cycle in which a person's birth will inevitably make him ill-tempered and as ferocious as a tiger. *Yo* or *Yeo*, the third year, signifies the rabbit or the hare and tends to make one born in this year cunning with alacrity. *Druge*, the fourth year, is popularly known as *Dragon* or *Thunderbolt Year* apt to develop the person born in the year extremely fussy and disorderly, often prone to making a chaos of everything. A person born in the sixth year *Drul* (*Snake Year*) is destined to be as cruel as a snake with a vindictive personality. A person born in the seventh year *Ta* (*Horse Year*) has legerity and dynamism. *Lug* (*Sheep Year*) often makes one born in the seventh year meek, timid and docile. Persons born in the ninth year *Tal* (*Monkey Year*) are often found to be restless and agile, whereas those born in *Jha* (*Eagle Year*), the year following the ninth, lack in temperamental stability. Persons born in the *Khye Year*, (*Dog Year*), the penultimate year of the cycle, have an extraordinary fidelity but those born in the *Phag* (*Pig Year*), the last year of the cycle, are often found to have sluggish habits. It is generally believed that every 13th year of the Tibetan calendar, according to the almanac, harbingers ill omen, misfortune and calamity for the people everywhere. The days of the week also have characteristics of their own for astrological forecasts. Born on Sunday, a person has a kind heart. A person born on Monday is level-headed. One born on Tuesday becomes ill-tempered and clever and at times vindictive too. Wednesday often tends to make a person born on this day of the week susceptible to gastritis, biliary ailments and diseases of the brain. A person born on Thursday becomes righteous, pious, honest, god-fearing, religious and erudite. Persons born on Friday become defiant and brutally frank, truthful and outspoken. A child born on Saturday is the father of an extravagant man, speculative and indulgent in gambling habits.

Christian religious institutions

Ten households in Upper Pedong are faithful Christians, but adhering to two scions of the same faith. While six households are Roman Catholics, four others are Pentecostal Protestants. The Catholics have their own Church in Upper Pedong, just near the Pedong High School, while the Protestants have their own Church outside in Sakyong *Khas Mahal*, a little down the 20th mile on the Pedong-Algarah Road.

Roman Catholic Church

A popular adage goes among the villagers with a subtle humour that nowhere one ever misses two sets of people, namely, the Marwaris and the Catholic priests. This tiny little village did not escape the eagle-eyed traders who quietly came here to secure their treasure nor did the village pass unnoticed by the clergymen preaching to death their faith. Inconvenience and hardship could not beat the tireless spirit of the Catholic preachers in establishing their Church in Pedong, which in the last quarter of the 19th Century had little attraction for the clergy who were also men as well as other

folks. In the thick primeval forests ancient as the hills which abounded in the village wild animals were no agreeable friends nor so were the thieves in this hideout of their den to break through, often to steal from journeymen and resident people here and there. In an inhospitable terrain with no road leading to the village from the outside world, the first Catholic Mission in the Division of Kalimpong came to be established, as a remarkably strange coincidence, here in Pedong to show the countrymen the gentle way to the parish Church. Rev. Fr. Desgodins, a French on his errands to Tibet under the mission of the Society of the French Foreign Mission of Paris came down to lend his helping hand to the Mission of Tatsienlou, already founded in the eastern region of Tibet, being entrusted with the responsibility of preaching Christianity in Tibet, a forbidden land to foreigners till then. Fr. Desgodins was a man with a dream to carry the message of the Holy Gospels to the heart of Tibet in Lhasa. An attempt to reach Lhasa from Tatsienlou proved abortive, as an influential *Lama* entrapped him, severely beat him with an iron rod and tied him down in the pigsty under his house. But, Desgodins managed to escape by night and trekked all along the river Mekong and went down to Singapore *via* Hongkong. His second attempt to enter Tibet from Assam met with no success either. On the 10th November, 1882, he reached Pedong, on way to Tibet and made a small hut there where he lived till his death. A scholar in Tibetan language, he started a Tibetan School himself as a teacher and wrote several books including a thick volume of French-Tibetan Dictionary, and a number of religious books in addition to the Bible in the Tibetan version. Thus was founded the Catholic Mission with so very humble a beginning in Pedong. The team of preachers was reinforced afterwards to help Fr. Desgodins.

Two kilometres northwards beyond Pedong and further beyond Pedong Bazar, a huge wooden Cross facing Tibet stands there as a replacement of the old one. Tibet was dedicated by the French priests to the seven *Dolours of Our Lady*. Every year on the 15th September on the feast the Catholics used to go in solemn procession to the above Cross on the Hill to pray for their mission in Tibet.

Pedong, in those days forbidden also to the Nepalese, was then entirely inhabited by the Lepchas and the Tibetans. Rev. Fr. Jules Douenel, later to become the Superior and afterwards *Prefect Apostolic* of the Mission, arrived in Pedong to preach the *Holy Gospels* in Kalimpong and Sikkim, known as Southern Tibet Mission. After the demise of Fr. Desgodins in 1913, his work, continued by other French priests under the Rt. Rev. Mgr. Jules Douenel, was not restricted to only religion but also extended to the field of social reforms and philanthropic pursuits. A Middle School was opened in Pedong to impart education to the children of the locality. Pedong Hospital was also built to serve the local people.

A second Mission Station, known as Maria Bustee, was founded on the Hill right opposite to Pedong. With the passage of time the French priests with their limited manpower having found it increasingly difficult to cope with the multifarious activities of the growing Mission, the Mission was handed over to the Canons Regular of St. Maurice, Switzerland, under the able leadership of Rt. Rev. Mgr. A. Gianora, a very intelligent scholarly engineer in 1937. The priests of St. Maurice have proved themselves in course of time equal to the task, entrusted to them, and justified the confidence reposed in them. The Roman Catholic Mission of Pedong has adjusted itself to the local customs remarkably well. The services are now conducted in the vernacular and the local customs are being studied as to how best they can be utilised in the service of the Church. A mixture of Tibetan local arts

has found place in the Church of Pedong, though outwardly it remains Gothic in structure with a Norman touch.

The missionary activities of the Church have been organised on a voluntary basis. *Christ* and His measure of salvation are preached with no motive to convert a person forcibly. Invitation is thrown to the villagers universally to accept Him and His teachings as those of the only *Saviour*. But, neither *Christ* nor His sermons are forced on any person. The people have accepted Christ, served and loved Him after retaining quite many of their own customs and traditions, habits and beliefs intact.

Protestant Church

The Protestant Church (Pentecostal), situated in Sakyong *Khas Mahal*, a little down the 20th mile on the Pedong-Algarah-Kalimpong Road, is housed in one long room with the roof made of corrugated iron sheets and the walls made of wood plastered with mud. The walls are adorned with paintings representing *Lord Christ* and several Cross marks, Christian sermons and Biblical passages in *Nepali* version.

Services in the Church

In the Roman Catholic Church both daily and weekly services are organised. Only the Christian students, resident in the Hostel attached to the School, and the Christian school-teachers participate in the daily service. But, in the weekly service held in the morning of every Sunday, most of the Roman Catholics of Pedong *Khas Mahal* and Kasyone *Khas Mahal* congregate for the *Sabbath* prayer. The assemblage for a Sunday service has an attendance of 150-200 persons in the Roman Catholic Church and of about 50 Protestant Christians on an average in the Protestant Church. In both the Churches, the prayers are made in both English and *Nepali*. The *Nepali* version caters to the illiterate villagers. All the Christian villagers have made their houses the homes of silent prayers, for they pray at least once in their houses praising the *Lord*.

Both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Christians observe two festivals annually, namely the *Easter* and the *Christmas*, on the occasion of which special services are organised in the Church of the respective groups. *Christmas* which comes but once a year affords the Christians and the villagers to be merry. The teenager school-students go about carolling up and down the village path. They decorate their houses as also their own Church with foliage, streamers of white and red papers and multi-coloured baloons. Candles are lit up in the Church and also in the Christian homes. The people are dressed in new clothes and take specially prepared food at home.

Marriage among the Christians, whether Roman Catholics or Protestants, being treated not merely as a social institution or a civil contract but as a blessed sacrament of religion, the Church functions as the Registrar's Office of marriage, wherein the *Chaplain* or the priest solemnizes the marriage. In every Christian marriage all the leading persons of the particular Christian community and also some non-Christians in the neighbourhood are invited. After the formal ceremony solemnizing the marriage is over, the guests are entertained to a hymeneal feast in the Church to celebrate the nuptial union. The Priest of the Church must accord his approval to a marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian, if the marriage ceremony is to follow the Christian rites. In such a case, the non-Christians are required to be baptized before the marriage can be solemnized. If any marriage is contracted in flagrant disregard of the Christian rules of marriage, requiring both the spouses to be Christians, the persons concerned have to face

the decree of ex-communication from the Christian society.

Of the 10 Christian households, heads of two households are orphans. One of the couple of orphans, brought up by the Christian Missionaries of Pedong, has embraced Christianity, while the other, reared up by a Christian householder of Upper Pedong, also became a Christian later. As for the heads of eight other Christian households, as many as five of them were not converted to Christianity in their life-time but are successors of the converts who had changed their faith forty to sixty years ago. The conversion of these households from the Buddhist and the Hindu faiths to the teachings of *Christ* does not reveal any apparent reason. The conversion four to six decades ago was not witnessed by any of the present living heads, as they were yet to be born. The three other households are, however, not forgetful of the reason for their conversion. It appears that economic factor motivated strongly their disposition for conversion. Conversion brought in its trail some economic benefits in the form of land, money in cash and ready food in addition to free medical advice and a free supply of medicine. The most recent case of conversion is that of one Gurung household, converted only eight years ago. Its head points out that the rigours of the Hindu religion and its orthodoxy, idolatry, animal-sacrifice in the name of gods and the various prescriptions and prohibitions weighed on the rationality of the head to wean it away from Hinduism and no temptation whatsoever prompted the members to change their faith. The conversion was voluntary. The household opines that after conversion it feels physically, mentally and economically better than it was before.

A neighbour of the same Gurung household discloses that the daughter of the present head of the household had died of tuberculosis nine years ago after a futile solicitation to the Hindu gods and goddess for the recovery of the girl. The death also brought in the wake of the tragedy the loss of the head's faith in the Hindu deities. It, therefore, switched over to Christianity to live in the world as neophytes with renewed hopes and nascent aspirations.

Social organisation and leadership

Though Upper Pedong is a village of quite a number of tribal communities, one comes across the remarkable absence of traditional tribal council or *Panchayat* and also the vacuum of traditional leadership, elective or selective, representing the social polity of the tribal communities. One does not, therefore, find an arrayed leadership, systematically organised to act as the social or moral guardian of the members of the respective communities.

Nevertheless, one should not hastily jump upon the conclusion that the village has transcended all barriers of castes or creeds or crossed hurdles and fencings of groupism on ethnic principles. The village is not devoid of informal leadership at different levels. Ethnic considerations very often shape the character and nature of informal ledership, unconsciously most of the time. Every ethnic group in the primary stages seeks to eliminate all differences of opinion and divergences of factionalism within the group through the good office of one or two persons of their own ethnic group to act as guardian angels enjoying their confidence and respect. These elementary leaders of each ethnic group guide the deliberations of any informal meeting of the same ethnic group on social or religious matter. But, this again does not call for budding primary leaders among all the communities. If the informal leaders of some communities are prominent and those among some others do not even make their presence felt or their feeble voice audible, it is because of the freak of chance coincidence rather than of a

conscious deliberation. As in all cases, the emergence of individual leadership depends on diverse factors like age, education, economic status and affluence.

The Bhutias comprising thirteen Sikkimese Bhutias and five Dukpas constitute an important community, being numerically the major group within the village. The Bhutias in Upper Pedong do not have any exclusive social organisation, non-statutory and traditional in nature. The only representative organic body, the community can claim as its own, is illustrated by the *Gumpa Committee* of the Sikkimese Monastery, constituted by all heads of the Bhutia households residing in the village. But, the *Gompa Committee* has an inner committee consisting of some five or six leading persons of the Bhutia community, to conduct the management of the *Gompa*. The small committee has filled the organisational vacuum within the Bhutia community. This oligarchical body has taken up the mantle of leadership of their ethnic group and acts as a decision-making organ over affairs both temporal and spiritual. But, this oligarchy is also dominated by one figure obeyed by all others. The person who is the *de jure* President of the oligarchy is *Subehdar Major* Nima Chhegdar Lama, the recognised spokesman of the Bhutias and also their *de facto* leader. President of the Sikkimese Monastery, and also the Vice-President of the Board of Management of St. George's High School, Sri N. C. Lama has gained ascendancy in the ladder of leadership, favoured by a number of factors, of which age may be reckoned as a very important one. Junior though to three other persons in age, Sri Lama is 63 years old. Scoring over his three other colleagues, older than he, not on age but on some other faculties of his character, personality and status, if Sri Lama has grown old with good grace and if he is a more 'venerable and reverend creature' in his community than his other compatriots, it is because of his education by which he has not been misled and has neither turned too pedantic to lead his people. A permanent resident of Sakyong *Khas Mahal* temporarily living in Upper Pedong because of his occupation as a teacher, another Bhutia who has education upto the Intermediate standard could have contested Sri Lama's prestigious position of the leader of his community as an enlightened opponent. But Sri Lama, a person with no less liberal education than that of the teacher, being a Matriculate of the University of Calcutta as early as 1920, has overscored on the point of his residential status over his possible rival in the Bhutia teacher who despite his education is an outsider to the village for all practical purposes. Sri Lama by virtue of his education is invested with prestige and respect by not only the members of his own community but also by covillagers of other ethnic groups. Besides, the young Bhutia teacher does not enjoy the gift of Sri Lama's old age. But, only education and age have not lifted Sri Lama to the pedestal of a leader. The honour and prestige as well as the social status enjoyed by Sri Lama in the rank-hierarchy of his community have paved the way for his natural leadership. But, the social standing and respect again emanate from his profession associated with the military service. An ex-military Officer of the rank of a *Subehdar*, Sri Lama has been a group-leader in the Government among his fellow army-men. The qualities of leadership, having earned him the rank of an officer during active service in the army, place Sri Lama in an advantageous social situation wherein the military service has an irresistible attraction. The subconscious mind of the people, of whom agriculture is the principal occupation, has subtly associated the ex-armyman's vocation with power, courage, fortitude and similar other abstract virtues of a natural leader all of which have weighed in favour of Sri Lama at the time of popular selection of a leader. This authority could not even be questioned

by the sublime power of knowledge and learning of a village pedagogue. And on top of all other factors reigns the economic power. The financial position of Sri Lama being very sound and his annual income being the highest among other households of the same community within the village, one need not seek a more remote cause of Sri Lama's great influence over his fellow-men. For money alone 'answereth all things' and holds the key to his social success.

On a resume, it appears that the incontestable supremacy of natural leadership has been achieved conjointly by several factors, each multiplying the effective strength of the other. The self-confidence, natural to a leader, has been bred of all the socio-economic factors of Sri Lama's successful ascension in the Bhutia society where the people have all been seeking a captain appearently possessing the courage and sagacity necessary for the achievement of supremacy. Among the Tamangs, the second largest community in the village, the traditional organisation of social control is absent and the informal leadership has devolved on Sri L. B. Moktan, not only a leading personage of his own community but also an important figure in the village-society with some power and influence. Sri Moktan is also the elected representative of the village to the *Gram Panchayat* of Pedong *Khas Mahal*. Thus, Sri Moktan has a double role to play. While he is the selected informal leader of the Tamangs, he is also the formally elected leader of all villagers to a statutory organisation of the village.

On analysis of the powerful forces helping Sri Moktan occupy the position of a chosen leader of the Tamang community, the demographic factor of age seems to be a powerful propulsive. His old age and experience of 60 years of existence in the world hand in hand lead him to the position of an informal leader, as no Tamang male is senior to him in age to surpass his experience in the realm of reality. With formal education upto the Primary standard of Class V, Sri Moktan has not the advantage of education to compete with the members of his community, for many others have attained still higher educational levels than Sri Moktan's. But, what education has failed him to achieve has been recompensed by his occupation and financial stability. The owner of a contractor's firm associated with road-construction, Sri Moktan occupies the apex of the economic pyramid in his community with the highest annual income. Sri Moktan's power and prestige accrue from his status as an employer, who is the arbiter of the economic destinies of many persons engaged in road-building activities as labourers and in diverse other capacities. In this matter his influence and power are not limited to the constricted confines of his own community, but have instead transcended the social bounds of other ethnic groups. Wielding an enormous economic power in the capacity of an employer to whom many people owe their daily ration of bread and also their important means of livelihood in a situation not offering a plethora of economic opportunities, Sri Moktan's socio-political power and influence are the valuable byproducts of his impressive affluence. Personal traits are all subservient to his superb financial strength. And in an indigent economy the purse holds the strings of public opinion much to the advantage of its owner, providing jobs and employment to the needy individuals.

Among the Rais there is no recognised leader, elected or selected, formal or informal, statutory or voluntary. But, the absence of a natural leader has not consequenced in a void of influential persons. In fact, two persons among the Rais, named Sri Biryaban Rai and Gyal Bahadur Rai, wield considerable influence over the community. Neither helped by a liberal education nor blessed by a fortune,

the former, an illiterate old man of 60 years with little financial solvency, has only one Rai senior in age to contend with him. For Sri Biryaban Rai age has reaped his present influence. Sri Gyal Bahadur Rai, junior in age to Sri Biryaban Rai, is 45 years old and has formal education upto Class VII. The Secretary to the Pedong Cooperative Society, he has considerable following within his community and covillagers.

The Sherpas who live at the highest altitude of the village in a residential cluster of their own could well have been the residents of a hamlet, if the village were situated in a level land in the plains instead of the hills. But, living as they are in a hill village in a separate enclave, they have developed a distinct communal solidarity among themselves and a separate entity also. They too have a recognised informal leader of their own in one Sri Gyal Dorji Sherpa, a septuagenarian, whose age has stamped wrinkles deeper on his brow but has not liquidated him to his people as a senile old man incapable of offering earnest advice of an elderly senior. Instead, his long experience has attained to something like a prophetic strain. Age's silver hairs have not withered him to dotage and decrepitude, but on the other hand, advanced age has impelled him to be a leader of his people, because of his singular contribution to the establishment of the Sherpa residential enclave here as a pioneer resident and a founder settler. Besides, his relative economic superiority to his fellow-people of the same community as the landowner of the largest landed area also holds the clue to his unrivalled leadership among the Sherpas. The Sherpas proudly observe that they have no generation-gap because of the installation of an old man to their captaincy, because age here has also approved of youth as the successor of the old leader's heritage of experience and counsels. That young people are not lost sight of by the old and are not rejected as being winged with vain, frolicsome and unrealistic desires is substantiated by a parallel complimentary leadership represented by one Sri Lalsingh Sherpa, a young man of 34 years who, though he has not sought the power of a leader, has yet been selected as a popular representative of the Sherpa people. The spirit of sparkling youth manifest in his great organising power and ability brought forth a fruitful expression and an impressive demonstration of the birth of a voluntary organisation of the Sherpas a few years ago in a musical association, (now defunct) mainly under the leadership and inspiration of Sri Lalsingh Sherpa. Besides, as a social worker associated with many welfare activities among the Sherpas, his reputation has no mean contribution to his popular image projected to the people.

