

BHUTAN.

AN independent State in the Eastern Himalayas, between 26° 45' and 28° N. latitude, and between 89° and 92° E. longitude, bordered on the north-east and west by Tibet and on the south by British India. Extreme length from east to west 160 miles; extreme breadth 90 miles.

The original inhabitants of Bhutan, the Tephus, were subjugated about two centuries ago by a band of military colonists from Tibet. In 1774 the East India Company concluded a treaty with the ruler of Bhutan, but since then repeated outrages on British subjects committed by the Bhutan hill men have led from time to time to punitive measures, usually ending in the temporary or permanent annexation of various *dwards* or submontane tracts with passes leading to the hills. In November 1864 the eleven western or Bengal *dwards* were thus annexed. The Bhutanese at first acquiesced in the annexation, but in January 1865 attacked an English outpost, and it was found necessary to send an expedition into their country. Peace being restored, a treaty was signed (November 1865) by which the rulers of Bhutan receive a subsidy of Rs. 50,000, on condition of their good behaviour. This gives the Indian Government an effective control over them, while the occupation of two strong positions at Buxa and Dewangiri, within a few miles of their frontier, serves as a material guarantee against further aggression.

The government of Bhutan resembles that of Tibet, the chief authority being nominally divided between the Deb Raja, or secular head, on the one hand, and the Dharma Raja, or spiritual head of the State, on the other. Practically, the Deb Raja is a mere instrument in the hands of powerful barons (*penlops* and *jungpens*), while the Dharma Raja is only supposed to be concerned with the spiritual welfare of his people. In theory the Deb Raja is elected by the *penlops* and *jungpens*, but he is usually the nominee of the most powerful chieftain for the time being. The Dharma Raja is supposed to be the incarnation of his predecessor, and is chosen in infancy. The most powerful chieftains of Bhutan are the *penlops* of Tongsa, Paro, and Taka, and the *jungpens* of Thimbu, Punakha, and Angdaphorang.

Area about 16,800 square miles; population about 20,000 in 1864, but now much larger.

The chief towns of Bhutan are Punakha, the capital, a place of great natural strength; Tashichhu Jong, Paro, Angdaphorang, Tongsa, Tarka, and Biaka.

The people are nominally Buddhists, but their religious exercises consist chiefly in the propitiation of evil spirits and the recitation of sentences from the Tibetan Scriptures. Tashichhu Jong, the chief monastery in Bhutan, contains 300 priests.

The military resources of the country are insignificant. Beyond the guards for the defence of the various castles, there is nothing like a standing army. In 1864 it was estimated at 6,000.

The chief productions of Bhutan are rice, Indian corn, millet, two kinds of cloth, musk, ponies, chowries, and silk. Muzzle-loading guns and swords of highly-tempered steel are manufactured.

The trade between British India and Bhutan amounted in 1889-90 to Rs. 199,190 imports from and Rs. 231,686 exports to India. The chief imports are tobacco, European cotton goods, betel-nuts, and rice; the chief exports, wool, musk, ponies, and caoutchouc.

See Report on Explorations in Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibet, 1856-86. Edited by Lieut.-Colonel G. Strahan. Dehra Dum, 1889.