TABLE 146

KINSHIP PATTERN

English	Tibetan	Sikkimese Bhutia	Dukpa	Sherpa	Tamang
Father's father	Yong-po	..	Ajo	..	Akhey
Father's father's elder brother	Yong-po	Aku-bompo	Ajo	..	Akhey
Father's father's younger brother	Yong-po	Aku-chung chung	Ajo	..	Akhey
Father's mother	Mo-la or Mo-o	Ang-eyon	Ana	..	Mam
Mother's father	Po-la or Po-o	Athing	Ajo	..	Akhey

TABLE 146—*contd.*

English	Tibetan	Sikkimese Bhutia	Dukpa	Sherpa	Tamang
Mother's mother	Mo-la	Angyoi	Ama	..	Mam
Father	Pha or Aba	Aba	Apa	Papa	Apa
Father's elder brother	Agu	Aba-bompu	Apa-bompu or Aku	Pap gerpu	A-bren
Father's younger brother	Aku	Aku	Aku	Pap Tikpe	Agu
Father's elder brother's wife	*Ani*	*Am-bompu*	*Am-bompu*	..	*Akh-ren*
Father's younger brother's wife	..	Am-chung-chung	Am-chung	..	Asu
Father's sister	Ani-la	Anghee	Angyee	..	Angyee
Father's sister's husband	..	..	Aku	..	A-sheng
Mother	Ama	Am	Amo	Mama	Ama
Mother's elder brother	Ashang	Azong	Azong	Ajyang	A-sheng
Mother's younger brother	Ashang	Ajong-cnung chung	Azong	Ajyang Tikpe	A-sheng
Mother's brother's wife	Angyee	Angyee	Angyee	Eni	Angyee
Mother's elder sister	Shumu	Am-dompu	Am-bompu	Uru	Am-ren
Mother's elder sister's husband	Aku	Aku	Apa-bompu	..	Ab-ren
Mother's younger sister	Shumu	Am-chung-chung	Am-chu	Am-chhau	Ashu
Mother's younger sister's husband	Aku	Aku	Aku	Au	Agu
Husband's father	Ghyopo	Hyop or pu	Ghyop	Mem	Ken
Wife's father	Ghyopo	Ghyopo	Ghyop	Mem	Ken
Husband's mother	Ghyumo	Ghyum or U	Ghyum	Ebee	Shyumi
Wife's mother	Ghyumo	Ghyum	Ghyum	Ebee	Shyumi
Husband's mother's brother	Ashang-ghyopo	..	..	..	A-sheng
Wife's mother's brother	Ashang-ghyopo	..	..	..	A-sheng
Elder brother	A-jho-o	Aggya-bompu	Achu	Ujyu	Jyo-jyo
Wife's elder brother	A-jho-o-ghyopo	Achu-ghyopo	Achu-ghyop	Yaku	Jyo-jyo-sheng
Husband's elder brother	A-jho-o-ghyopo	Achu-ghyopo	Achu-ghyop	Yaku	Jyo-jyo-sheng
Elder sister	Aji	Ayee	Ayee	Aji	Nana
Wife's elder sister	Aji-ghyumo	Aji-ghyum	Ajee-ghyum	Nyermu	Nana-shyumi
Husband's elder sister	Aji-ghyumo	Aji-ghyum	Ajee-ghyum	Nyermu	Nana-shyumi
Younger sister	Phunja	Bhusim	..	Num	..
Younger brother	No-o-chhung	Pin-lo	Nu-chu	Nuk Tikpe	Chyán-Change-ba
Wife's younger brother	Kyip	..	Kyipu	Yaku	Shyamg-bo
Daughter's husband	Magpa	Mako	Mako	Makpa	Mha
Daughter's husband's father	Nyen-thuin	Nyen-dyun-gyap	Ne-du-ghyap	Mem	Samad
Son	Phu	Bhu	Phu	Pyu-jung	Ja
Younger brother's son	Tsha-ow	Chhow-chung chung	Chhow	Chhow-byuk	Chyong-chang-ba-la-ja
Elder brother's son	Tsha-ow	Chhow-chung chung	Chhow	Chhow-byuk	Joth-la-ja
Husband's brother's son	Tsha-ow	Chhow-chung chung	Chhow	Chhow-byuk	Joth-la-ja
Elder sister's son	Tsha-ow	Chhow	Chhow	Chhobyuk	Joth-la-ja
Younger sister's son	Tsha-ow	Chhow	Chhow	Chhobyuk	Joth-la-ja

TABLE 146—*concld.*

English	Tibetan	Sikkimese Bhutia	Dukpa	Sherpa	Tamang
Daughter	Phu-mo	Phum	Phyum	Pumu	Ja-me
Husband's younger brother's wife	..	Num	Num-chacha jam	..	..
Husband's younger sister	Bhu-mo	..	Nhyim	..	Nyi-mo
Elder brother's daughter	Tsha-mo	Chhamu	Chham	..	Jotla-jame
Husband's elder brother's daughter	Tsha-mo	..	Chham	..	..
Wife's brother's daughter	Tsha-mo	..	Chham	..	..
Husband's sister's daughter	Tsha-mo	..	Chham	..	Kone-mye
Wife's sister's daughter	Tsha-mo	..	Chham	..	Kone-mye
Elder brother's wife	A-che	Machi	Machi	Chham	Jo-chang
Younger brother's wife	A-che	Nam Namo (ad)	Nam	Nama	Chang
Son's son	Tsha-o	Chho	Chhow	..	Chhaya
Son's daughter	Chu-mo	Chham	Chham	..	Chhuiya
Husband	Chhogya	Phugya	Phogya	..	Remba
Wife	Kimey	..	Nyem/moby	..	Mring
Son's wife	Nama	Nam	Nam	..	Chang
Brother's son's wife	Nama	Nam	Nam	..	Chang
Sister's son's wife	Nama	Nam	Nam	..	Chang
Widow	..	Marem	Marem	Eusyim	Moring
Widower	..	Fawrem	Fawrem	Eusyip	Moring-shiba
Adopted son	..	Bhuia	Tinkni	..	Nabaza
Step-father	Paba-faya	Affaya	Affaya	Aba-tikpe	Ap-chang
Step-mother	Amma-maya	Ammaya	Ammayam	Ama-Tikpe	Am-chang

TABLE 147

KINSHIP TERMS AMONG THE RAIS

English	Bontowa Rai	Chamling Rai	English	Bontowa Rai	Chamling Rai
Father	*Apa*	..	Wife's father	*Chha-Deua*	*Achha-Dikpa*
Mother	*Ama*	..			
Father's father	*Deus*	*Kokepa*	Wife's mother	*Chha-Dema*	*Achha-Dikma*
Mother's father	*Deua*	*Kokepa*			
Father's mother	*Diuma*	*Kokema*	Wife's sister	*Ama*	..
Mother's mother	*Diuma*	*Kokema*	Wife's elder sister's husband	*Bua*	..
Father's elder brother	*Deoa or Adewa*	*Tippa*	Wife's younger sister's husband	*Nichha*	..
Father's younger brother	*Banghya*	*Pashibe*	Wife's elder brother's wife	*Nana*	..
Father's elder brother's wife	*Dema*	*Timma*	Husband	*Taya-wa*	..
Father's younger brother's wife	*Bahghma*	*Pashime*	Husband's elder brother	*Dewa*	..
			Husband's younger brother	*Banya*	..
Father's sister	*Dema*	..	Husband's elder brother's wife	*Nana*	..
Father's elder sister's husband	*Bhena*	*Bhena*			
Father younger sister's husband	*Magchha*	*Mochha*	Elder brother	*Bua*	..
			Elder sister	*Nana*	..
Mother's elder brother	*Diku*	*Chuka*	Elder brother's wife	*Nammit*	*Telma*

TABLE 147—*contd.*

English	Bontowa Rai	Chamling Rai	English	Bontowa Rai	Chamling Rai
Mother's younger brother	*Chhuwa*	*Chuka*	Elder sister's husband	*Bhena*	..
Mother's brother's wife	*Dimi*	..	Son	*Chha*	..
Mother's sister	*Dema*	*Timmia*	Daughter	*Me-chha-chha*	..
Mother's elder sister's husband	*Deoa*	*Tippa*	Son's wife	*Nammit*	*Telma*
Mother's younger sister's husband	*Bangha*	*Pashire*	Son's son	*Natipa*	..
Wife ..	*Tayama*	*Ame*	Son's daughter	*Natima*	..

TABLE 148

KINSHIP TERMS AMONG THE LEPCHAS

English	Lepcha	English	Lepcha
Father	*Aba*	Wife's mother	*Anu*
Step-father ..	*Aba*	Wife's younger brother	*Ajong*
Father's father	*Thikung*	Wife's elder brother	*Anum*
Father's mother	*Nikung*	Wife's elder sister	*Anom*
Father's elder brother	*Buthim*	Wife's younger sister	*Ing*
Father's younger brother	*Aku*	Wife's elder sister's husband	*Anum*
Father's elder brother's wife	*Anu*	Wife's younger sister's husband	*Ing*
Father's younger brother's wife	*Anu*	Wife's elder brother's wife	*Anom*
Father's sister	*Anu*	Wife's younger brother's wife	*Ing*
Father's sister's husband	*Ajong*	Elder brother	*Anum*
Mother	*Amu*	Younger brother	*Ing*
Step-mother	*Amu*	Elder sister	*Anom*
Mother's father	*Thikung*	Younger sister	*Ing*
Mother's mother	*Nikung*	Elder brother's wife	*Anom*
Mother's brother	*Ajong*	Younger brother's wife	*Neyom*
Mother's brother's wife	*Anu*	Elder sister's husband	*Ajong*
Mother's elder sister	*Mathim*	Younger sister's husband	*Meok*
Mother's younger sister	*Anu*	Father's brother's elder son	*Anum*
Mother's elder sister's husband	*Buthim*	Father's brother's younger son	*Ing*
Mother's younger sister's husband	*Anu*	Father's brother's elder daughter	*Anom*
Husband	*Avo*	Father's brother's younger daughter	*Ing*
Husband's father	*Afet*	Father's sister's elder son	*Anum*
Husband's mother	*Anu*	Father's sister's younger son	*Ing*
Husband's elder brother	*Anum*	Father's sister's elder daughter	*Anom*
Husband's younger brother	*Ajong*	Father's sister's younger daughter	*Ing*
Husband's elder sister	*Anom*	Son	*Tagṛipok*
Husband's younger sister	*Ing*	Daughter	*Tayykop*
Husband's elder brother's wife	*Anum*	Son's wife	*Neyom*
Husband's younger brother's wife	*Ing*	Daughter's husband	*Meok*
Husband's elder sister's husband	*Anum*	Elder brother's son	*Akop*
Husband's younger sister's husband	*Ing*	Elder brother's daughter	*Akop*
Wife	*Ayu*	Younger brother's son	*Tagrikop*
Wife's father	*Afet*	Younger brother's daughter	*Tayukop*

TABLE 149

KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY IN *KHAS-KURA*

English	Nepali	English	Nepali
Father's father	*Baje*	Wife's younger brother	*Sala*
Father's father's elder brother	*Baje*	Son	*Chhora*
Father's father's younger brother	*Baje*	Younger brother's son	*Bhatija*
Father's mother	*Baju/ Amai/Zima*	Elder brother's son	*Bhatija*
		Husband's brother's son	*Bhatija*
Mother's father	*Raje*	Elder sister's son	*Bhanij*
Mother's mother	*Raju*	Younger sister's son	*Bhanij*
Father's elder brother	*Bara Babu*	Daughter	*Chhori*
Father's younger brother	*Kaka*	Husband's younger brother's wife	..
Father's elder brother's wife	*Badi Ama*	Husband's younger sister	..
Father's younger brother's wife	*Kaki/ Chhyama*	Elder brother's daughter	*Bhatiji*
		Husband's elder brother's daughter	*Bhatiji*
Father's sister	*Phupu*	Wife's brother's daughter	*Bhatiji*
Father's sister's husband	*Phupa/ Phupaju*	Husband's sister's daughter	*Bhatiji*
		Wife's sister's daughter	*Bhatiji*
Mother	*Ama*	Elder brother's wife	*Bhauju*
Mother's elder brother	*Mama*	Younger brother's wife	*Buari*
Mother's younger brother	*Mama*	Son's son	*Nati*
Mother's brother's wife	*Maju (Mami)*	Son's daughter	*Natini*
		Husband	*Logene*
Mother's elder sister	*Thuli Ama*	Wife	*Soashni*
Mother's elder sister's husband	*Thulo Babu*	Son's wife	*Buari*
Mother's younger sister	*Chhyama/ Sanima*	Brother's son's wife	*Buari*
		Sister's son's wife	*Buari*
Mother's younger sister's husband	*Kaka*	Widow	*Rari*
Husband's father	*Sasur*	Widower	*Rada*
Husband's mother	*Sasu*	Adopted son	*Dharam Putra*
Wife's father	*Sasur*		
Wife's mother	*Sasu*	Step-father	*Sano Babu*
Husband's mother's brother	*Mama Sasur*	Step-mother	*Sani Ama*
Wife's mother's brother	*Mama Sasur*	Elder sister's husband	*Bhenaju*
Elder brother	*Daju*	Younger sister	*Kanchi Bahini*
Wife's elder brother	*Jhyathan*		
Husband's elder brother	*Jhyathaju*	Husband's younger brother's wife	*Deorani*
Elder sister	*Didi*	Husband's younger sister	*Nanda*
Wife's elder sister	*Didi*	Brother's daughter	*Bhandaini*
Husband's elder sister	*Amaju*	Husband's sister's daughter	*Bhanji*
Younger sister	*Baini*	Step-son	*Jharkelo Chhora*
Daughter's husband	*Jnoai*		
Daughter's husband's father	*Samji*	Step-daughter	*Jharkelo Chhori*
Younger brother	*Bhai*		

Traditional institution

The various ethnic groups representing the village society in segmented units have failed to proffer any evidence of any traditional organisation or a permanent social structure of hereditary leadership to act as guardian angels to preserve the cohesion of individual ethnic

groups and promote their welfare. Instead, a loose inchoate leadership of an informal character and selective nature, evidenced among some of the communities, has not organised itself into a permanent institution inseparably associated with or distinctly imbedded in the cultural vein of the community, as a typical trait of its social institution. If, therefore, one does not trace in the traditional leadership any convention of its prescriptive rights and prerogatives as also the customary norms and values of its social sanctions to keep the social group on an even keel, one need not pronounce arbitrarily the absence of any such traditional institution in the communities as such. It is quite likely on the other hand that the communities within the village are not aware of them or even that they may not be socially and intellectually as alert as the same communities outside the bourne of the present village. The absence of any precise information of the kind does not enable one to analyse the social fabric of the community into the required shreds for microscopic observation of the dynamics of the social processes of change or stagnation. Inadequate data do not warrant a sweeping observation about the value-system of each community and also about its attitudes towards continuation or rejection of its social traditions by preservation or opposition. It is likewise futile to expect any forecast about the direction of their social movements, and any change or decay of their social systems and institutions.

But, even though one is confused in the event of absence of any information about the past institutions and their present role in the life of individual communities of Upper Pedong and has to falter many a time to write the analytical causerie, the community-life of the village taken as a whole does not so miserably fail to adduce evidences of the traditional social institutions of therein. If so, it is partly because the institution is found to be the lengthened shadow of one individual and partly because the institution sprang to life as a direct consquence of the politico-economic measure of the administrative machinery ruling over the country, of which the village forms only a part.

The traditional *Mandal* (Headman) was statutorily acknowledged by the British as the *de facto* village-official in charge of the land-revenue system. In the beginning of the present Century, the *Mandal*, usually in charge of each *Khas Mahal* Block, was entrusted with the sole responsibility of the collection of land-revenue from the *Raiyats* (Tenants) who paid rent to the Government through him. The *Mandal* remitted the rent, so collected, to the Manager of the *Khas Mahals* (later known as *Khas Mahal* Officer). The *Mandal* had an Assistant under him to assist him in his accounts. He had to look after the repair, on a free-labour system, of portions of the roads made over to him, to construct new roads, to see that the *Raiyats* provided him *Coolies* and provisions at market-rates for Government, to be an intermediary between the Government and the *Raiyats* as regards public order, sanitation etc. The *Mandal* used to receive 10 per cent of his collection of rent except cardamom in addition to a rent-free grant. The *Mandals* were appointed as such in succession. The *Mandal* in Pedong *Khas Mahal* happened to be Sri L. B. Rai, resident of another constituent outside Upper Pedong, about whom a discussion will be made later.

The *Mandal* as the traditional leader of the villlage with a *quasi*-judicial authority and influence, has prestige and area of domination not restricted within the confines of his *Khas Mahal* but sometimes even transgressing the limits of his area of residence and revenue-jurisdiction. Yet, with the formation of the statutory *Panchayats* his position has been

affected, inasmuch as formerly the headman usually took the lead in arbitration proceedings on disputes in his area, namely, the boundary disputes and irrigation disputes. Even quarrels and conflicts of a serious nature, though not noteworthy crimes, were referred to the *Mandal*, whereas the informal leader of each community attempted to settle the inter-personal and inter-family strifes and dissensions connected with any caste or inheritance through their good office and mediation. Thus, one observes the subtle distinction between the role of the informal leader of each ethnic group and that of the informal leader of the village-community. But, formal leadership of statutory nature after the election of the *Gram Panchayats* and *Anchal Panchayats* has only partially taken over some of the functions of the *Mandal* and has ecclipsed the importance of the latter only insignificantly. The *Mandal* continues to enjoy the position of a virtual master in the *Khas Mahal* as hitherto. His overbearing importance in the *Khas Mahal*, still a factor to be reckoned with, only helps him resolve all knotty problems, whether of inter-personal or inter-family, inter-community or inter-hamlet nature. And all differences dissolve, once he gives his personal attention to the dispute referred to him. Interestingly, however, the arbitration is not a mandatory obligation of the *Mandal*. Yet, one cannot go beyond the Bhutia adage of *Cha Ryp Chheyn Ta* which makes the *Mandal* behave like a father in the *Khas Mahal*. The goodwill and influence of the *Mandal* are proverbial to help him considerably in undertaking welfare-work within the village. According to the practice of the *Jharlongi*, each household within the village has to contribute two mandays compulsorily towards the construction or renovation of the village-roads under the *Mandal*. During the survey the renovation of the village-road in Sakyong *Khas Mahal* was observed to have been undertaken under the *Jharlongi*.

Decentralised democracy and statutory leadership

In 1960 Upper Pedong was brought under the scope and jurisdiction of the Community Development Organisation, when the Office of the Block Development Officer of the Kalimpong National Extension Service Block II was established at Algarah with all the technical personnel and funds and the avowed objective of allowing a reasonable opportunity to all villagers to develop their capacity to the utmost and to assume the welfare and prosperity of the rural people by technical guidance. It is interesting to have an idea of the impact of all the development programmes and the Five-Year Plans on the villagers after more than a decade. The probe does not yield a very bright picture, if one takes into account the awareness of the people about the Block Organisation, scheduled to have executed the development measures. Though one and all the households know of the market at Algarah, 14 households, out of 87, are yet to know of the location of the Block Development Office and the purpose of its existence. But more appalling is the revelation that only 32 households (36.8 per cent) have admitted to have been benefitted by the same organisation. To accept the oral evidence of the respondents or not on the basis of its face value is anybody's option. But, reality spells out the truth further, when three households declare themselves as beneficiaries of the help received by them through distribution of improved seeds from the Block Office, while the heads of 16 households are reported to have received improved seeds and chemical fertiliser from the Block Office. The rest of the 13 households reported to have derived some benefit from the Block Development Organisation include ten recipients of Government loan from the same Office and three others who do not forget that they have been offered general relief.

A critical assessment will never treat

households, receiving loans or general relief from the Block Development Office, as real beneficiaries. If so, the effect of the development measures has percolated to the individual levels of only 21.8 per cent of the total number of households in Upper Pedong. Distribution of loan or relief has not been the avowed objective of the Five Year Plans or the development programmes executed by the Block Organisation. Still, Block Development Organisation has had to take up many curious assortment of programmes, not even remotely connected with the development of the rural economy.

A Block Development Organisation's success depends on the technical team captained by the Block Development Officer. But, the eyes and ears of the Block Organisation function through the agency of the *Gram Sevak*, (the Village Level Worker) who maintains the vital link of the Block Officer with the people through extension methods. In such cases an efficient liasion with the people can only harbinger the success of the development work. But, there too signal failure seems to be the only derivative from the response of 17 households (less than 20.0 per cent), which are aware of the functions of the *Gram Sevak*. About one third (29 households) of the village households which observes the *Gram Sevak* to have regularly visited them are mostly engaged in cultivation either directly or indirectly.

Panchayati Raj solemnising the coronation of the uncrowned leaders, statutorily elected by the village people, promises to serve as the king-pin of the decentralised democracy. Such a leadership does not envisage a pyramidal structure with the head of the institution providing the drive and initiative at the apex of the organisation. An agricultural economy with a vast rural base and the people nailed to tradition and puritanism, immobility and conservatism demands revolutionary dynamism of tremendous protentiality to rouse the people from their age-old slumber and to make them glance at the world outside moving in an incredible speed with an objective of change and progress.

West Bengal *Panchayat* Act of 1957 marks the beginning of the promises held out by the *Panchayati Raj* institution. But, the enactment of the legislative measures has not gone hand in hand with executive enforcement of the same statute. Hence, with the time-lag of five years nearly, the rural democratic hierarchy in the two-tiered Pedong *Gram Panchayat* and Pedong *Anchal Panchayat* comes into being in 1961. With 12 elected representatives, Pedong *Anchal Panchayat* has its office situated at Pedong Bazar in a rented room in the shopping centre of Pedong D. I. F. Area. Pedong *Anchal Panchayat* has within its jurisdiction Pedong *Gram Panchayat*, Sakiyong *Gram Panchayat* and Kashone *Gram Panchayat*. The *Gram Panchayat* being the democratically elected body at the village-level constituted by the village-electorate known as *Gram Sabha*, of which every adult villager qualifying as a voter in the electoral roll of the Assembly Constituency is a member, it is proposed first to discuss about Pedong *Gram Panchayat*.

Pedong *Gram Panchayat* is the decentralised democratic body-elect representing the rural populace of the *Gram Sabha* of Pedong *Khas Mahal* comprising the villages Upper Pedong, Dalep, Merong and Niong through 10 elected members. Since a *Mauza* is the lowest unit in the land-revenue administration, the individual segments of the *Mauza*, whether in the form of villages or hamlets as distinctly viable socio-economic units or not, are neither recognised nor identified. For all purposes of administration the *Mauza* remaining an indivisible unit, no mutation without legal sanction and statutory notification by the concerned agency is ever taken note of. If

this rigidity is observed with all sanctity for the integrity of the geographical and administrative entity known as a *Mauza*, this does not preclude the possibility of the constitution or cohesion of different other areas of socio-economic cooperation and dependence transcending the juristic norms of unchangeable borders of the *Mauza*. In the case of statutory bodies of the *Panchayats*, the area of jurisdiction is delimited keeping in view the population of a *Mauza*. But, the configuration of the constituency of the *Gram Sabha* may or may not fit in with the demarcated map of the *Mauza*. Once it does, as in the case of Pedong *Khas Mahal*, the limits of the *Gram Sabha* are inviolable and consequentially also the area of jurisdiction of the elected body of the *Gram Panchayat*, even though the *Gram Sabha* covers more than a village or hamlet within the *Mauza*. As a result, the number of representatives to be returned by the electorate of the *Gram Sabha* very much depends on the total population of the *Mauza* as a whole but not on the population of its segments. Therefore, 10 members of Pedong *Gram Panchayat* represent the entire population of Pedong *Khas Mahal*.* To analyse the number of members village-wise on the basis of the place of residence of the elected members would lead to wrong conclusions, as the villages do not have individual quota of representatives. But, one may examine the question of the seat of leadership from the point of member's place of residence. Pedong D. I. F. Area, locating the seat of shopping parade and marketing centre of not only Upper Pedong and other constituent segments of Pedong *Khas Mahal* but also a larger area around, happens to be the place of residence of two representatives of Pedong *Gram Panchayat*, even though it is not covered by the jurisdiction of either Pedong *Gram Panchayat* or the Pedong *Anchal Panchayat*. It is exclusively under the control of Darjeeling Improvement Fund Committee. Upper Pedong has only one representative, Dalep has three, Merong and Niyong each has two elected members of Pedong *Gram Panchayat*. Obviously, the importance of Upper Pedong is minimal from the point of place of residence. Pedong D. I. F. Area with an importance of its own because of the economic levers of marketing and distribution of different commodities and services of the rural life of the region around has also assumed an aristocratic look because of the two elected representatives from its heart pursuing trade and commerce. If the democratic power of Pedong *Gram Panchayat* be the trust springing from and existing for all the people of Pedong *Khas Mahal*, its citadel is located in Pedong D. I. F. Area where the Office of Pedong *Gram Panchayat* is situated. The locational factor of the situation of the Office of the *Gram Panchayat* has vested some other socio-political importance on Pedong D. I. F. Area, stealing a march on Dalep with three elected representatives. Table 150 on the elected members of Pedong *Gram Panchayat* will show the demographic, socio-economic and cultural traits of the rural democrats.

An analysis of the ethnic groups of the members of the *Gram Panchayat* brings into a sharp focus the majority of the *Nepali* communities comprising two Newars, two Tamangs, one Brahman and one Rai, representing 60.0 per cent of the elected members. Three Bhutia representatives belonging to the Scheduled Tribe represent 30.0 per cent of the elected members of the *Gram Panchayat*. Incidentally it may be mentioned that in Pedong *Khas Mahal* the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes represent 35.7 per cent of the total population of 1,673 persons and in this respect the Bhutias represent in identical proportion their community to the *Gram Panchayat*. Upper Pedong through its Bhutia representative has shown justice to the Bhutias, the numerically majority community of the village. But, an adequate

TABLE 150

MEMBERSHIP OF *GRAM PANCHAYAT*

Name of *Gram Panchayat*	Villages thereunder	Names of the members	Place of residence	Community	Religion	Age	Education with standard	Occupation	Whether a *Mandal* before the *Panchayat*
Pedong *Gram Panchayat*	Upper Pedong Dalep	Mahananda Pradhan *(Adhyaksha)*	Niyong	Newar	Hindu	62	Class VI	Cultivator	No
	Merong	Lobsang Tsh Nadik *(Upaddhyaksha)*	Merong	Bhutia	Buddhist	46	Class VI	Do	Ex-*Mandal*
	Niyong	Wangval Thendup Bhutia	Pedong D. I. F.	Bhutia	Buddhist	45	Class V	Cultivator & trader	No
		Lalbahadur Moktan	Niyong	Tamang	Buddhist	55	Class V	Contractor	No
		Bhagwan Prasad	Pedong D. I. F.	Bihari-*Vaishya*	Hindu	52	Class IV	Trader	No
		Sangay Bhutia	Upper Pedong	Bhutia	Buddhist	42	Can read & write *Nepali*	Cultivator	No
		Dhanapati Sharma	Dalep	*Nepali* Brahman	Hindu	55	Do	Do	No
		Karnabahadur Rai	Dalep	Rai	Hindu	52	Do	Do	No
		Mailasingh Bomjan	Dalep	Tamang	Buddhist	53	Do	Do	No
		Mrs. Lilamaya Pradhan	Merong	Newar	Hindu	45	I. A. & G. T.	Teacher	No

representation of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes of Upper Pedong or of its parent *Mauza* through the Bhutias does negative the question of ethnic principles as the motive-force in the body-politic of the *Gram Panchayat*. The key position of the *Adhyaksha* is taken by a Newar and the second important position in the hierarchy is occupied by the Bhutia through the post of the *Upaddhyaksha*. Even though the *Nepali* communities as a group seem to be dominant numerically, the relative superiority in number to other groups is established by three Bhutia representatives. In the *Gram Panchayat* the Bhutias are numerically followed by the Newars and then by the Tamangs, the Rais and the *Nepali* Brahmans. The *Vaisya* (Bihari) is the solitary member of a community of the plains and also of Bihar residing in the remote corner of a hill village.

As the majority of the households of Upper Pedong are Buddhists, the election of the Buddhist Bhutia as the representative of the *Gram Panchayat* only substantiates the inference that religion in the village is also a great socio-cultural force invading people's forum and influencing popular choice. Taken as a whole, there is a parity of Hindus and Buddhists among the elected members of the *Gram Panchayat*. Buddhism has introduced a new factor of alignment, ignoring factional groups on ethnic principles. The Bhutia and the Tamang members being all Buddhists, the election of the *Adhyaksha* and the *Upaddhyakhsha* from the *Nepali* and the Bhutia communities is explained. When the Newar representative was a nominee for the post of the *Adhyaksha*, the *Nepali* communities grouped together without any regard for their religious faith or profession and constituted a majority group. The Bhutia *Upaddhyaksha*, on the other hand, got the support of the members of the Buddhist following who disregarded ethnic considerations.

While none of the members of the *Gram Panchayat* is less than 41 years of age, the youngest elected member, aged 42 years, hails from Upper Pedong. Members in the age-group (51-60) constitute the majority group with five representatives, four members belong to the age-group (41-50) and the seniormost member, aged 62 years, happens to be the doyen of the elected members in the post of the *Adhyaksha*, in whose favour age and seniority have weighed considerably.

One is assured that rural democracy in Pedong *Gram Panchayat* is not on trial, as all the members are literate. Four members are literate without any educational standard, four have education upto Primary standard, one has pre-Primary education and another is an undergraduate with diploma in Teacher's Training.

Occupationally, five members are exclusively cultivators and one is a cultivator as well as a trader. One person is exclusively a trader. One is a businesman connected with road-construction. A teacher has also a place in the *Gram Panchayat*. On the whole, the majority of the members are associated with cultivation.

That the *Mandal* is an important person is corroborated by the election of the ex-*Mandal* of Pedong *Khas Mahal*, as a nominee to the *Gram Panchayat* of the villagers and his subsequent election to the Office of the *Gram Panchayat*. But, in the case of election of other members the support or influence of any such institution is not observed. The most important feature of the rural democracy at the level of the *Gram Panchayat* is the election of a female from Merong as the most enlightened and educated representative to the elected body. The participation of women in the social life of the community and the elected body-politic of the village society spells the transformation of the village into a new world, imbued with modern concepts and values of change and progress. Another feature which merits

TABLE 151

MEMBERSHIP OF PEDONG *ANCHAL PANCHAYAT*

Name of *Anchal Panchayat*	Constituent *Gram Panchayat*	Names of villages under each *Panchayat*	Names of members of *Anchal Panchayat*	Place of residence	Community	Age	Religion	Education with standard	Occupation	Whether a *Mandal*
Pedong *Anchal Panchayat*	Pedong	Upper Pedong Dalep Merong Nyong	Brich Pradhan *(Pradhan)*	Phurun (Kashone)	Newar	45	Christian	Class IV	Cultivator	No
			Chen Tsh Bhutia *(Upa-Pradhan)*	Dokyong (Sakyong)	Bhutia	60	Buddhist	Class VI & Jr. B. T.	Teacher	No
	Sakyong	Dokyong Upper Menchu Lower Menchu Tendrabong Mul-Sakyong	Lalbahadur Rai	Nyong (Pedong)	Rai	47	Hindu	B. A.	Teacher	*Mandal* & member of *Zilla Parishad*
			S. G. Dorjee	Mul-Sakyong	Bhutia	60	Buddhist	Class III	Cultivator	*Mandal* & ex-member of District Board
	Kashone	Samdung phurun Kamjer Namchelekha	Gajanand Pariwal	Pedong D. I. F.	*Marwari*	55	Hindu	Class VII	Trader	No
			Bhusan Rai	Upper Menchu (Pedong)	Rai	50	Hindu	Class VI	Teacher	No
			Kharkadas Rai	Dakyong (Sakyong)	Rai	49	Hindu	Class III	Cultivator	No
			Jabar Dewan	Lower Menchu (Sakyong)	Yakha	48	Christian	Class IV	Cultivator	No
			Ramlal Rai	Tendrabong (Sakyong)	Rai	63	Hindu	Can read & write *Nepali*	Cultivator	No
			Agu Tsh. Lepcha	Namchelekha (Kashone)	Lepcha	56	Buddhist	Do	Cultivator	No
			Narad Sharma	Samdung (Kashone)	*Nepali* Brahman	61	Hindu	Do	Cultivator	No
			Wangyal Dhendun Bhutia	Pedong D. I. F.	Bhutia	45	Buddhist	Class V	Cultivator	No

attention concerns the education of the elected representatives. Even though 29.4 per cent of the population of Pedong *Khas Mahal* constitute the literate and the educated section of the *Mauza*, the verdict of the village electorate is decisively in favour of literacy and education. This reveals that the people do not like to be led by a group of illiterate representatives. Only the literate and the educated in the opinion-poll have the merits and attributes of an able leadership to shape the destiny of the village to a bright future.

The elected body of the village at the micro-level is but a segment of the larger democratic body in the form of the *Anchal Panchayat*. Pedong *Anchal Panchayat* with twelve representatives elected by three *Gram Panchayats* has jurisdiction over three *Mauzas*, namely Pedong *Khas Mahal*, Kashone *Khas Mahal* and Sakyong *Khas Mahal*, each with a population of 1,673, 1,382 and 3,037 respectively. Table 15 relates to the membership-pattern of Pedong *Anchal Panchayat*.

On the strength of population, the respective *Gram Panchayats* of Pedong *Khas Mahal*, Kashone *Khas Mahal* and Sakyong *Khas Mahal* are entitled to an apportionment of seats in the ratio of 3:3:6. Instead, the number of members returned by the same *Gram Panchayats* to Pedong *Anchal Panchyat* follows the ratio of 2:8:2. The loss in number of the elected representatives from Pedong *Gram Panchayat* to Pedong *Anchal Panchayat* has been partly recompensed by the capture of the prestigious offices of the two highest office-bearers, namely, the *Pradhan* and the *Upa-Pradhan*, by the two members returned by the same *Gram Panchayat*. But, then again, none of the two elected officials of the *Anchal Panchayat* are residents of either Pedong *Khas Mahal* or Pedong D.I.F. Area. An analysis of the places of residence of the elected members of the *Anchal Panchayat*, however, reveals the ratio of the number of members from the aforesaid *Mauzas* in a different way. None of the members returned by Pedong *Gram Panchayat* is a resident of Upper Pedong. Only one representative elected by Sakyong *Gram Panchayat* and two members returned by Kashone *Gram Panchayat* are residents of Sakyong *Khas Mahal* and Kashone *Khas Mahal* respectively. From the point of residence Pedong *Khas Mahal* and Pedong D.I.F. Area have jointly four representatives, each with two. Three members of the *Anchal Panchayat* stay in Kashone *Khas Mahal* and five representatives on the same body are residents of Sakyong *Khas Mahal*. The two representatives staying in Pedong *Khas Mahal* both belong to the Rai community, a *Nepali* ethnic group.

The *Nepali* communities constituted by four ethnic groups hold the majority comprising one Newar, one *Nepali* Brahman, one Yakha and four Rai members of the *Anchal Panchayat*. One Lepcha and four Bhutia members representing one-third of the seats of the *Anchal Panchayat* belong to the Scheduled Tribes, the members of the Scheduled Tribes in the *Mauzas* within the jurisdiction of the *Anchal Panchayat* accounting for 29.1 per cent of the total population of the three *Mauzas*. Of the two representatives returned by Pedong *Gram Panchayat*, one is a Rai and one is a Bhutia. But, both the elected members of the *Anchal Panchayat*, residing in Pedong *Khas Mahal*, belong to the Rai community. Pedong *Anchal Panchayat* as a whole predominantly comprise Hindu members, as only two members are Christians and four are Buddhists. Though Pedong *Gram Pauchayat's* representatives comprise one Buddhist and one Christian, the members, resident in Pedong *Khas Mahal*, are all Hindus, returned by Kashone *Gram Panchayat* and Sakyong *Gram Panchayat*.

No member is younger than the one aged 45 years, whereas the seniormost member is 63

years old. The middle age-group (41-50) appears to have the maximum number of six members, the *Pradhan* being 45 years old and the *Upa-Pradhan*, aged 60 years, holding a balance between him and the juniormost member. Four members belong to the age-group (51-60) and two members senior to them have had more than six decades of life.

Even with 33.6 per cent of the population as the literate and the educated group, the three *Mauzas* have elected only literate representatives to the *Anchal Panchayat*. With only one member, a Graduate in Arts, the *Anchal Panchayat* comprises three literates without any formal education, four members with education upto pre-Primary standard, three persons with education upto the Primary standard and one member educated upto the Middle standard. The Graduate is a teacher in Pedong *Khas Mahal*.

Though the *Pradhan* is a cultivator, the *Upa-Pradhan* is a teacher. Cultivation, being the occupation of eight members, only represents the vocation of the majority of the people living in three constituent *Mauzas*. But, the election of three teachers to the elected council of rural democracy on the other hand shows the inclination of the electorate in general and of the literate elected representatives of the three *Gram Panchayats* towards education, enlightenment and emancipation from ignorance. It also heralds the awakening of the rural people in age-old slumber, on the point of being unbound from the chains of servitude to superstition and escape from a dull narrow world of their own. Even the Himalayan hills pose no surmountable barriers for them to allow the streaks of the light of democratic concepts into the little societies of the tiny village in the lap of the most famous mountain of the world.

In the rural democracy with a free election by ballot, opinions modulate the choice and selection of representatives of the public to the forum of the *Panchayat*. But, opinions are formulated by the people proficient in the 'art to find mind's construction.' The simple villagers are subject to the influence of many forces which can be looked at 'not with the eyes but with the mind'. Election to the *Panchayats* has not been conducted on the merit of any manifesto or on the subjective and objective appeals of any political ideology or principle. *Panchayats* are out of the range of practical politics, for none is in favour of importing this political party or that into the arena of the village-society. Yet, the consensus of opinion does not negative the personal and impersonal influence of the contestants on the electorate and the perplexed reaction of unseemly exposure of public minds to the spell of parochial appeals germinating from ethnic issues. 'To die for faction is a common evil' no doubt, and the villagers could not rise above the common evil of the faction of their respective communities regimented on ethnic principles at the hour of selection of popular representatives to the *Anchal Panchayat*. Ethnic considerations outweighing the sterling qualities of the contesting candidates for a seat in the *Anchal Panchayat* act as decisive factors in the election to motivate the voting pattern and affect the voters' behaviour during the polls. Even the status and power of the candidates wield an uncanny influence on the free poll. Thus, two members, *Mandals* in their respective *Khas Mahals*, seem to make the people aware of their importance as Rent-Collectors of the Government and irrelevantly though, accepted as their chosen representatives. The traditionalism of an old institution casts its shadow on the modernism of a democratic organisation. One of the *Mandals* has after election to the *Anchal Panchayat* even been nominated as a member to the *Zilla Parishad* at the district level. He is a Rai, a Graduate in Arts, a teacher and a resident of Pedong *Khas Mahal*. Another *Mandal* stimulates his

appeal to the people by the position, he earlier enjoyed as a member in the District Board, the forerunner of the present *Zilla Parishad*. The change-over from the District Board to the *Zilla Parishad* might mean a different philosophy for those who enunciate *Panchayati* institutions with a broad base of representative democracy. But, for the present *Anchal Panchayat* the old wine has been poured in a new bottle for at least a section of the village people. The member of the erstwhile District Board has acquired a new prestige which boosted his candidature before the electoral college of the village. Basically, the leadership remains the same but with the difference of only a name and nomenclature. Wealth and commerce have likewise succeeded in winning friends from the people to nominate a trader and businessman to the rural Parliament. Learning as well as the old institution of official nobility represented by the village-official of the *Mandal* have weaned quite many voters to declare the democratic will in favour of three teachers and two *Mandals*. The preponderance of *Nepali* population in the constituent *Khas Mahals* of the *Anchal Panchayat* has been explained by the majority group in the *Anchal Panchayat* belonging to various *Nepali* communities. Democracy has levelled differences of castes and creeds down to the level of the majority with which factionalism in the ethnic base is a comfortable creed. The nascent rural democracy has not yet obliterated the bastion of groupings based on differences of castes and creeds. For its leadership to catch up the spirit of fraternity and equality is a distant vision, a non-descript dream and a remote possibility in the background of the present reality of the illiterate multitude with a distressingly mute, quiet and innocent life.

That *Panchayats* are yet to integrate themselves into the social polity of the village is attested by the negative answers of the heads of 15 households to the question if they are aware of the existence of the *Gram Panchayat* and the *Anchal Panchayat*. The explanation that some of the households are recent immigrants and some have women as the heads does not provide a good defence in support of the ignorance of a section of the village-people. Only 45 households accounting for a little over 50.0 per cent of the total number of households of Upper Pedong declare themselves as recipients of even partial benefits from the *Gram Panchayat*. But, on actual examination of the nature of benefits derived by them, it is revealed that 20 households have a wrong notion about the nature of service of the *Gram Panchayat*, as they are reported to have been helped by the *Gram Panchayat* in the settlement of disputes involving them. Since the judicial wing of the *Anchal Panchayat* in the elected body of the *Nyaya Panchayat* has not yet been constituted, the *Gram Panchayat's quasi*-judicial functions in the arbitration of disputes exceed the terms and conditions of its juristic functions. Besides, the informal help extended by members of the *Gram Panchayat* does not entitle it to the epithet of a dispenser of public benefits. The nature of benefit is not spelled out by a couple of households. Only 23 households reportedly acclaim the *Gram Panchayat* for the construction of the *Kutcha* village-roads within the village but do not cite any more example of its welfare activity or development work. The performance on the score of public testimony is indeed a poor record and offers a sad commentary on the inaction of the decentralised democracy to enthuse the people about the development work, the constructive programme of nation-building and to involve them in the planning and execution of development schemes for the village. If the villagers remain silent about the achievement of the *Gram Panchayat*, the failure of the organisation in attaining the objectives necessitating its creation becomes too patent and brooks no analysis.

TABLE 152

BUDGET ESTIMATE OF THE PEDONG *ANCHAL PANCHAYAT*
(1961-62 TO 1966-67)

RECEIPTS

Sanctioned estimate for years

Heads of receipts	1961-62		1962-63		1963-64		1964-65		1965-66		1966-67	
	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.
Opening balance	..	..	703	98	2,308	64	3,913	30	3,812	35	5,479	52
Contribution by the State Government under Section 52, for the maintenance of *Dafadars* and *Chowkidars*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	45	00	45	00
Contribution by the State Government under Section 55(1)(a) for general or any special purpose	1,194	96	1,600	00	1,880	00	2,157	00	2,169	00	2,207	00
Receipts from tax, tolls, fees, rates etc. under Section 55(1) (b)	..	..	200	00	1,418	00	1,150	00	2,136	95	2,641	94
Receipt from loans, gifts or contributions or from endowments or trusts under Section 55(1) (b)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**1,194**	**96**	**2,503**	**98**	**5,606**	**64**	**7,220**	**30**	**8,163**	**30**	**10,373**	**46**

Actuals for the years

Heads of receipts	1961-62		1962-63		1963-64		1964-65		1965-66		1966-67	
	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.
Opening balance	..	..	703	98	2,308	64	3,913	30	3,812	35	5,479	52
Contribution by the State Government under Section 52, for the maintenance of *Dafadars* and *Chowkidars*	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Contribution by the State Government under Section 55(1)(a) for general or any special purpose	1,144	96	1,600	00	1,762	88	2,157	00	2,060	00	2,507	00
Receipts from tax, tolls, fees, rates etc., under Section 55(1) (b)	..	..	884	89	884	89	783	45	995	01	..	..
Receipts from loans, gifts or contributions or from endowments or trusts under Section 55(1) (b)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Miscellaneous	..	..	9	00	9	00	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	**1,144**	**96**	**3,197**	**87**	**4,965**	**41**	**6,853**	**75**	**6,867**	**36**	**7,986**	**52**

TABLE 152—*contd.*

EXPENDITURES

Sanctioned estimate for the years

Head of disbursement	1961-62		1962-63		1963-64		1964-65		1965-66		1966-67	
	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.
General Administration												
(i) Pay and allowances of												
(a) Secretary	362	88	600	00	880	00	1,157	00	1,169	00	1,207	00
(b) Other establisments	00	00	50	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
(ii) Travelling allowances	32	08	150	00	50	00	50	00	100	00	150	00
(iii) Contingencies	300	00	10	00	200	00	200	00	300	00	250	00
(iv) Miscellaneous	00	00	00	00	49	97	50	00	00	00	100	00
(v) Collection charges, rates, taxes, relief etc.	00	00	00	00	00	00	50	00	00	00	00	00
Maintenance of *Dafadars* and *Chowkidars*	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	90	00	45	00
Allotment to *Gram Panchayats*	500	00	990	00	3,113	10	3,000	00	1,500	00	1,500	00
Miscellaneous (House rent)	00	00	00	00	00	00			00	00	00	00
Total	**1,194**	**96**	**1,800**	**00**	**4,293**	**07**	**4,507**	**00**	**3,159**	**00**	**3,252**	**00**

Actual for the years

Head of disbursement	1961-62		1962-63		1963-64		1964-65		1965-66		1966-67	
	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	F.	Rs.	P.	Rs.	P.
General Administration												
(i) Pay and allowances of												
(a) Secretary	312	88	600	00	762	88	1,157	00	1,060	00	1,277	00
(b) Other establishment	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	131	50
(ii) Travelling allowances	128	10	00	00	00	00	40	00	78	00	152	85
(iii) Contingencies	00	00	00	00	131	38	149	40	249	84	00	00
(iv) Miscellaneous	00	00	164	23	47	85	120	00	00	00	120	00
(v) Collection charges, rates, taxes, relief etc.	00	00	125	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Maintenance of *Dafadars* and *Chowkidars*	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Allotment to *Gram Panchayats*	00	00	00	00	00	00	1,575	00	00	00	3,000	00
Miscellaneous (House rent)	00	00	00	00	110	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Total	**440**	**98**	**889**	**23**	**1,052**	**11**	**3,041**	**40**	**1,387**	**84**	**4,681**	**35**

Voluntary organisation

Backed up by necessity's sharp pinch and moved by a sense of fellow-feeling and philanthropy, three persons, Sri Kusal Singh Karki, Sri Prabhu Narayan Pradhan and Sri Jagat Bahadur Pradhan, were the sponsors of the first voluntary organisation of the village, named Pedong S. K. U. S. Ltd., registered originally in 1910 with 25 members in the village of Pedong as a Rural Credit Society with an object to provide loans for the members. Primarily cultivators, all the sponsors also ran individually a private business as money-lenders. When they were impregnated with the concept of cooperation, they discontinued their trade in usurious loans and organised Pedong Rural Cooperative Society to help themselves as well as others with credit on easy terms. The remarkable change of three private money-lenders into powerful exponents of the principles of cooperation appears quite fantastic and the account sounds like a fable. One may reasonably ask what occasioned the change. Prior to the organisation of the Society, the members had to pledge their crops to the *Mahajans* of the village against loans on exorbitant rate of interest. The blatant injustice and inhuman exploitation perpetrated on the villagers by the *Mahajans* had sown the seeds of cooperation in the minds of the three organisers, pioneers in this field of cooperation in the village. The Society, soon after its formation, took upon itself the task of extending the credit facilities to the members at reasonable rate of interest to enable them to purchase the inputs of agriculture, seeds, manure etc. The Society has still been advancing loans for seasonal agricultural operations to its members. And the membership-pattern will be detailed later.

The Society, according to the information furnished by the Assistant Registrar Cooperative Societies, Darjeeling, Government of West Bengal, had a total share capital of eighty rupees only at the time of its inception. But the share catital, having rolled on for more than half a century, is reported at the time of investigation to total Rs. 973.50 *paise*, an amount not revealing a very healthy state. The paucity of funds explains partly the reason why the Society has not expanded its business beyond the pale of agricultural credit to take up other service functions. Total loan taken by members could not be ascertained, as old records are reported by the Assistant Registrar Cooperative Societies, Darjeeling; not to have been available. The furnished information relates to a couple of years preceding the investigation and reveals that the loan issued till July, 1963 amounts to Rs. 2250.00 *paise* and the amount of loan realised totals Rs. 1814.00 *paise*, leaving an amount of Rs. 436.00 *paise* due for realisation. The efficiency of work, however, appears to be attuned to a high pitch, as 80.6 per cent of the loan have been realised. But, executive efficiency has been more than offset by the financial weakness sapping the strength of the Society. With an asset of Rs. 5416.00 *paise*, the Society bears the burden of a liability of Rs. 1673.00 *paise*.

While the finance of the Society offers a bleak picture, one may examine the membership pattern of the same Society. The Society consists of 40 members hailing from nine different communities, of which eight members are residents of Upper Pedong, others staying in different other villages of Pedong Khas Mahal. The largest number of members come from the Tamangs with 18 members, of which three are residents of Upper Pedong. Interestingly however, the Tamangs are the largest single ethnic group in the village. Next to the Tamangs, the second largest group is represented by seven Rais, of which three reside in Upper Pedong. The Rais constitute the third largest ethnic group in the village. Only one Chhetri, out of six members of the same community, hails from Upper

Pedong. But, none of the six Newars, two Kamis, one Dukpa, one Lepcha and one Sarki comes from Upper Pedong. Thus, eight members, also residents of Upper Pedong, represent only 9.2 per cent of all households and belong to four ethnic groups, out of 18 communities of the village.

Out of forty members, eight belong to the age-group (31-40), 10 to the age-group (41-50), seven to the age-group (51-60), another seven to the age-group (61-70) and eight to the age-group (71-80). The preponderance of the persons aged 51 years and above is explained mainly by the pattern of headship according to age. The land owned by a household and cultivated by the members is recorded in the name of its head. The majority of the members are literate, as only 17 members of the Society are found to be illiterate. Again 33 members pursue cultivation as their primary occupation. Though seven other members of the Society are associated with service, agriculture is their secondary source of income and cultivation their subsidiary occupation. Of the members, resident in Upper Pedong, three are below 50 years of age, whereas the rest represent a wide spectra from 51 to 75. Six members are literate and three members, primarily service-holders, are secondarily cultivators. The information of the area of land, cultivated as owners or sharecroppers or both, by the members of the Society would have been a very important datum. But, the datum of the same kind is available only for the residents of Upper Pedong. Of the Tamang trio, only two are owner-cultivators each with the landed area of 1.45 acres and 7.90 acres respectively. The land under cultivation by these two owners totals an area of 9.35 acres accounting for 65.8 per cent of the landed area owned by five Tamangs, the average area of land under cultivation and ownership of an individual being 2.84 acres. Of the two Tamang members of the Society, one owns land with an area much above the average area of an individual Tamang landowner. The third Tamang member of the Cooperative Society is a sharecropper cultivating the land of 3.50 acres of area. The three Rai members of the Society are all landowners, one of whom is primarily an agriculturist. While the average area of land cultivated by a Rai landowner comes to 4.21 acres in Upper Pedong, two members of

TABLE 153

PEDONG RURAL COOPERATIVE SOCIETY

Name	Community	Place of residence	Age	Level of literacy	Occupation
Sri Bahadur Tamang	Tamang	Outside Upper Pedong	75	Illiterate	Agriculture
Sri Bhuiral Singh Lama	Ditto	Ditto	70	Literate	Ditto
Sri Birbahadur Moktan	Ditto	Upper Pedong	51	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Chhi Dorjee Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	70	Illiterate	Ditto
Sri Dhojman Tamang	Ditto	Outside Upper Pedong	80	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Harkaman Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	75	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Kalu Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	41	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Lalbahadur Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	60	Literate	Service
Sri Madhumaya Tamang	Ditto	Upper Pedong	75	Illiterate	Agriculture

TABLE 153—*contd.*

Name	Community	Place of residence	Age	Level of literacy	Occupation
Sri Manbir Tamang	Tamang	Outside Upper Pedong	42	Literate	Ditto
Sri Mohon Sing Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	70	Illiterate	Ditto
Sri Pademlal Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	40	Literate	Ditto
Sri Palsang Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	39	Illiterate	Ditto
Sri Phurba Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	48	Literate	Ditto
Sri Samser Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	52	Ditto	Ditto
Sm. Rupadevi Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	47	Illiterate	Ditto
Sri Temba Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	55	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Tenzing Tamang	Ditto	Ditto	65	Ditto	Service
Sri Birbahadur Rai	Rai	Outside Upper Pedong	45	Literate	Ditto
Sri Birjalal Rai	Ditto	Upper Pedong	52	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Dalbir Rai	Ditto	Ditto	35	Ditto	Agriculture
Sri Gyalbahadur Rai	Ditto	Ditto	51	Illiterate	Ditto
Sri Rambahadur Rai	Ditto	Outside Upper Pedong	45	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Ranbir Rai	Ditto	Ditto	37	Literate	Ditto
Sri Sakhbiri Rai	Ditto	Ditto	35	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Manbahadur Chhetri	Chhetri	Upper Pedong	45	Literate	Service
Sri Rajbahadur Singh	Ditto	Outside Upper Pedong	48	Illiterate	Agriculture
Sri Ratan Bahadur Chhetri	Ditto	Ditto	42	Literate	Ditto
Sri Jabbir Newar	Newar	Ditto	65	Ditto	Agriculture
Sri Kirtiman Pradhan	Ditto	Ditto	80	Illiterate	Service
Sri Laxmi Narayn Pradhan	Ditto	Ditto	75	Literate	Agriculture
Sm. Motimaya Pradhan	Ditto	Ditto	43	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Tembahadur Pradhan	Ditto	Ditto	37	Illiterate	Ditto
Sri Umananda Pradhan	Ditto	Ditto	41	Literate	Ditto
Sri Adal Bin Kami	Kami	Ditto	80	Illiterate	Ditto
Sri Ashfar Kami	Ditto	Ditto	52	Literate	Service
Sri Purna Sharma	Brahman	Upper Pedong	32	Ditto	Agriculture
Sri Khargabahadur Dorjee	Dukpa	Outside Upper Pedong	32	Literate	Ditto
Sri Sonam Sing Lepcha	Lepcha	Ditto	66	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Chandra Sekhar Sarkey	Sarki	Ditto	80	Ditto	Ditto

Note : 1, 2, 3 & 4 have since been deceased, but their share-money has not yet been transferred—Editor.

the Society belonging to the Rai community have land with an area below the average figure and the third member of the same community associated with the Society has land, much above the same average. Thus, individual areas of land under cultivation and ownership of the three Rais, who are members of the Society, measure 2.25 acres, 2.40 acres and 6.50 acres respectively. The total area of land in the ownership of these members constitutes 37.8 per cent of the total area under cultivation and in the owership of seven Rai landowners of Upper Pedong. The solitary Chhetri member of the Society owns land much above the average of 4.01 acres of landed area of a Chhetri landholder of Upper Pedong. Primarily a service-holder but secondarily an agriculturist, the Rai owns 5.48 acres of land under cultivation, accounting for 68.3 per cent of the total area of land cultivated by the two Chhetri landowners of Upper Pedong. The area of land of the Brahman remains unspecified.

The constitution of the Society lays down the rule that a Managing Committee will hold the executive responsibility of running the Society. It consists of six Directors elected by the general members of the Society. The elected Directors, retiring annually, are eligible for reelection. But, no member of the Board of Directors is normally eligible for election, if he has held office for three years or more. The restrictive rule can be waived only with special permission from the Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Government of West Bengal, to enable a person to seek reelection, if he is disqualified otherwise under the restrictive principle.

The most striking feature about the Board of Directors, apt to arrest one's attention, is that the numerically strong ethnic group has been outstripped in a bid for leadership by another group, numerically less strong. Ethnic elements are not altogether a weak factor of influence on the election of Directors' Board, but the force of communal appeal has worked to a very limited extent. The Tamangs by virtue of the strength of their membership could have made the Board more homogeneous, even after the election of the Chairman. But as it appears, the power-structure is dominated more by the Rais than by others. While 18 Tamang members have only one representative elected to the Board, seven Rais have returned three representatives to the Managing Committee embodied in the Board of Directors. No less significant is the election of a single Dukpa member of the Society to the executive body. Similarly, three Chhetris have returned one member to the Board of Management. But, six

TABLE 154

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Name	Community	Designation	Age	Level of literacy	Occupation
Sri Padamlal Tamang	Tamang	Chairman	40	Literate	Agriculture
Sri Gyal Bahadur Rai	Rai	Secretary	51	Ditto	Service
Sri Manbahadur Chhetri	Chhetri	Director	45	Ditto	Agriculture
Sri Kharga Bahadur Dorjee	Dukpa	Ditto	32	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Dirghalal Rai	Rai	Ditto	66	Ditto	Ditto
Sri Narbahadur Rai	Ditto	Ditto	36	Ditto	Ditto

Newar members remain unrepresented and so do two Kamis, one Lepcha, one Brahman and one Sarki. All the members of the Board of Directors being literates, the election has profitably been utilised by 23 literate members of the Society. The illiterate members remain unrepresented in the management. The maximum number of members elected to the Board of Directors belongs to the age-group (31-40), which claims three Directors to the Board. All other age-groups have each one member elected to the Board, the age-group (71-80) remaining unrepresented. As it appears, youth has triumphantly established its leadership in the Cooperative Society. If so, it is because the youngest age-group has not yet been artful in the complex interplay of interests and are yet to know the guiles of winning friends to butter its own bread without provoking any question in any quarter. The Chhetris have evinced remarkable qualities of leadership and capacity with effective control on the power-structure of the Board of Management. That does not, however, speak equally eloquently for a spirit of cooperation and selfless social work. If the Rai Secretary and the Chhetri Director happen to be the residents of Upper Pedong, it only illustrates very strongly the ecclipse of the power of the Bhutias by the Nepali ethnic groups. The Rai and the Chhetri have been expert politicians with positive qualities of leadership beyond the limits of the village. The Rai Secretary is also the informal leader of his own community within the village. His election to the post of Secretary only shows how successfully he has projected himself as the leader in a voluntary organisation even outside the limits of his village. He has directed his faculty of positive leadership successfully in assessing his personal motivations against a background of possible social and economic advantages. No other member of any community except the Chhetri, let alone the Dukpas or the Sikkimese Bhutias, could emulate the Rai in his victorious march for ascendancy and glory across the confines of Upper Pedong.

The Society has not had the record of a a performance, vouchsafing the health of the Cooperative Society. But it has existed for more than half a century. The spirit of cooperation has been a mighty force to bind members together in their bid to break away from the clutches of an ever-exploiting band of rural creditors. The financial position of the Society has not proved very satisfactory in infusing an element of optimism into the organisation to look forward to an enlarged membership from a wider area of command. Nor does the strength of membership lend any weight to the force sustaining the Society. But, the Society has not altogether been extinct in course of its fifty years of existence, being neither weakened by rivalries, dissensions and cliques nor ruined by dishonest fortune-hunters. After establishment of a large-sized Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society at Algarah with an object of marketing ginger, the present Society has ample scope to tag its members to the larger Society at Algarah in the commerce of ginger instead of creating a ginger-group within its structure. But, that only marks the beginning, with no clear indication of whether or how it can steer itself to a prosperous future. Only future can judge its achievements.

Myths and legends

Upper Pedong is not a single community village. Instead, it is heterogeneous from several aspects, ethnic, linguistic, religious, economic and so on. The diverse characteristics of the population have not coalesced to develop 'a 'utopia of integration'. But, one can neither lose sight of the broad perspective of the common cultural heritage enshrined in the robust traditions of myths and legends which hold the children in enchantment and provide the young and the aged with an exuberant *joie-de-vivre*. The tales never get old nor become hackneyed through repetitive narration by parents to their

children, by the elders to the youngsters and by the *Lamas* to their clientele of devotees. The legends and tales, having no local origin nor any of the restrictive limits of time and place, have a spatial approach to effect a type of horizontal unity among the people of one or more ethnic or linguistic groups beyond the village. Composed by anonymous people in an unknown period of time, the legends have still the freshness of a folklore, constituting the unsophisticated oral tradition of the rural mass of different communites.

Legend of the Bhutias about a hunter

Once upon a time, a hunter, named Gyen Dorjee, with two hunting dogs chased a reindeer. The deer sought refuge from Jyee Che Rimboche, a meditating hermit in recluse. The hunter altercated with the hermit over the possession of the chase. But, the saint refused to give in. The enraged huntsman was about to shoot an arrow at the mendicant but failed to accomplish his design. Soon after he had gained consciousness, he realised that he was bereft of all physical power. The hunter did not take long to understand that the saint in spiritual power was superior to him. So, he surrendered to the saint, begging his forgiveness. The saint preached him many religious sermons and ethical principles and impressed on him the sin of hunting. The chastened hunter promised to abjure hunting and follow a life of virtuous acts and thoughts to secure a smooth passage to heaven.

Bhutia legend about their prayer

Long, long ago there lived a leper woman in a certain village all alone, looked after by none but, despised and neglected by her neighours and even by her relations. Determined to immolate herself in utter disgust, she climbed up the cliff of a mountain. There it suddenly occurred to her that her parents often muttered the holy prayer, *Kon Chhog* (the Buddhist Triad of *Buddha, Rimboche* and *Cherenji*). Before taking the fateful leap, she chanted the word, *Kon Chhog*. There appeared before her an aureola of sunrays in which she could decipher the prayer, *Om Mani Padme Hum* and also the divine revelation with an oracular announcement that the six-syllable prayer would cure her of her ailment. The woman instantly chanted the hymn and was miraculously cured then and there. In gratitude she stayed on in that place and recited the sacred hymn. Her health also gradually improved.

One day a lame shepherdess from the leper woman's village happened to visit the mountain with her herd of sheep and instantly recognised the covillage-woman during the chance encounter. The shepherdess wondered how the diseased woman was cured of her chronic malady. The woman ascribed her recovery to the grace of *Kon Chhog* and narrated the whole story. Very much amused, the shepherdess started chanting the prayer and continued doing so even on return home. Her father, blind in one eye, could not follow the meaning of her prayer. Next day, he shadowed her daughter to the hill and overheard a conversation between her and a woman there behind a grove. Her daughter accosted a woman expressing her gratitude to the latter and also told her that she felt much better, that day and she could walk in greater ease. After the woman had advised the girl to pray all the time so that the latter could enjoy full bliss, the girl left the place for her village. The girl's father then came out of the hideout, met the woman and implored her to shower her blessings on him to restore his lost eyesight to the affected eye. The woman candidly admitted that a cruel man like him taking fresh meat and slaughtering countless animals most freely could hardly be cured. The old man solemnly promised that he would neither touch meat any more nor kill any animal thenceforth. He was then administered the prayers, *Om Mani Padme Hum* and *Kon Chhog*, and was confided that on recital of the same he would get back his lost sight later. The old man, so assured, returned to his village and

chanted the prayers with devotion and without any cessation. Very soon he regained lost sight in the affected eye. He then publicised the prayer among his covillagers. Many of them, victims to leprosy and other malignant diseases, recovered, after having taken recourse to the prayers. And thus the holy prayer was known to all.

Bhutia legend about the king with a bull's horn

Once upon a time, there reigned a Tibetan king with a bull's horn projected from his forehead. A tyrant and a persecutor of all Buddhist subjects, the king not only used to coiffure his hair in front, with an object to cover his horn and hide the same from his people, but also commanded his subjects to practise the royal hair-style. The cold climate pursuaded the king to dress his hair only once or at most twice a month with the help of a young maiden, called in by the king. But, the king would execute the hair-dresser soon after his hair-dressing, lest she should disclose the scandalous secret of the bovine horn on the royal head to the public. The royal hair-dressing had thus taken the toll of many young lives by turn.

Once it was one young girl's turn to dress the hair of the royal personage. The girl became jubilant and buoyant, as she took it for a great fortune to be intimate with the royal company. Her mother looked despondent and gloomy. The girl enquired of her why she looked so pulled down on such a joyous occasion. The mother warned her that a visit to the royal bath had earlier proved very tragic to her predecessors, because none retraced her steps home. On a request from the daughter to devise a plan to avert the repetition of the same tragedy in her case too, her mother contrived an artful measure. She prepared a palatable food from barley mixed with the milk of her breast and instructed her daughter to offer the sweetmeat to the king.

The young damsel went to the king an started the hair-dressing. After she had proceeded half-way through the hair-dressing business, she paused for a moment to seek the king's permission to take the tiffin carried with her, as she felt very hungry. The king did not hesitate to assent. The young girl, in a gesture of her genteel humility, offered a portion of her food to the king to share. The king accepted the offer and tasted the food with so much relish that he promptly admitted to the girl that he had never taken so tasty a food before. He felt curious to enquire of her about the ingredients of the food. The girl disclosed that it was prepared from barley and her mother's milk. The king expressed his surprise that having taken the said preparation, he tasted also the breast-milk of the girl's mother and thereby unknowingly established a fraternal tie with the girl. The king did not kill the girl but let her free.

The mother of the girl, on latter's return home and disclosure of the events in details, advised her daughter to keep her knowledge of the horn on the king's head as a well-guarded secret. She warned her not to divulge it if she wanted to avert royal wrath and the death-decree. But, it was hard for the girl to confine the secret only to herself and stop its leakage. One morning she went to the clumps of bamboo for whispering to the young shoot of a bamboo plant that the king had a horn on his head. After some time a shepherd came there and cut down the same bamboo to make a fife out of it. But what a wonder was in store for him! As he played on the fife, it tuned, 'The king has a horn on his head'. In utter bewilderment he went to his parents, friends and covillagers and played on his fife. Everyone heard the tune that the king had a horn on his head. The news spread like wild fire. The people already seething with discontent came to realise why the royal decree on the style of hair-dressing was issued and enforced. They decided finally to

get rid of their king. The king was invited to a dance arranged by the people. Hardly had the dance commenced, than the king was shot with an arrow with a poisioned head. The people at last were delivered of the brutality in the hands of a tyrant king, who was antagonistic to the Buddhists.

Bhutia legend about Min-a-repa

One of the greatest among the Buddhist *Yogis, Min-a-repa* was the son of a rich man and had lost his father in the prime of his life. Proffered gold and other valuables and many jewelleries, he was instructed by his mother to go out in quest of knowledge and to become versatile in religion and occult sciences. *Min-a-repa* moved about in various places, and met many Buddhist monks. After many years of travel on scholarship, he returned home with proficiency in religion, scriptures and the *Yogas*. During the long absence of *Min-a-repa* abroad, his patrimony was wastefully spent by his mother's brother in luxury and merriments and his mother had turned a pauper. One of the sons of the maternal uncle of *Min-a-repa* was going to be married in the midst of splendour on the day of *Min-a-repa's* return home. The villagers were so much engrossed with the marriage-ceremony that none cared for either *Min-a-repa* or his mother. The anxious woman felt belittled at the apathy of her covillagers towards her son. Her motherly pride was hurt. Exasperated to the extreme, she entreated to her son, 'My dear *Min*, please demonstrate your knowledge and mastery over sorcery to appease your offended mother. This is the hour of their mirth and your moment to avenge an insult to your mother. Please foil their festival'. After a vain bid to convince his mother to withdraw her request, *Min-a-repa* found her mother adamant and persistent in her pursuasion. The son had to oblige his mother in the end. He assumed the form of a giant scorpion, entered the palatial building where festivity was in the air and twirled the central pillar. The building collapsed and all the people were killed. Though *Min-a-repa* carried out his mother's order, he himself was penitent for the sin. He left home in the guise of a monk and meditated for several years till he was absolved of the sin and invested with supernatural powers of *Tapa* and *Yoga*. So, high rose the temperature of his body after the acquistion of spiritual powers that he became naked.

During his spiritual learning, *Min-a-repa* witnessed a fierce struggle for supremacy between *Bon-Cos* (Believer in evil spirits) or *Phyen-Chho* (Religion of sorcery) and *Lha-Cos* (Religion of the gods). The Buddhists were regarded as the followers of *Lha-Cos*. Once one of the prophets of *Bon-Cos* (*Phyen Chho*) during an accidental meeting with *Min-a-repa* systematically underrated the latter's spiritual faculties and erudition, whereas *Min-a-repa* upheld the supremacy of *Lha-Cos*. The verbal duel having failed to establish the superiority of one to the other, both mutually agreed to a trial of power by recourse to an ingenuity. *Min-a-repa* and his contender agreed to accept him as a winner who could climb the summit of a mountain first next morning.

Early next morning, the prophet of the *Bon-Cos* with the aid of magic rode on a rolling drum to ascend the peak. But, *Min-a-repa*, still fast asleep, could not be aroused by his disciples in their first attempt. He was forcibly awakened when his competitor had covered half the ascent to the mountain. On enquiry, *Min-a-repa* learnt that it was the hour of sunrise. He mounted the very first streak of sunray and in a split second was transported to the cliff of the mountain. His rival who had started much earlier and was confident of his victory was shocked and surprised to meet *Min-a-rapa* atop the hill with his hands outstretched, as if to help him in the last lap of his uphill journey *Min-a-repa* has since then been universally

esteemed by the Buddhists as the pioneer who had humbled the *Bon-Cos.*

Lepcha legend about an orphan

Long ago, there lived in a village a poor Lecha boy. Having lost both his parents at an early age, he was sheltered in his uncle's house. But, he had to pay a high price for his uncle's guardianship. He had to work very hard, doing all the domestic chores including collection of drinking water and fuel as also cattle-grazing. Any minor lapse in his work did not escape the observant eyes of his uncle or aunt. Very often he was severely beaten by them for even the most minor omission. One day a cow strayed out of the herd in charge of the boy. He was terribly alarmed and did not dare return home in apprehension of chastisement by his uncle. He cried long under a tree and there fell asleep. When he woke up, he found himself in a cave bestrewn with gold and jewelleries all over the floor and saw a demon in deep slumber. The boy collected as much gold and precious gems as he could and quietly slipped out of the cave.

The boy returned to the village with his treasures and sold them out very soon for a fabulous price to become a millionaire. His uncle went to him and learnt the secret of his fortune. Tempted to follow the same course as his nephew, he went to the same tree and pretended to have been asleep there. The demon, robbed of a part of his wealth, was out to look for the mischief-maker and took the uncle for the culprit. He did not lose any time to avenge the misdeed and devoured the greedy man then and there.

The legend has all the elements of a fantasy or a fable and also the romantic approach to escapism from the grim reality of hunger and poverty. The story has also the lesson of a parable projecting in the end a subtle moral against avarice.

Rai legend about ancestor-worship

In ancient times it was a practice among the Rais to sacrifice buffaloes as offerings to the *Pitri Deota* (Deity presiding over the spirits of the deceased ancestors). Once a section of the people prayed to the *Pitri Deota* to be bountiful, and promised to offer in return the deity an animal with nine horns. In response to the call of the devotees, the deity showed benediction to them. The Rais amassed huge fortune with the aid of divine favour within a very short period. In gratitude, the Rais offered only cocks as sacrifice to the deity. The *Pitri Deota* was not pleased with the Rais for their failure to keep their promise. Soon the Rais faced a divine wrath. Caught unawares in a cataclysm of death and catastrophic disasters, the helpless people called in their *Bijua* (Medicineman) to appease the deity. The *Bijuya* invoked the blessings of *Pitri Deota* and convinced the deity that the blade on the cock's head bore nine horns. Since then, cocks have been sanctioned as worthy of sacrifice to the same deity.

Limbu legend about a deity

Naya Deota, one of the deities popularly worshipped by the Limbus, had not the same status earlier as now enjoyed. Long ago in the Himalayan region, she was born as an ordinary Limbu woman in a two-storied house She lived in the first floor, while the ground floor was occupied by her son and daughter-in-law. A devout woman, engaged in the worship of many deities, she had also a benevolent and charitable disposition and was very often alluded to as a goddess in adulation. One day, her daughter-in-law called her from the ground floor but had no response. She rushed upstairs and was stupefied to find her mother-in-law disappearing in the air. She cried aloud, calling her mother-in-law who replied that she would come to their help whenever she would be remembered. And that marked the birth of a *Naya Deota* (New Goddess).

Leisure and recreation

The pleasures of the people of Upper Pedong at the Himalayan height remain ethereal for only a couple of households. Even at the lofty height of the Himalayas where people have enough of freedom to make their life joyous even in the midst of penury and want, very few can afford to enjoy their leisure according to the recognised means of entertainment. Whereas elsewhere radio-receiver sets are treated as the accepted means of modern communication-media and also as very powerful instruments for the transmission of different fares of cultural entertainment in sound and music, broadcast over All India Radio's network of Radio Stations or over different other Radio Stations of foreign broadcasting companies, the villagers are denied even this cheap mechanical pleasure. At present when radios are no longer considered very novel scientific instruments which can be owned almost by all, specially so for the mass production of the transistorised variety, only two villagers comprising one Newar and one Tamang own radio-sets. But, even then the affinity of the listeners in these two households along with a sprinkling of a few more neighbours is with Nepal and its cultural pattern. It has been observed that the Radio Station of Kathmandu is preferred to other Stations of All India Radio, namely Siliguri, Kurseong or Calcutta. One of the reasons for the greater inclination of the licence-holders towards Kathmandu is the clear audibility of transmissions from the same Station. But, one should not also ignore the fact that Kathmandu's programmes have more emphasis on and predominance of the unilingual medium of expression rather than the multilingual fares of assorted varieties catered by Radio Kurseong, far from their choice. The cultural linkage does not necessarily follow any beaten track here. Apart from the culture-contacts of persons staying away from their homes in areas outside India, marital channels uniting remote areas of Nepal with Upper Pedong as also the radio-receivers prove very strong indeed for the integration of the villagers residing in Upper Pedong, however insignificant their number may be, after impregnating them with some elements of their parent culture from which roots they have long been cut off after their immigration. The ancestral culture, instead of becoming exotic and alien to the villagers of Upper Pedong, has been drawn *nearer home through the medium of wireless*, deferring the possibilities of the growth of cosmopolitanism.

It has already been discussed in details that *the village is also the home of quite some* people, retired from their occupations in the tertiary sectors after rambles through different climes and cultures. Quite many of them here have had experience of contacts with urban cultures elsewhere, while some members, away from their households, in the village are living in urban areas of India, Nepal, Sikkim or Bhutan. The cultural forces, darted from these absentee people, have influenced the rural habits of the neoliterate section of the villagers. Neither it is an *Alice*-like tale that *Statesman*, one of the popular English dailies of Calcutta and Delhi, is read by four households comprising a Lepcha, a Rai, a Tamang, a Sikkimese Bhutia, one member of an unspecified community, a Newar and a Limbu and two more households comprising a Sikkimese Bhutia and a Limbu read another English daily of Calcutta, namely Hindusthan Standard. In all, nine families except three households comprising one Lepcha, one Rai and one Sikkimese Bhutia, contribute to various English journals like Reader's Digest and periodicals like Cine Advance and some Nepali magazines of local celebrity. It will be a misconception if one deciphers from the fact stated above that the habit of reading newspapers and journals have been developed with the avowed objective of keeping oneself abreast of the fashionable urban mores of living or for

being alive to different human situations in the national life and the international arena. It will not be correct to presume that newspapers or journals alone add to the status of the reader households. Most of the people among the readers of newspapers and journals are either retired people or rentiers of agricultural land. Hence, newspapers and journals are not all read out of an academic interest or a motivation to get a glimpse of the world view to extend one's social entity beyond the jurisdictional limits of the body-politic of the village and to encompass one's interests across the social arena of the communities. Journals and newspapers are in reality handy means of these persons to kill their time over the infinite length of leisure offered by retirement from active economic life or during the short fleeting moments of exhaustion after day's work in the roads or fields, in the School or in the Health Centre.

In any case, these people constitute the microscopic minority. But, the majority, the toiling workers of both the sexes, are not as such interested in the bibliophil's methods of passing time in the printed world. The people of the village are normally very busy with their occupations. Members of both sexes and of almost all the age-groups, from small children to the aged people, work very hard for a livelihood. Hence, lenten recreation is often misconceived as a luxury. The villagers equate rest with the first sleep of night that 'knits up the ravelled sleave of care'.

But a sociological enquiry does not ordinarily take superficial attitudes and negative answers for granted. The participant observation has brought out a number of cases to illustrate that games and childly plays recreate innocent children in short fleeting moments of leisure during their stop-overs in their errands from the *Jhoras* back home with pails filled with water, panting for a breath. Fresh air on the hill-track or on the slope of the valley provides the absent-minded children ample verve to mind their games. The simple wayside games include *Danda Guli* (Indian version of base ball with a short stick and the piece of a still shorter wooden chip, approximating to the American game), *Marbles,* a local game with five or more pellet-like stone chips, the game of *Goal*-a game resembling *Dainra* (of the Village Bhumij Dhan Sol in Midnapore District of West Bengal *Vide* Village Survey Monograph on Bhumij Dhan Sol, Vol. XVI, Part VI (5) of 1961 Census, pp. 175), the game of *Bokabuki, City Bol* (Hide and seek), *Dung Ara* and *Duku Muku.* All these games may not be equally important to a plainsman denoting a special ceremonial meaning or social significance. Nevertheless, the games cast a spell of their own on the children of this village. Upto the age of 11 or 12 years the children do not even understand, far less observe, sex segregation. They play more or less in mixed groups—mixed not on the basis of sex or the count of age but on the principle of ethnic groups. The groups of children at play are found to be more or less linguistically homogeneous. Language, therefore, helps the Sikkimise-Bhutia, Dukpa, Sherpa and Lepcha children form groups of their own with a common language like Tibetan. But, the Rai, the Gurung, the Limbu and the Tamang children coalesce into as many groups as are required by the assembled sportive children. For the acquaintance of all with Nepali as the link-language, one or two children intrude into the group of playmates of other ethnic groups speaking the same language. A group of children desirous of joining the bigger group is neither treated as outcaste nor debarred from participation in the game here. Culture-contact has thus made some children polyglots. Even those, speaking in their own mother tongue other than Nepali, pick up a few Nepali colloquial words for the purpose of the games.

Boka Buki

Essentially an active game of movement between two teams, each with four players, involving agility, strength, endurance and skill, *Boka Buki* is held in an open space where two teams take up two fixed positions opposite to each other with some intervening space in between each team. The game starts when the member of the first team crosses over to the opposite position carrying another member of his own team. The member carried over to the second team gets down to transport the first member of the second team to a neutral position where the member of the second team rests awhile. Meanwile, the second member of the first team crosses over positions to carry the third member of his own team to the place where the second team stands in array and the member, so carried over, now alights from the back of the second member of his own team to transport the second member of the second team to the neutral position. The game continues till all the eight players are posited in the neutral place and installed in their respective positions, being transported by members of the second team and carrying those of the first team in the reverse direction.

Dung Ara

A typical game of hide and seek adapted by the children of the village, *Dung Ara* requires 5-6 players or more. For this round game of simple amusement, the players stand in a ring-like formation and the leader of the team chimes a verse :

Ambal Dambal, Khaire pat,
Dash sap kuti Mahadeo,
Ambak pake tata tuti,
Pakha lagey ghichua,
Bhimsen khola,
Pakha lagey chitua,
Dhukur Singh Bhatua,

The leader counts the players touching each, while uttering every word of the verse. The player who is touched last by the leader at the utterance of the word *Bhatua* is finally selected as *Dung* (Thief). In this game the *Dung* has to touch any one of the players after a hot chase, while others avoid his touch. The player once touched by the *Dung* has to relieve him and play the role of the *Dung* himself. The players continue the game till they get tired of and exhausted with the game, held in the open.

Duku Muku

Another typical game of the hill children, *Duku-Muku* necessitates the participation of five to ten players who select from among them the seniormost or the juniormost member as their king if he is a male or as a queen in case she is a female. The king signals the start of the game by scratching his palms. The other members place their fingers over the palm of the king or the queen, who starts counting numericals from one. While doing so, he attempts to catch hold of the finger of any of the players. The particular player whose finger is seized by the king becomes a *Bhote Kukur* (Bhutia dog). Then the *Bhote Kukur* hides his face with his palms in between the knees of the king, whereupon the remaining players hide themselves in their respective positions. If the *Bhote Kukur* turns aside and looks at the hiding player, he is given a good thrashing by the king. Lastly, the following lyrical conversation takes place between the king and *Bhote Kukur* :

King : *Duku Muku, Keko hat ?*
(Duku Muku, whose hands are these ?)

Bhote Kukur : *Rajako*
(The hands are those of the king)

King : *Duku Muku, Keko hat ?*

Bhote Kukur : *Raniko*

(The hands are those of the queen)

The king then speaks loudly, as if to issue a warning to the hiding players.

King : *Santoley pinda bhayena*
Dukoley chhopda bhayena,
Snagli ley banda bhayena
Rajako Bhote Lukur Umkeo.

(The Bhotia dog cannot be crushed under the grinder, it cannot be kept concealed in a basket, cannot be bound in chains and, therefore, the king's Bhutia dog escapes)

Then the king will let loose the *Bhote Kukur* to spot the hiding players. Once he is able to trace out and touch a hiding player, the detected player plays the new *Bhote Kukur* and has to find out others. Once a player comes out and touches the king, he can no longer be spotted by the *Bhote Kukur*. Thus the game continues.

The game symbolises the historic feud between the Nepalese and the Bhutias. The clash of interests between the immigrant Nepalese and the resident Bhutias generated such a bad blood between the two communities that the feeling is embedded in the hearts of the adults and transmitted to the children who put up the pantomime-like game played only by the Nepali communities.

Other sports and games

The schools here not only impart knowledge to the boys and girls of the village, but also make them aware of the worldly pleasures. The innocent games of the children no longer interest them to participate in the unsophisticated wayside amusemets of the unlettered children of the village. The ideas of prestige, esteem and status also creep into the minds of the school-going boys and girls who blush at the silly idea of crawling back to their childhood days by playing the games, since long abandoned. Carroms and badmintons apart, outdoor games like football, volley ball etc. are played by the school-going boys and girls and also by the adults who have completed their schooling. The playground, aptly the pride of the village, nay of the neighbourhood, in a circular plain meadow attached to the school but situated at a little lower altitude provides the venue for all outdoor games and sports. The use of the ground, not restricted to the students and teachers of the school only, is also freely let out to others residing in the village or outside for abundant use. Another ground with far less area adjoining the school compound is meant for specific games like volley ball etc. As to the games played by the students and the teachers of the school, reference may be made to the sports as also to the inter-school league matches, inter-class league matches and exhibition matches organised between the students and the staff of the school. Certain soccer matches are played between either the school staff and the students combined and the staff working in different other Government offices at Pedong *Khas Mahal* or between the villagers comprising the students and the staff and Government officials of the village or other teams from Algara, Lava etc. The exihibition matches are played with great *eclat* and seen by enthusiastic spectators of the whole village thronging in the field all along boundary line to enjoy the matches and cheer up the players.

There is, however, no club or any voluntary organisation of the youths to arrange such matches in the village or outside.

Means of entertainment

Besides, documentary film shows arranged by the Information and Public Relations Department of the Government of West Bengal and also by the Field Publicity Officer of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, provide some opportunities of entertainment to the villagers. Feature

films exhibited at the cinemas at Kalimpong and Siliguri occasionally let the people relax and enjoy. Needless to mention, films in Hindi attract the audience from the village.

Previously, the agricultural fair organised at Kalimpong provided great amusement to the people. Though primarily organised as an educative programme for the agriculturists to orient them in the modern agricultural practices, it was held at Kalimpong, as mentioned by W.W. Hunter. But, since 1947 an annual exhibition has been held at Upper Pedong under the auspices of the Community Development Depatment of the Government of West Bengal to highlight the achievements and programmes of animal husbandry, agriculture, education, industry, public health, veterinary sciences and sericulture. Spread over five days, the exhibition is opened by the *Puja* of *Damsong* deity by the people of Pedong *Khas Mahal.* Even a secular function of a scientific nature of the present kind does not appear to free itself from the influence of religion and local customs.

The local functionaries and dignitaries with an important place in the organisation of the exhibition comprise the *Lamas* too, who accord a ceremonial reception on the opening day to the President and Chief Guest of the function. A Guard of Honour by the Auxiliary Cadet Corps of St. George's High School and the Home Guards of the village over, the Deputy Commissioner of the district inaugarates the Exhibition as its President. He is then garlanded by the village girls and blessed by the *Lamas.* An address of welcome is then read by the President of the Exhibition Committee and followed by the Presidential speech. After a vote of thanks, the meeting is over and the exhibition is inspected. Folk dances like the *Gumpa* dance of *Sanchen Dorji Gompa, Mahdaley Nach, Limbu Chabrung Nach, Dhan Nach* and *Damphu Nach* are also organised. The attendance of visitors for all five days in March varies from 3,000 at the lowest to 10,000 at the peak hour of attendance. Cultural shows by the district unit of the Folk Entertainment Section of the hill people under the Department of Information and Public Relations is arranged along with a cinema show. Among other items, one should mention the milking competition wherein the persons professionally engaged in dairying or cattle-rearing usually take part. A committee of experts sits to judge the best agricultural, poultry, livestock and cottage industry exhibits. A baby show is organised to enthuse the village mothers in modern methods of pediatrics and to arouse local interests. Healthy babies are awarded prizes and their mothers felicitated. To boost up the community spirit of the village on principles of integration, sports and archery competitions are also organised. In addition, an open competition of folk songs and dances to search and appreciate local talents is also held.

The exhibition is looked forward to by the entire village, as it affords an opportunity to all to see, to learn and to enjoy many new things of the modern world beyond the reach of the village. Held in a spirit of carnival in *Topkhana Maidan,* the annual exhibition is attended by traders who construct stalls in the exhibition ground for sale of their wares. The mercantile community comes from far and near places inside and also outside the district.

Besides the exhibition, *Lama* dance is organised at the local *Gompas* for three days during *Buddha Purnima* (Birth day anniversary of *Lord Buddha* during the full moon of *Baisakh*).

Folk songs

Akashka Tirimiri Tra
Patalaima Pareegayo Raat
Bas Bas Maiti Raja
Mat Janchhu Swamiko Sath
Haai Sano Marooni.....
Suraso Phulyo Banai Raato
Keyar Phulyo Saheli

Ke Ko Lagi Ganchho
Ni Mero Lai Lai Jobanko
Haai Jano Jano.....
Ukalico Darai Dara
Chalko Haalki Haalki
Sasuralai Topi
Sasulai Kaairo
Salikulai Chhamke Bulaki

The stars are twinkling in the sky, but there is darkness in the world. Please stay, O my parents. I am going to my husband's house. Oh ! little dancer (*Maruni*). The blossom of flowers adorns the forest with red and pale, what for do you preserve your life, oh little dancer ? Over the steep hill, there is storm on the way. A hat for father-in-law, a comb for mother-in-law, but a *Bulaki* for sister-in-law, oh little dancer.

1. The prospects of bumper crop in the field heightens the elated mood of the joyous agriculturist who sings merrily the following song :

Kati ramro mero ye powengre goroo,
Kati ramro mero hall.
Kati ramro mero ubjani bali
Ramro chha mihinetko phall.

2. The farmer in a merry mood sings the following hallelujah in praise of Mother Earth.

Dharti amai ! dharti babai !
Yisbat pawoonchho anna.
Pyaro ma garchho, sanman garchho,
Dharti amai ! dhanya.

3. The poor tiller pestered by poverty and want for crop-failure sings a pathetic song to the following effect.

Umer bitayen jotaima maile,
Aeana sukhko din.
Jew buro mero man buro mero,
Sukh chhaina ekai chhin.

4. The husband is away from home in a distant land. His consort is, therefore, detached from worldly affairs. She hears the tune of a piper playing on a flute. She lends her voice to the tune.

Himalai chooli ke yati ramro
Sarpako knachooli.
Yeo papi manma biraha chalyco
Na bajau bansuri.

5. A young lover in ecstatic mood compares his lady love with the moon and sings a romantic song.

Sun jasto Nepal ke ramro dekhcha,
Swarga chha sansarma.
Sun jasto premle jun jasto dekhchha
Mayako sansarma.

6. A young married girl while taking her bath in the *Jhora* suddenly realised that she had left the vermilion box behind in her room. Regretting her folly, she asked herself melodiously how she would return home without the mark of vermilion on her forehead.

Nepalai jiyanko sunko dhara
Ma kapal nuhaunchhoo.
Kapalai nuhaune dhungama basi,
Ma kapal sukaun chhoo.
Sirko sindoor birsera ayen
Yeo manai andhyaro.
Ghar jaun bhane kasri jaun
Sirko sindoor birsera ayen
Mayita jaun bhane behosou cheli
Yeo bhanchhin hamro amaile.

7. The following song describes the agony of a housewife constantly maltreated by her mother-in-law.

'Sasu bhanchhe—'buhari !' buhari
bhanche—'jiw !'
'Singmangma rakheko kasle khayeo ghiw ?'
'Dekhnu na sunnu maile kahan khacyn ?'
'Oth tera-chilla chhan thaha maile payen.
'Dhaka jati thunchu, iyal jati kholchhoo.
'Ghiw chorne buhariko oth tera polchhoo.'

8. A young mother converses with an astrologer whom she has called in to predict the future of her new-born baby.

Nau mahina dekhi dash mahina lagiyo,
Dasai ra mahina pugi ra gayo, Bibli raniko.
Dash mahina pugi kastai ra lagiyo
Phool jasto chhoro janmi ra haliyo,
Bibli raniko.
'Yeo balak kasto, heridew jaisi !
Balak ko Lachhin rahechha kasto,
Bibli raniko'.
'Thalai ra bhari deu muga—moti,
Jun jasto chhoro bhayechha janma,
Bibli raniko'.
'Muga ra moti ke ho hai jaisi !
Leo Adha rajya ajai ra dekhi, Bibli raniko.'
'Liyera raj-pat ke garnoo maile !
Rajagai sukhi chhoo matarajma, Bibli raniko.'

Modern songs

(1) *Sanaiko swarle paharai dhakdai*
Lou bibaha sajayo
Sajayo lou bibaha sajayo

The melodious tune of *Sehnai* (Musical instrument played during marriage) covers the hilly region, indicating the marriage-ceremony.

(2) *Ghorama charii beula ayo*
Ananda lou chayo
Door banko pakshile soon
Milanko git gayo
Git gayo milanko git gayo

The bridegroom comes riding on a horse and for the time being the place seems to be tuned to joy. Even the bird sings a song of union of the two souls.

(3) *Gharira pala dubaile milee*
Laganlai nimtayo
Siundoma sindoor beuleeko dekhi
Tarale gijjayo
Gijjayo tarale gijjayo

The hours and the minutes mark auspicious time for the union of the couple, and even the stars seem to envy her when they see the vermillion mark on the head of the bride.

(4) *Rat lou bityo gham lou jhulkayo*
Bidalai bolayo
Matako mamata harshle hola
Ankhama chalkiyo
Chalkiyo ankhamai chalkiyo

When the night is over and the Sun rises in the morning, the time for bidding farewell to the bride and bridegroom comes, when the bride's mother sheds tears of joy.

(5) *Baratai pugiyo dnarako parii*
Beuliilai liera
Hā[illegible]iti raja bas hai bhandai
(Sanaile git gayo
Git gayo sanaile git gayo

When the party crosses the hills along with the bride, the sound of the *Sehnai* seems to indicate her separation from the rest of family.

(6) *(Chuiya ma ha ha)*
Nachula hasai yio man
Gnasula mayaloo jiban (chuiya ma.....
Gurmash phulyo chait masma
Banai sabai laha laha
(Guelee simalle lyatho)
Baisakhko chal
Jethko Khaurima kasto kasto din
Run thalyo pheri hriday pani bhane
chin chin
Chuiya ma.....

In the month of *Chait* (Springtime), the forest is covered with beautiful flowers like *Guras, Guyeli, Simal* etc. He wishes to sing and dance joyfully in such a beautiful make-up.

In the month of *Baisakh* and *Jeth* there is no rain. The days are not identical. So, he weeps sorrowfully.

(7) *Asarko ropaima hilacko mato*
(Sabanko Jharima) hera laharako

Bhadoureko sayma bakcha anshu dhara
Dhan chamal makaima banyo lakhar
Chuiya ma.....

The paddy which has been transplanted in the month of *Asar* looks green and beautiful. It rains heavily in the month of *Bhadra* and the raindrops fall on the maize and the paddy plants.

(8) *Pakeko makai bhnachee Asojko masma*
Polik khai khelou dewsi
Kartikko masma

In the month of *Asauj* the maize ripens and the farmer eats it, playing "*Dewso*" joyfully in the month of *Kartik*.

(9) *Dhan kati dai garou mangsir mangsirma harshko*
Shesh mahina phagun hola
Bhagi jane barshko
Chuiyama ha ha.....

The month of *Mangsir* is a month of happiness, as the paddy is harvested in this month. The last month of the year is *Fagun* when the farmer wishes to dance joyfully.

(10) *Sirima siri hawa chalyo paharko*
Rimi jhimi snajhma
Bolauna ta man lagcha
Boli phutnai saktaina

The gentle wind is blowing over the hill in the evening. The lover wants to call her beloved, but he cannot call her.

When there is sunshine on one side of the hill, there is shade on the other side of the same. She looks in all direction thinking of her beloved in her mind. She request her lover to express his desire, as there is nothing to be feared.

(11) *Dnara pari gham lagda*
Dnara wari chamma cha
Ankha dulcha charai tir
Manma timro maya cha
Manka kura man hai
Maya launda ke ko dar ?

She tells her lover that her life is short and she wishes fervently to spend their life loving each other.

(12) *Jindagani dui dinko*
Bitaun maya gnasera
Anshu mero ankhama
Timi bandha hasera
Bolauna ta man lagcha

She expresses her desire with tears in her eyes that her beloved may live joyfully, because she may not live long though she has a great desire to do so.

A few proverbs in Khaskura

1. *Alchhi Tighro Swade Givro.*
(An idle Tom, but a voracious glutton)

2. *Apnai Bhatma Marr Kade Matra Hunchha.*
(Oil your own machine)

3. *Apno Gunga Musarna Nasakne, Arkako Gunga Musarne.*
(Charity begins at home)

4. *Upian Farkyo Jumrako Ghan.*
(The criminal runs scotfree, but the innocent get punished)

5. *Ekohoro Roti Paktaina.*
(It requires two partners to quarrel)

6. *Ounlo Dinda Dudullko Nilne.*
(The more he gets, the more he wants)

7. *Kankrolai Thankro Diyo, Thankrai Dhanii.*
(One lends an article for one's use, but claims ownership later)

8. *Kag Karaundai Garchha, Pina Suttakai Garchha.*
(The dogs bark while the caravan passes on)

9. *Kalo Ganchha, Goro Aunchha.*
(Nature abhors vacuum)

10. *Kukurko Puchhar Bahra Barsa*

Dhungrama Hale Pani Bangako Bangai.
(A leopard does not change its spots)

11. *Khai Napai Chhalako Topi Lai.*
(When the danger is gone, God is forgotten)

12. *Gaduwa Napai Chindo Fordo.*
(Look before you leap)

13. *Gai Na Goath Labar Labar Oth.*
(A blind man leads another blind man)

14. *Ghora Dagureko ra Hatti Lamkeko.*
(Great is the deed when done by a great man)

15. *Chichee Pani Papa Pani.*
(He wants both the bird in hand as well as that in the bush)

16. *Chhaṅ Gedii Sabai Meree, Chhainan Gedii Sabai Tedee.*
(Summer swallow)

17. *Jasle Maha Karrchha, Usle Hath Chatchha.*
(Diligence reaps its own harvest)

18. *Josto Boat Ustai Phal.*
(Like father like son)

19. *June Rukhko Phal Khanu, Usaiko Jaro Khannu.*
(He cuts the branch on which he is perched)

20. *Jo Pani Baleko Aago Tapchha Niveko Kohi Tapdaina.*
(One who loses cannot command)

21. *Doko Bokchha, Supari Tokchha.*
(Empty vessels sound much)

22. *Dhang Maru, Kaso Gnaru ?*
(Hollow words can achieve little)

23. *Tain Rani Mai Rani Ko Bharla Kuwako Pani ?*
(If everybody rules, who will be ruled ?)

24. *Dajyo Sang Khane, Bhaujyo Sang Uthne.*
(A slow coach)

25. *Dhanko Mukh Rato.*
(Money has its own charm)

26. *Na Vae Ek Peer, Vae Sai Peer.*
(Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown)

27. *Bandar Apno Ghar Pani Banaundaina, Arkako Ghar Pani Rakhtaina.*
(Dog in the manger)

28. *Bandarko Hathma Nariwal.*
(To cast pearls before swine)

29. *Bolneko Pitho Bikchha, Na Bolneko Chamal Pani Bikdaina.*
(A crying child gets the milk)

**Semantics of the hill people*

Tibetan language has two distinct dialects, common and honorific, the first being used by the people of the lower economic strata or social order as also the medium of expression of these people in their conversation with their inferiors, while the honorific dialect is restricted to the enlightened section of the people being also the medium of expression used to address the superiors. The specimens are given in Table 155.

TABLE 155

SOME TIBETAN WORDS

English	Tibetan (Common)	Tibetan (Honorific)
Nose	*Nakhun*	*Shang*
Pleasure	*Ga-tshor*	*Nye-tshor*
Marriage	*Chhangsa*	*Thrung-sa*
Name	*Ming*	*Tshen*
Father	*A-pha*	*Yap*
Mother	*A-ma*	*Yam-ku-sho*
To inform	*Ja-len-phu-wa*	*Ka-len-nang-wa*
Fame	*Ke-tra*	*Nyentra*

*Note : Specimens of many words in different languages currently spoken in the village and collected by the Investigator are given in this dissertation—Editor.

TABLE 156

SPECIMENS OF WORDS IN DIFFERENT TIBETAN DIALECTS

English	Tibetan	*Da-njong-ke*	*Lhoke*
I	*Nga*	*Nga*	*Nga*
We	*Nga-tsho*	*Nga-cha*	*Nga-chag*
Thou	*Khyo*	*Choo*	*Khyot* or *Choo*
You	*Khyo-rang*	*Choo*	*Khyot-tsho*
He	*Kho*	*Kho*	*Kho*
They	*Khon-tsho*	*Khong*	*Khong*
I am going	*Nga dyugihi*	*Nga yuyi*	*Nga Yoyi*
We are going	*Ngoe-tsho dyugihi*	*Nga-cha yuyi*	*Nga-cha yoyi*
Thou art going	*Khyot-rang dyugi ina*	*Choo yugi inam*	*Choo nyenya*
You are going	*Khyot-rang dyugi ina*	*Khyot-tsho yugi inam*	*Khyot-tsho nyenya*
He is going	*Kho dyugidu*	*Kho yud*	*Kho yud*
They are going	*Khon-tsho dyugidu*	*Khong yud*	*Khong yud*
Mouth	*Kha*	*Kha*	*Kha*
Tooth	*So*	*So*	*So*
Hair	*Tra*	*Kya*	*Kya*
Head	*Go*	*Go*	*Gu*
Hand	*Lak-pa*	*Lak-pa*	*Lak-pa*
Eye	*Mig*	*Mi-do*	*Mik*
Gold	*Se*	*Ser*	*Sey*
Iron	*Cha*	*Chak*	*Cha*
Silver	*Ngu*	*Ngu*	*Ngu*
Cow	*Pa*	*Bha*	*Ba*
Dog	*Khyi*	*Khyi*	*Pho-khyi*
Cat	*Shi-mi*	*A-lu*	*Phi-li*
Horse	*Rta*	*Ta*	*Ta*
Bird	*Cha*	*Phya*	*Bya*
House	*Khang-pa*	*Khim*	*Kheem*
Fire	*Me*	*Mi*	*Mee*
Water	*Chhu*	*Chhu*	*Chhu*
Sun	*Nyi-ma*	*Nyim*	*Myima*
Moon	*Da-wa*	*Dau*	*Dawa*
God	*Kun-chho*	*Konchho*	*Lha*
Man	*Min*	*Min*	*Min*
Father	*A-pha*	..	*Ap*
Mother	*A-ma*	*A-mo*	*A-yi*
Son	*Pu*	*Pu*	*Bu*
Daughter	*Pu-mo*	*Pum*	*Bum*
Brother	*Pun-Kya*	*Pun-gya*	*Punchha*
Child	*Pu-gu*	*Phu-gu*	*Bu-tsho*
Wife	*Kyi-men*	*Khim-me*	*Nam*
One	..	*Chu*	*Chi*
Two	..	*Nyi*	*Nyi*
Three	..	*Sum*	*Sum*
Four	..	*Zhi*	*Jhi*
Five	..	*Nga*	*Yna*
Six	..	*Tuk*	*Thu*
Seven	..	*Duin*	*Dwin*
Eight	..	*Gye*	*Gye*
Nine	..	*Gu*	*Gyu*
Ten	..	*Chu-thum-ba*	*Zu-thum-ba*

TABLE 157

SPECIMENS OF SHERPA WORDS

English	Sherpa	English	Sherpa
One	*Chik*	Wealth	*Nor*
Eye	*Mik*	Fire	*Me*
Come	*Shok*	Door	*Go*
Back	*Gyap*	Home	*Khangba*
Bullock	*Lhyang*	Way	*Lam*
Cow	*Chhyungma*	Hill	*Ri*
Dog	*Khi*	Water	*Chhyu*
Bitch	*Khi-mo*	Wood	*Sing*
He-goat	*Ra-Pho*	Tree	*Dongbu*
She-goat	*Ra-mo*	Sky	*Nam*
Son	*Pu*	Sun	*Nima*
Daughter	*Pu-mu*	Cave	*Phukpa*
I	*Nga*	Market	*Chhyake*
We	*Nga-tsho*	Pig	*Phakpa*
Thou	*Khyod*	Hand	*Lakpa*
You	*Khyod-tsho*	Leg	*Kang-ba*
He	*Kho*	Mouth	*Kha*
They	*Kho-tsho*	Nose	*Naohu*
Gold	*Sher*	Eye	*Mik*
Money	*Deba*	Hair	*Rah*
Fireplace	*Kosha*	Head	*Goho*
Wind	*Lung*	Body	*Ungbu*
Window	*Karung*	Chin	*Oku*
Gold	*Lhamu-nok*	Rib	*Chima*
Silver	*Nyul*	Ear	*Namjyok*
Nail	*Shermung*	Work	*Laka*
Finger	*Thebu*	Light	*Lamlasu*
Shoulder	*Pungba*	Come up	*Loho*
Tooth	*Sha*	Liver	*Chhiba*
Tongue	*Chela*	Pulse	*Lehe*
Heavy	*Chendu*	Heart	*Neyeng*
Throat	*Michyung*	Goat	*Ra*
Intestine	*Gema*	Fowl	*Chya*
Buffalo	*Mesi*	Hen's egg	*Chya-Ganja*
Meat	*Shya*	Cooked rice	*Shyen*
Curry	*Pa*	Bread	*Si-wang*
Liquor	*Arak*	Nice	*Nya-mu*

TABLE 157—*contd.*

Bitter	*Khakte*	Sweet	*Ngarmu*
Hot	*Kharwa*	Sour	*Khyurbu*
Cup	*Kora*	Dish	*Dyermang*
Lamp	*Memota*	Spoon	*Khimbok*
Lamb	*Luk*	Shoe	*Kacha*
Cloth	*Myaja*	Red	*Mermu*
White	*Karmu*	Yellow	*Sherbu*
Green	*Ngarmu*	Blue	*Nakpu*

TABLE 158

SPECIMENS OF TAMANG WORDS IN MOORMI

English	Moormi	English	Moormi
I	*Nga*	Fowl	*Nagra*
We	*Nga-ni*	Pig	*Thua*
Thou	*Ye* or *Ai*	Cat	*Taur*
You	*Ye-ni*	Dog	*Nagi*
He	*The*	Cow	*Mih*
They	*The-ni*	Bitch	*Nagi-mama*
Sky	*Moo*	Horse	*Tha*
Cloud	*Kasoo*	Goat	*Ra*
God	*Chungryo*	Sheep	*Kew*
Rain	*Num*	River	*Shiong*
Year	*Tiding*	Mountain	*Kung*
Moon	*Lani*	Valley	*Kunjung*
Sun	*Dini*	Road	*Kiam*
Star	*Kurjeu*	Tree	*Thoong*
Lightning	*Tibling*	Wood	*Shing*
Thunder	*Moodoorba*	Iron	*Phai*
Man	*Mhi*	Gold	*Mir*
Woman	*Muring*	Silver	*Mooi*
Boy	*Kola*	Bow	*Dulli*
Girl	*Chami*	Arrow	*Meah*
Father	*A-ba*	Door	*Morup*
Mother	*A-mi*	Roof	*La*
Brother	*Kroon*	Rice	*Mla*
Sister	*Augha*	Flour	*Prah*
Elephant	*Lungboochi*	Salt	*Chuja*
Tiger	*Chun*	Oil	*Keugoo*
Paddy	*Soon*	One	*Keek*
Book	*Keoi*	Two	*Nh*
Water	*Kim*	Three	*Som*
Fire	*Me*	Four	*Pli*
Stone	*Yeoong*	Five	*Gua*
Red	*Wata*	Six	*Too*

TABLE 158—*contd.*

Green	*Pingh*	Seven	*Nees*
Yellow	*Oar*	Eight	*Poeh*
Hand	*Promji*	Nine	*Koo*
Head	*Tho-bo*	Ten	*Kun*
Nose	*Na*	Eleven	*Chookri*
Eye	*Mih*	Twelve	*Chooni*
Belly	*Pho*	Thirteen	*Chooksom*
Thigh	*Bulli*	Fourteen	*Choopli*
Foot	*Bulli-pha*	Fifteen	*Choogua*
Chest	*Koo*	Sixteen	*Choo-too*
Long	*Ringjum*	Seventeen	*Choo-nus*
Short	*Toomba*	Eighteen	*Choo-puh*
High	*Gnoba*	Nincteen	*Choo-koo*
Fat	*Gnujung*	Twenty	*Neesio*
Lean	*Chitpa*		

TABLE 159

SPECIMENS OF LEPCHA WORDS IN RONG

English	Rhong	English	Rhong
I am	*Go gum*	Cloud	*Kum-byong*
We (two) are	*Ka nyi gum*	Day	*Suk-nyi*
We are	*Ka Ya gum*	Yesterday	*Ta-so*
Thou art	*Ho gum*	World	*Suk-dum*
You (two) are	*A-nyi gum*	Water	*Ung*
You are	*A-Yu gum*	God	*Rum*
He is	*Hu gum*	Goddess	*Rum-mit*
They (two) are	*Hu-nyi gum*	Head	*A-thyak*
They are	*Ho-yu gun*	Hang	*A-ka*
A man	*Ma-ro ta-gri*	Blood	*Vi*
A woman	*Ma-ro ta-ayu*	Food	*A-zom*
A young man	*Fa-Lyeng*	Milk	*Nyon*
		Meat	*Man*
		Fish	*Ngo*
A young woman	*Ma-Lyeng*	What is your name ?	*A-do a-bry-ang Sa-lo go*
An old man	*Pa-nyom*	What are you doing ?	*Ho shu nat tung go*
An old woman	*Num-nyom*	Have some liquor	*Chi thang le*
		I am glad to know this	*Go thyo wung sa Sak-dima*
Sun	*Sa-tsuk*		
Moon	*La-vo*		
Snow	*Sa-nong*		

V

CONCLUSION

V

CONCLUSION

Though very old are the brooks, the Rishi and the Rangpo, no man, however old, exactly knows through what wild centuries roves back the foliage of the Damsong Forest. 'No tales told in dim Eden' in reverie can visualise either what soft incense had hung upon the boughs that once clad the steepled hills. The same hills now stand aloft with the silent meadow of sleepy Upper Pedong, the quiet hamlet of mists and mellow sunshine, which in dim past offered cosy shelter to tired travellers and wayfaring merchants to and from Sikkim and Tibet during their night's sojourn and rest. But, now not even the old man as wise as Solomon really knows when life of Upper Pedong sprang up in this part of the hill which echoed the jingling chimes of tiny bells round the necks of mules tramping with loads of merchandise to Tibet. The august Himalayan mountains with their heads touching heaven and standing in frosty silence offer no material for the history of the rural folk of the village. Yet, the people unobtrusively put forward some magnificent myths that carry conviction to everybody. The popular legend goes that yonder in the hilly wild, not very far from here, stood the invulnerable fortress, in ruins long ago. But no dusty rubble is left now, though its marks are indelibly impressed upon people's memory and children's story-books. If the shadow of doubt and uncertainty falls sometimes between the tale about *Gebey Achho* and the reality of his mystic origin and powers, one cannot cynically reject the claim of the Lepchas and the Bhutians to their status as autochthons of the village, others not readily corroborating the version of the two communities. The Lepchas and the Bhutias together now constitute hardly one fourth of the total village population. One who does not use statistics 'as a drunken man who uses lamp-posts for support rather than illumination' is in such a situation prone to treat the claim of the two communities as fake and hollow, pretentious and vainglorious. An outright rejection of the narrative may very well prompt a sociological enquirer question about the ulterior motive of the concocted story. On an analytical appraisal of the legendary story and sparse historical material, one is urged to accept the legends and gossips in their proper perspective. The legend about *Gebey Achho* has as much historical truth as the *Ramayana*, the Classical Epic of the Hindus.

The area was once under the sway of the Lepchas. But, in course of time, the Dukpas appeared on the scene to suppress the Lepchas

and exploit them. It was the climacteric in the history of the Lepchas, when they were exposed to the cruel treatment by the Dukpa marauders. At this critical hour of the Lepchas, their National Hero represented by the legendary figure of *Gebey Achho* emancipated his followers. But, the feud between two contenders for power led to the expropriation of the Lepchas by the Dukpas, loss of the former's freedom and the tragic death of the Lepcha Hero. It is an irony that the Dukpas who had once ousted the Lepchas from power were in the historical process reduced gradually to the status of a minority community, though the Lepchas, the Sikkimese Bhutias, the Dukpas and the Sherpas as members of the Scheduled Tribes and the Kamis as members of the Scheduled Caste together build a formidable under-privileged class constitutionally, accounting for 42.9 per cent of the total households and 44.1 per cent of the village population.

By a historic dialectic a dominant community has been reduced to a minority status. The wheel is come full circle. The community which had once ruled now requires the statutory safeguards under the protective care of the Constitution. But, it is doubtful if the turn of fortune has forged any unity among rest of the communities which were not so privileged earlier. Now the ethnic groups are many. The Nathung War of 1888 started the process under which an opening was found in the village and around for different ethnic groups from Nepal to come as immigrant people. Economic factors of employment opportunities and better income assumed a meaningful dimension and purpose because of the construction of the Darjeeling-Himalayan Railways and the foundation of of the Cinchona Plantation. The hegemony of the Bhutias was slowly overshadowed by the immigrant numerical majority of Nepali-speaking people. Upper Pedong which hitherto remained a single community village was gradually transformed into a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-religious hamlet. Though most of the communities had come from places in the district of Darjeeling, many others hailed from Sikkim, Bhutan, and Nepal.

The addition of several languages and several religions has made the isolation of all the communities more or less complete but not really absolute. The three faiths of Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity have brought under their sway 51.7 per cent, 37.9 per cent and 10.4 per cent of the village population. Though Nepali happens to be the functional language of the area, being the mother tongue of the majority, 29.5 per cent of the village people still retain their individual linguistic characteristics by returning different languages other than Nepali as their mother tongues. The languages cover *Dan-jong-ke, Lokhe, Limbu, Sherpa, Tamang, Newari, Mangari* and *Rong*. The integration of different creeds, languages and ethnic varieties into one composite culture-group is indeed a complex social process. To ascertain how far Upper Pedong represents an integrated culture-pattern, one requires a depth-study of some traits on an analytical frame. Before the analysis is attempted, it is better to survey the people and their life. It is fascinating to slowly follow up the village history and find that before the people of the plains in West Bengal or other States in India knew of the village, the communion of the people of Upper Pedong with some unknown Missionaries from France was established. And it led to the foundation of a Church and a Christian Mission at the village as a corollary to an unfulfilled dream of a few Christian preachers on an inconclusive journey to the roof of the world, a land of snow and yaks. It is now difficult for anybody to know how far the messages of Christ were communicated to Tibet, as the ties with that land have since been snapped because of deterioration in Sino-Indian relations. One has to accept an unbelievable fact without batting an eyelid that the village, inspite of the Church in its heart, has only 10.4 per cent of its population as

Christians. Without casting any reflection on the achievement of the Mission or the resistance or accommodation of the people to the proselytizing messages of the Mission, one may safely conclude that the general standard of literacy (37.9 per cent) is far above the average figure for the general population of the State. This is no mean achievement of the Mission Schools. The Mission had explored the village and brought it nearer to the world outside. The roads and faster means of transport only accelerated the process of further discovery of rural India in a tiny hamlet against the Himalayan setting.

If the Church is old, so are some of the households of Upper Pedong. As the village has not ceased to receive immigrant households, there appears to be a harmonious coexistence of very old residents and also very recent settlers. Every decade has injected a good number of people into the village. The inflow dating about a century back still continues unabated. And the decade preceding the survey has drawn the largest number of people. Because of diversity of language, creed, ethnic group and nativity, the village-society presents a mosaic of distinct culture-traits.

It is necessary to highlight the most important aspects of the people's life in the village. Here, in Upper Pedong, not very many households own land for even their own houses. About 50.0 per cent of the households own their homesteads, while some households among the other half own their houses but not their homesteads. The majority (75.9 per cent of the households, whatever their sizes), live in single-roomed houses. Of the households constituting regular families (51.0 per cent of the total households), 42.6 per cent are faced with a housing problem so much so that married couples in the households concerned are to share their bedrooms with one, two or more adult members of the households. Houses with walls of bamboo plastered with mud, earthen floors and with roofs thatched with straw shelter the majority. About 26.4 per cent of the households have no furniture in their houses. Negative features have brought forth a common meeting ground for the majority. The majority of the households have neither any drawing room nor any latrine attached to their houses. The infinitesimal minority enjoying the amenities of the two housing elements deviate from the main stream because of their urban culture-contacts. Rice alone constitutes the staple diet in one of the principal meals for all the households and in both the principal meals for about half the number of village households. Though the intake of protein diet is restricted to meat for the majority, the pattern is not uniform in other items of food. Fish is consumed by just one third of the households, eggs by 52.9 per cent and milk by 55.2 per cent of the village households. Though meat is consumed by a larger number, certain contradictions are observed in their food-habits. No prohibitive decree of religion can restrain one-fourth of the non-vegetarian households. But, religious faith too has not caused an enforcement of the prohibition uniformly. Beef is a taboo to the Hindu households generally. But, some of them do still take beef, meat of buffalo, pork and other animal meat. The Buddhists and the Christian households reveal similar characteristics. Drinks, meaning thereby spirituous beverages, largely sober the majority after dark, though some people hasten to be drunk to bed.

Economically too, the village establishes a type of unity among both the people privileged with the means of production and those who do not enjoy the same privilege. Landed households with some vestige of land, whatever the size, constitute half the village people. Milch cattle are owned by about 58.6 per cent of villagers. Ownership of land without draught animals has no economic significance. The majority of the households are economically

weak and insignificant on account of the absence of draught bullocks in their animal-farms. About 64.0 per cent of the cultivators do not have the requisite draught animal, so badly needed for cultivation. If ownership of land and draught animals be the weakest point in the economic organisation of the majority, resource of livestock at the disposal of the households projects no better image of the assets of the people. Pigs are not reared by 57.5 per cent, goats by 78.2 per cent and sheep by 98.6 per cent of the village households. Though poults are found to be owned by a greater number of households, there still remain 26.4 per cent which do not rear any poult. Inspite of many areas of basic difference, the general unity of the village is fostered by the agrarian economy of the village. Deficient in food, the village imports half its requirements from outside. Uses and practices in agriculture do not reveal any wide departure from convention, chemical fertiliser and improved inputs being resorted to by very limited number of households. Still, agriculture has provided the largest source of income for the households (35.8 per cent). Construction has played a complementary role to boost up individual income. Yet, 81.3 per cent of the households continue to comprise the poor and the very poor. Poverty is not a disgrace to the people, though it is confoundedly inconvenient to many. But, adversity has tutored the majority to live within their means. That explains why indebtedness is limited to only 50.0 per cent of the households. Whether indebted or not, the majority spend the maximum amount of income on food which item accounts for 57.6 per cent of the total expenditure. In a hilly terrain clothing demands a considerable portion of the purse. Hence, expenditure on dress comes next in importance to food.

The account of Upper Pedong cannot merely be the simple annals of the poor and the maimed. Life of the people in the confinement of the hill village has many brighter facets to redeem the ignominy of a hand-to-mouth existence. The village school is the living symbol of a dispenser of learning and also the dispeller of darkness of ignorance. That is why, seventy per cent of the boys and more than fifty per cent of the girls of the school-going age attend schools. The trend of literacy shows an upward direction among the young compared to the older section of the people.

Education and learning have kindled hopes for better living and for more dignified means of livelihood. The parents of many pin high hopes in their wards who in future will salvage the lost dreams of their parents through occupational mobility for a change towards a better life.

If education has illumined some dark corners, it has not changed the attitude of the people totally towards certain social institutions and practices. Though the women here on their sweet self do not set 'their own price, knowing man cannot choose but pay', one cannot deny the fact that the system of payment of bride-price has not been discontinued. No case has been observed to illustrate a marriage without the payment of bride-price. No stretch of imagination can reconcile the two contrary features of the people. If economically the per capita daily income of one household on the lowest scale stands at 0.20 *paise* and that of another on the farthest end does not exceed more than Rs. 4.00 *paise*, the financial soundness of most of the people is far from satisfactory. But, the same people have accepted marriages to be little more expensive than their purse permits. One would not have any reason to bother about the incompatibility of economic means with social practices, had marriages generally promised more durable family-ties than usual and also a very happy conjugal life. But inspite of the cost of marriage ranging from Rs.(1-100) to Rs. 501.00 *paise* and above, separation and remarriage very commonly

plague the social life in the village. Tradition has a very firm grip on the people no doubt, marriage by negotiation still constituting the predominant mode followed by the majority. But, inter-community marriages, transgressing the social bounds of ethnic and religious groups, are fairly common. The transgressions are not bred of any social change or educational progress. The enlightenment, if any, is engendered by a remarkable romantic glow or other personal preferences, often leading to union of hearts, oblivious of differences of caste, creed or language. Messages of change and scientific ways of life have no doubt percolated the village-society, but their domain is different. To illustrate the point, one should bring home the fact that family-planning methods are known to sixty per cent of the married heads of households. About 39 per cent of the married heads want children and many do so even after having four children. To return to the point of marriage, one should not infer from the limited number of inter-community marriages that cosmopolitanism is the living force to strike a form of unity in the village-society and to integrate the village into larger frame of the country outside. It has already been discussed that different religions keep their respective adherents under their sway and some of the languages maintain their identity by retaining their speakers. There are different institutions for respective votaries. The Church, the temples and the *Gompas* thrive side by side without encroaching on the jurisdiction of the other. Festivals, whether social or religious, are likewise observed with pomp and fervour by the people of different religious faiths and languages.

In the social organisation one finds the *Mondal* enjoying respect and confidence of the people. The voluntary organisations in the form of clubs or theatrical groups are absent in the village-life. But, a semblance of democratic spirit seems to pervade the committees supervising the religious institutious and also organisations like the Cooperative Society. The statutory *Panchayat* has initiated the villagers in the modern institution of rural democracy. But, all the people have not yet understood the role of the *Panchayati Raj* in the rural reconstruction. The absence of people's awareness of the existence of the Community Development's massive work of rural uplift among 63.2 per cent of the village households reveals painfully the communication-gap between the administrative channels for rural welfare and the people to whom the beneficial results trickle down. The village and for that matter, its people are not unresponsive to any need for change. That a section of the village population lives away for livelihood or education elsewhere is an impressive show of the awakened aspiration of the people for a better life, free from the pangs of poverty and hunger.

Upper Pedong does not stand insulated from the outer world. But, the communion of the people is better established with the Himalayan region than with the plains. Of the absentee members of the village households, a little less than fifty per cent live in the district of Darjeeling and also in other places in Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan. The marital ties do not mostly extend beyond 25 kilometres or so, but the trail miles mean in most cases a day's journey in the hills. All the married women are confined to the wide cultural zone of the Himalayan people, namely the district of Darjeeling, and Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. The sense of common culture which superficially appears to envelop the people is not in reality a very deep-seated feature. The subtle sense of hatred of the Lepchas against the Dukpas is evident in the legendary story of *Gebey Achho.* The inferior status accorded to the Bhutias by the Nepali-speaking people is reflected in the game of *Duku Muku* in which *Bhote Kukur* is said symbolically to represent the Bhutias. It is not known if in the new society coming up in the age of change and

progress the children realise the true implication of the social distinctivess of different communities and of their *inter-se* ranking in the hierarchy of the village-society.

Upper Pedong represents the cultural diversity in a Himalayan village and also the cultural homogeneity therein. Despite the cultural drift from the parent stream originating in different Himalayan lands, Upper Pedong does not express complete submergence of different cultural traits of the ethnic groups inhabiting the village. Neither the riddle of destiny has allowed Upper Pedong to rest perpetually in eternal slumber. The people ploughing the fields and breaking stones on the roadside fancy white collar jobs for their sons and the status of a *Memsahib* for their daughters. And the simple people of the hills quietly labour and sleep and dream a dream 'that knows not breaking, morn of toil nor night of waking'.

APPENDIX

Some Geological aspects of the area at and around Pedong, Darjeeling District, West Bengal

Introduction
Physiographic features
Rock types and their attitude
Geological conditions of hill slope
Note on landslip and its prevention
Acknowledgment

APPENDIX

Some Geological aspects of the area at and around Pedong, Darjeeling District, West Bengal

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Introduction

This account on some geological aspects of Pedong area includes Upper Pedong and its surroundings. In order to represent a comprehensive geological background of Pedong, the limits of the area considered have been chosen as follows : on the north the Rishi Khola (river), on the south the semi-circular ridge from Algarale to Medong, on the east the Mandum Khola (river) and on the west Pedong ridge which separates Pedong from Damsong forest. These geographical limits can be ascertained from Survey of India Topo Sheet No. 78A/12. The area is approximately 6 sq. miles and Upper Pedong occupies its north-central part. The aim of the account is to elucidate some aspects of geology of the selected area, which control the natural setting of Upper Pedong.

Physiographic features

Upper Pedong is situated on the eastern slope of Pedong ridge which extends in a nearly northernly direction from Algarah to the Rishi Khola. This ridge acts as the local water divides on the western slope streams flow westwards and on the eastern slope eastwards. The ridge is nearly 1/2 mile wide and attains height of approximately 6,000 ft. Just west of Pedong a prominent peak occurs at 5,941 ft. Eastwards from Pedong the hill slopes gradually (at about 20°) towards the valley of the Mandum Khola. This is illustrated in a vertical WNW-ESE topographic profile across Pedong (Fig. 1). Although the regional slope is about 20° locally steeper slopes can be observed.

The eastern slope of Pedong ridge offers natural gradient for streamlets (locally called *Jhoras*) which ultimately join the Moudum Khola. North-east of Pedong around Dalep, the slope of the ridge is north-eastwards and here the streamlets flow in a north-easterly direction to join the Rishi Khola.

The discharge along the streamlets (*Jhoras*) on the hill slopes is seasonal. During rainy season surface run-off is carried as much as possible along these water-courses. As there is no natural reservoir on Pedong ridge, flow of water is negligible along the *Jhoras* during the rest of the year. Whatever water could percolate along fractures, planes of fissility and pore-spaces in rocks on the higher slopes of the ridge trickle along the *Jhoras*.

Rock types and their attitude

Pedong area is included in the "Geological Map of the Darjeeling Hill Territory" by Mallet (1874). As deduced from his map, the rocks of Pedong area belong to "Sikkim Gneiss" (also referred to as "Darjeeling Gneiss") and "Daling Series". The Darjeeling Gneisses are high grade metamorphic rocks and "Daling Series" are relatively low grade metamorphic rocks ; argillaceous lithological units are prominent in both types. The geological boundary between "Darjeeling" and "Daling" rocks occurs just west of Pedong ridge and trends in a NNE-SSW direction. The eastern slope of the ridge is composed mainly of "Darjeeling" rocks.

The present author visited Pedong area on several field trips during 1965-68. Some of the observations made during the study are stated below.

The rocks of Pedong are mainly argillaceous metasediments. Two main types could be recognised.

(i) *Greenish phyllitic schist :* This rock is mineralogically composed of chlorite, muscovite, biotite, quartz, feldspar and opaque ores. The rock displays prominent phyllitic shine.

(ii) *Brownish mica schist :* this rock is mineralogically composed of biotite, muscovite, quartz, feldspar and opaque ores. Garnet may be present.

The rocks mentioned above are recrystallized and the texture is metamorphic schistose. The planar schistose arrangement is guided by the parallel alignment of constituent minerals, particularly micas and chlorite. Megascopically the schistosity appears as a prominent plane of parting (Fig. 2). This plane of fissility of the rocks is penetrative and width of parting is of microscopic dimensions (Fig. 3). This prominent planar structure controls distribution and attitudes of rocks around Pedong. All along the eastern slope of Pedong ridge the schistosity strikes nearly NEE-SSW and dips moderately steeply (30°-50°). The general direction of dip or inclination is eastwards (*vide* Fig. 1). However, local variations in alignment occur and south-westerly inclinations of schistosity have been observed. As a whole the general consistent attitude of schistosity of rocks has guided the NNE-SSW physiographic trend of Pedong ridge. The ridge is, therefore, a strike ridge.

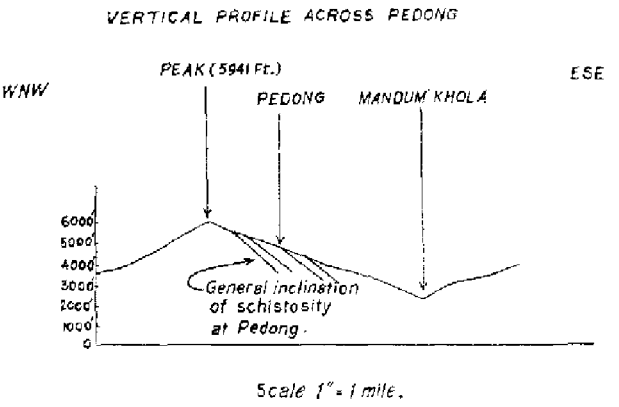
The mica-schists and phyllites of Pedong are deformed and folded. Presence of at least two sets of folds may be mentioned here. One set is tight, near isoclinal and rootless ; these occur in intrafolial fashion within visible schistosity and possess characteristic high amplitude/wave-length ratio. Another set is open, after appearing as puckering in micaceous rocks with crenulation cleavage cutting across schistosity ; these folds have relatively low amplitude/wave-length ratio. The open folds have distorted the megascopic schistosity and are responsible for the local variation in attitude of schistosity mentioned earlier.

There are indications of copper mineralisation in the schists and phyllites on the lower slopes of Pedong ridge towards Mandum Khola valley. Sulphides of copper occur as yellowish disseminations mainly along schistosity of greenish or brownish rocks.

Geological conditions of hill slope

Usually hill slopes below 25 may be considered safe irrespective of structure or condition of rocks. In this respect the general low slope (about 20°) of eastern side of Pedong ridge is apparently a safe one. However, recent landslips (especially during 1968-69) in areas adjacent to Pedong, such as, around Algarah which is about 4 miles south of Pedong, suggest that mere low slope is no safeguard against landslip and rockslide. Moreover, the slope

APPENDIX



Scale 1" = 1 mile.

Fig 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

of hill from Pedong to the Mandum Khola is not consistently uniform and locally slopes steeper than 25° occur. Hence, the possible geological conditions responsible for stability of hill slope at Pedong area is discussed here.

Geological conditions which mainly control stability of hill slopes have been recorded by Coulson (1940) as follows :

(a) The composition of the rocks
(b) Their state of preservation
(c) Their direction and inclination of dip and other divisional planes
(d) Variations in sub-aerial conditions to which they are exposed
(e) The occurrence of earthquake shocks

The above conditions are discussed below with special reference to hill slope at Podong. As a general principle, slopes in limestones, dolomites, and other massive sedimentary rocks are safer than those in shales, slaters or schists. As the rocks of Pedong belong to the last category, the hill slope here is actually made of relatively weak rock type. Fortunately, however, there is no indication of further destruction of these rocks by crushing and brecciation, although the rocks are deformed by folding. The state of preservation of phyllites and schists are such that their stability has not been reduced by earth movements subsequent to their origin.

The relationship between the inclination of schistosty (most prominent plane of parting) of the rocks of Pedong and the physiographic slope is important for assessing stability of hill slope around Pedong. As a general rule, the stability of rock strata on a slope is satisfactory when the prominent plane of parting (say, bedding or schistosity or sometimes joint) is inclined in a direction against the slope ; the stability is less when both parting plane and slope are inclined in the same direction. In the latter situation possibility of rock-slide and landslips is greatest when parting of rock and slope of hill have nearly the same amount of inclination ; the situation is also unsafe if parting is of gentler in inclination than slope. Although not a satisfactory situation, it is relatively safer if parting plane of rock is inclined at angle steeper than slope of hill in the same direction. On the eastern slope of Pedong ridge, in the neighbourhood of Pedong, such a situation is present (Fig. 1). Actually this limited part of hill slope has so far been unaffected by landslip. However, it has been observed that the schistosity of rocks are undulated by folding. It is possible that attitudes of schistosity in relation to slope may be locally different on hill slopes below Pedong towards the Mandum Khola from that observed at Pedong proper. Hence, existence of potential unsafe zones of less stability cannot be ruled out for the entire hill slope. That the relative attitudes of schistosity of rocks and slope of hill have controlled major and minor landslips can be observed around Algarah.

The variation in sub-aerial conditions to which the rocks are subjected is usually important, because this is the only factor which can be materially controlled by artificial means. The action of circulating subterranean water is uniformly destructive and is the principal cause of instability in fissible rocks like mica-schists and phyllites. It is, therefore, necessary to prevent water from entering hillsides. On the eastern slope of Pedong ridge rain water mainly flows across the plane of fissility in rocks and it is necessary to ensure proper chanelling of water through natural and artificial drainage so that excessive percolation does not take place. The action of running water over the surface, deepening natural courses like *Jhoras* and so increasing the angle of slope locally, would without capacious drains and artificial protective measures, prepare the way for the destructive action of the subterranean water. The existing *Jhoras* of Pedong area need to be kept under observation for this reason.

Although this hilly area receives earthquake shocks from time to time, no classified data could be obtained about the intensity of seismic activity and its effect on rocks.

Note on landslip and its prevention

It appears that Upper Pedong proper has not experienced senious landslip so far. The term landslip is used here to include slips, slides and falls of all varieties. Thus it includes soil-cap movements, rock movements like rock-slides and rock-falls, compound varieties of landslips and any exceptional subsidence. In recent years it has been the common experience that in hilly regions of Darjeeling District landslip is extensive during or after the monsoon. Landslips have affected hill slopes which had been previously free from such hazard. In the discussion under "Geological conditions of hill slope" it has been pointed out that stability of hill slope at Pedong, although not apparently unsafe, is not altogether satisfactory. The following observations are, therefore, made for focussing attention on prevention of possible landslip in the area.

Water is the chief source for triggering off landslips. Surface water may increase average slopes beyond the angle of repose by undermining the lower slopes of Pedong ridge and subterranean water would simultaneously diminish the strength of the rocks. Well aligned and efficient drainages are, therefore, necessary as means of prevention of landslip. Drains should not be allowed to run along the strike of schistosity of rocks further than it is absolutely necessary. Surface drainage, however, is not sufficient to remove the whole of rainwater which falls on highly fissile rocks like phyllite and schists. Subterranean accumulations need to be released by adits. These should run panallel to the direction of dip of fissility planes of rocks and not necessarily parallel to the direction of maximum surface slope.

Most other methods for the prevention of slips, such as the construction of revetments, buttresses, and the plantation of trees, are comparatively superficial in their effects and generally can seldom protect more than the soilcap. These may locally prevent incipient slipping which might otherwise have developed into major slide.

In view of the increase in occurrences of landslips in Darjeeling District, it is suggested that the entire slope of hill from Pedong to the Mandum Khola should be kept under observation. Any slip, however minor it may appear, should be reported, studied and its nature classified. This caution is necessary because such slips, once initiated on any part of the slope, may gradually affect the stability of the entire hill side around Pedong.

Acknowledgment

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27 The Secretary, Federation of Association of Small Industry of India, 23/B/2, Rohtak Road (Rest)
28 Standard Booksellers & Stationers, Palam Enclave (Rest)
29 Lakshmi Book Depot, 57, Regarpura, Karol Bagh (Rest)
30 Sant Ram, Booksellers, 16, New Municipal Market, Lody Colony (Rest)

NILGIRIS

1 Mary Martin Booksellers, Kogagiris Madras States (Rest)

PATIALA

1 Jain & Co., 17, Shah Nashin Bazar (Reg.)

PATNA

1 To-day & To-morrow, Ashok Rajpath (Rest)
2 J. N. P. Agarwal & Co., Padri-ki Haveli (Reg.)
3 Luxmi Trading Co., Padri-ki-Haveli (Reg.)
4 Moti Lal Banarsi Dass & Co., Padri-ki-Havali (Reg.)

PONDICHERRY

1 M/s. Honesty Book House, 9, Rue Duplix (R.)

POONA

1 Deccan Book Stall, Deccan Gymkhana (Reg.)
2 Imperial Book Depot, 266, M. G. Rd. (R.)
3 International Book Service, Deccan Gymkhana (Reg.)
4 Raka Book Agency, Opp. Natu's Chawl, Near Appa Balwant Chowk (Reg.)
5 Sarswat, 67, Patel Flats, 2 Bombay Poona Road (Rest)
6 Secy., Bharati Itihasa Samshodhalla Mandir, 1321, Sadashiv Peth (Rest)

PUDUKOTTAI

1 Shri P. N. Swaminathan Sivan & Co., East Main Road (Rest)
2 Meenakashi Pattippagam, 4142, East Main Road (Rest)

RAJKOT

1 Mohan Lal Dossabhai Shah, Booksellers and Sub-Agents (Reg.)

RAJPUR

1 Pustak Pratisthan, Sati Bazar (Rest)

RANCHI

1 Crown Book Depot, Upper Bazar (Reg.)

REWARI

1 Tika Ram Singh Lal (Rest)

SAUGAR

1 Yadav Book Stall, Publishers and Booksellers (Rest)

SECUNDERABAD

1 Hindusthan Diary Publishers, Market Street (Rest)

SIMLA

1 Minerva Book Shop The Mall (Reg.)

SIVIKASI

1 Ganesh Stores, South Car Street (Rest)

SURAT

1 Shri Gajanan Pustakalaya, Tower Road (Reg.)
2 Gujrat Subs. Agency, Jawarhar Lal Nehru Margh Athwa Lines (Rest)

TEZPUR

1 Jyoti Prakshan Bhawan, Tezpur, Assam (Rest)

TIRUCHIRAPALLI

1 S. Krishnaswami & Co., 35, Subhash Chandra Bose Road (Reg.)

TRIPURA

1 G. R. Dutta & Co., Scientific Equipments Suppliers (Rest)

TRIVANDRUM

1 International Book Depot, Main Road (Reg.)
2 Reddiar Press & Book Depot, P. B. No. 4 (Rest)

TUTICORIN

1 Shri K. Thiagarajan, 51 French Chapal Road (Rest)

UDAIPUR

1 Ashutosh & Co., Station Road, Opp. University of Udaipur (Rest)
2 Book Centre, Maharana, Bhopal Consumers, Co-op. Society Ltd. (Rest)

UJJAIN

1 Rami Bros, 41, Mallipura (Rest)

VARANASI

1 Viswavidlyalaya Prakashan, K40/18, Bhairo Nath Marg (Rest)
2 Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Gopal Mandir Road, P.B. 8 (Reg.)
3 Glob Book Centre, P. O, Hindu University (Rest)
4 Kohinoor Stores, University Road, Lanka (Reg.)
5 B. H. U. Book Depot (Reg.)

VELLONE

1 A. Venkatasubhan, Law Booksellers (Rest)

VZEGAPATAM

1 Gupta Brothers, Vizia Building (Reg.)
2 The Secy., Andhra University, General Co-op. Stores Ltd (Rest)

WARDHA

1 Swarajeya Bhandar, Bhorji Market (Reg.)

For Local Sale

1 Govt. of India Kitab Mahal, Janpath, Opp. India Coffee House, New Delhi, Phone 44561
2 Govt. of India Book Depot, 8, Hastings Street, Calcutta, Phone 23-3813
3 High Commissioner for India in London, India House, London, W.C. 2

Railway Bookstall Holders

1 S/S. A.H. Wheeler & Co., 15, Elgin Road, Allahabad
2 Gahlot Bros. K. E. M. Road, Bikaner
3 Higginbothams & Co. Ltd., Mount Road, Madras

Foreign

1 S/S. Education Enterprise Private Ltd., Kathmandu (Nepal)
2 S/S. Aktiebologat, C. E. Fritzes Kungl, Hovóbokhandel, Fredsgation-2, Box 1656, Stockholm—16 (Sweeden)
3 Reise-und-Ver Kehrsverlag Stutt Gart, Post 730, Guteneergstrelea 21, Stuttgart No. 11245, Stuttgart den (Germany West)
4 Shri Iswar Subramanayam, 452, Reversite Driv. Apt. 6, New York, 27 NWY

5 The Proprietor, Book Centre, Lakshmi Mansons, 49, The Mall, Lahore (Pakistan)

S. & R. Agents As on 31. 3. 70

1 The Asstt. Director, Extension Centre, Bhuli Road, Dhanbad

2 The Asstt. Director, Extension Centre, Santnagar, Hyderabad-18

3 The Asstt. Director, Govt. ot India, S.I.S.I. Ministry of C & I Extension Centre, Kapileshwar Road, Belgaum

4 The Asstt. Director, Extension Centre, Krishna Dist. (A.P)

5 The Asstt. Director, Footwear, Extension Centre Polo Ground No. 1, Jodhpur

6 The Asstt. Director, Industrial Extension Centre, Nadiad (Gujart)

7 The Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries, Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi

8 The Dy. Director, Incharge, S.I.S.I. C/O Chief Civil Admn. Goa, Panjim

9 The Director, Govt. Press Hyderabad

10 The Director, Indian Bureau of Lines, Govt. of India, Ministry of Steel Mines & Fuel, Nagpur

11 The Director, S.I.S.I. Industrial Extension Centre, Udhna-Surat

12 The Employment Officer, Employment Exchange, Dhar, M. P.

13 Do , Gopal Bhaban, Morena

14 Do , Jhabue

15 The Head Clerk, Govt. Book Depot, Ahmedabad

16 The Head Clerk, Photozincographic Press, 5, Finance Road, Poona

17 The Officer-in-Charge, Assam, Govt. B. D., Shillong

18 The O.I/C., Extension Centre, Club Road, Muzarferpur

19 The O.I/C., Extension Centre, Industrial Estate, Kokar, Ranchi

20 The O.I/C., State Information Centre, Hyderabad

21 The O.I/C., S.I.S.I Extension Centre, Malda

22 The O.I/C., S.I.S.I., Habra, Tabaluria, Twentyfore Parganas.

23 The O.I/C., University Employment Bureau, Lucknow

24 The O.I./C., S.I.S.I. Chrontanning Extension Centre, Tangra 33/1, North Topsia Road, Calcutta-46

25 The O.I./C., S.I.S.O., Extension Centre (Footwear), Calcutta-2

26 The O.I./C., S.I.S.I., Model Carpentry Workship, Puyali Nagar, P. O. Burnipur Twentyfore Parganas

27 Publication Division, Sales Depot, North Block, New Delhi

28 The Press Officer, Orissa Sectt. Cuttack

29 The Registrar of Companies, Andhra Bank Bldg., 6, Linghi Chetty Street, P.B. 1530, Madras

30 The Registrar of Companies, Assam, Manipur and Tripura, Shillong

31 The Registrar of Companies, Bihar Journal Road, Patna-1

32 The Registrar of Companies, 162, Brigade Road, Bangalore

33 The Registrar of Companies, Everest, 100, Marine Drive, Bombay

34 The Registrar of Companies, Gujarat State Samachar Building, Ahmedabad

35 The Registrar of Companies, Gwalior (M.P)

36 The Registrar of Companies, H. No. 3-5-37, Hyder Guda, Hyderabad

37 The Registrar of Companies, Kerala, 70, Feet Road, Ernakulam

38 The Registrar of Companies, M. G. Road, West Cott, Bldg., P. B. 334, Kanpur

39 The Registrar of Companies, Narayani Bldg., Brabourne Road, Calcutta-1

40 The Registrar of Companies, Orissa, Chandi Chouk, Cuttack

41 The Registrar of Companies, Pondicherry

42 The Registrar of Companies, Punjab & Himachal Pradesh, Link Road, Jullundur City

43 The Registrar of Companies, Raj. & Ajmer, Sh. Kumta Prasad House, 1st Floor 'C' Scheme, Ashok Marg, Jaipur

44 The Registrar of Companies, Sunlight Insurance Bldg. Ajmeri Gate Extension, New Delhi

45 The Registrar of Trade Unions, Kanpur Soochna Sahita Depot, (State Book Depot) Lucknow

46 Supdt. Bhupendra State Press, Patiala

47 Supdt., Govt. Press & Book Depot, Nagpur

48 Supdt, Govt. Press, Mount Road, Madras

49 Supdt. Govt. State, Stores and Pubs. P.O. Gulzenbagh, Patna

50 Supdt. Govt. Printing & Stationery Depot, Rajesthan, Jaipur City

51 Supdt. Govt. Printing and Stationery, Rajkot

52 Supdt. Govt. Printing and Stationery, Punjab, Chandigarh

53 Supdt. Govt. State Emporium, V. P. Rewa

54 Dy. Controller Prtg. & Sty. Office, Himachal Pradesh, Simla

55 Supdt. Printing and Stationery, Allahabad, U.P.

56 Supdt. Printing and Stationery, M.D. Gwalior

57 Supdt. Printing & Stationery, Charni Road, Bombay

58 Supdt. State Govt. Press, Bhopal

59 The Asstt. Director, Publicity & Information, Vidhan Sandha Bangalore

60 Supdt. Govt. Press, Trivandrum

61 Asstt. Information Officer, Press Information Bureau, Information Centre, Srinagar

62 Chief Controller of Imports & Exports, Panjim, Goa

63 Employment Officer, Employment Exchange (Near Bus stop) Sidhi (M.P.)

64 The Director, Regional Meteorological Centre, Alipur, Calcutta

65 The Asstt. Director, State Information Centre, Hubli

66 The Director of Supplies and Disposal Deptt. of Supply, 10, Mount Road Madras. 2

67 Director General of Supplies and Disposals, N. I. C. Bldg., New Delhi

68 The Controller of Imports & Exports, Rajkot

69 The Inspector, Dock Safety, M/I & E Madras Harbour, Madras-1

70 The Inspecting Asstt. Commissioner of Income Tax, Kerala, Ernakulam

71 The Under Secretary, Rajya Sabha Sectt., Parliament House, New Delhi

72 Controller of Imports & Exports, 7, Portland Park, Visakhapatnam

73 The Senior Inspector, Dock Safety, Botwwalla Chambers, Sir P. M. Road, Bombay

74 Controller of Imports & Exports, I. B. 14-P Pondicherry

75 Dy. Director Incharge, S. I. S. I. Sahakar Bhavan, Trikon, Bagicha, Rajkot

76 The Publicity and Liaison Officer, Forest Research Institute & Colleges, Near Forest, P. O. Dehradun

77 The Asstt. Controller of Imports and Exports, Govt. of India, Ministry of Commerce, New Kandla

78 The Dy. Director Generl. (S. D.) 6, Esplanade East, Calcutta

79 The Director, Govt. of India, S. I. S. I. Ministry of I & S Industrial Area—B. Ludhiana

80 The Govt. Epigwaphist for India

81 The Asstt. Director, Incharge, S. I. S. I. Extension Centre, Varansi

82 The Director of Supplies, Swarup Nagar, Kanpur

83 The Asstt. Director (Admn.) Office of the Dir. of Supplies & Disposal, Bombay

84 The Chief Controller of Imports & Exports, Ministry of International Trade, Madras

85 The Dy. Collector of Customs, Custom House, Visakhapatham

86 The Principal Officer, Merantile Marine Department, Calcutta

87 The Director, S.I.S.I. 107, Industrial Estate Kanpur

88 The Director, I/C, S.I.S.I. Karan Nagar, Srinagar

89 The Director of Inspection, New Marine Lines, Bombay-1

90 The Dy. Chief Controller of Imports & Exports, T. D. Road, Ernakulam

91 The Asstt. Director, Govt. Stationery & Book Depot, Aurangabad

92 The Asstt, Director I/C, S.I.S.I. Club Road, Hubli

93 The Employment Officer, Talcher

94 The Director of Inspection, Dir. S, & Disposal, 1, Ganesh Chandra Avenue, Calcutta

95 The Collector of Customs, New Custom House, Bombay

96 The Controller of Imports & Exports, Bangalore

97 The Admn. Officer, Tariff Commissioner, 101, Queen's Road, Bombay

98 The Commissioner of Income Tax, Patiala

99 The Director, Ministry of I & Supply, (Deptt. of Industry) Cuttack

100 The Dy. Director of Public Relations, State Information Centre, Patna

101 The Registrar General, India, New Delhi

102 The Officer-in-charge, State Information Centre, Madras

103 The Asstt. Director, S.I.S. I.M.I. Road, Jaipur

104 The Collector of Customs, Madras

105 National Building Org., Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi

106 The Controller of Communication, Bombay Region, Bombay

107 The Karnatak University, Dharwar

108 The Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar

109 The Principal Publications Officer sending commission for Scientific & Tech., Terminology, UGC, Building, New Delhi

110 The Officer-in-Charge, Information Centre, Swai Ram Singh Road, Jaipur

111 The Director General of Civil Aviation, New Delhi

112 Controller of Aerodromes, Delhi

113 Do , Calcutta

114 Do , Bombay

115 Do , Madras

116 The Registrar, Punjab Agrl. University, Ludhiana

117 The Land & Development Officer M. Of Health Family Planning W.H. & W.H. & U.D., Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi

118 Director of Census Operation, Manipur, Imphal

119 Do , West Bengal, 20, British Indian Street, 10th floor, Calcutta-1, Phone 23-8531

120 Do , Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad

121 Do , A. & N. Islands, Port Blair

122 Do , Bihar, Patna

123 Do , M. P. Bhopal,

124 Do , Tripura, Agartala

125 Do , Nagaland, Kohima

126 Do , Mysore, Bangalore

127 Do , H. P., Simla

128 Do , Goa, Daman & Diu, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli

129 Do , Punjab, Chandigarh

130 Do , Tamilnadu & Pondicherry, Madras

131 Do , Gujarat, Karanwala Building, Ellis Bridge, Ahmedabad

132 Do , Delhi, Grand Hotel, Under Hill Road, Civil Lines, Delhi

133 Do , Arunachal Pradesh, Shillong