

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE KING UGYEN WANGCHUK WITH RAJA UGYEN DORJI IN KURJEY LHAKHANG*

The Lord (King Ugyen Wangchuck) had himself taken on his shoulders the activities that would benefit the Tenpa (Buddha's doctrine). The Lord had submitted frequent letters to the Thirteenth Dalai Lama- Tibetan Government's precious jewel of the monastic communities and public- that there was no need to proceed to other neighboring countries. The Lord had given personal assurance in an important message that even if the external aggressors reach the centre of the country (Tibet), the Chamgoen Rinpoche will not be harmed. In the detailed letter sent by the Lord to the two British envoys, including Colonel Sahib, he had conveyed that they must not at all have doubts on the Bhutanese. The Lord had also written in the letter that there was no need for any dispute and conflict with the Tibetan Government, for the Bhutanese would mediate. Even though the Lord's envoys; the son of Trongsa Penlop (*choszhab*) Takdzongpa and his cousin Thimp-dzongpa Kuenzang Thinley were sent deliberately, the two British envoys - Lakchi and Colonel Jernel had said that there were several reasons mentioned in the correspondences found in the offices of the British Government and the Tibetan Government for Britain to fight against Tibet. Moreover, instead of agreeing to the mediation, the two British envoys had said ill words that Bhutan would be invaded. The mediation could not succeed and they had to return.

Several years before this event, due to the accumulated merit and fortune of all people in this country, His Majesty the first King had taken over the entire country into his hands. In order to spread the pre-ordained fame (like summer thunder) in Tibet, India and other bordering countries and to promote

* Contributed by Her Majesty The Queen Mother, Ashi Kesang Choden Wangchuck

the noble deeds that were being carried out by the Lord, there was a meeting between the Lord and Drukpa Jaboed Ugyen in Kurjee in Bumthang, as recommended by the Great Refuge Zhabdrung Jigme Chogyal. Drukpa Jaboed Ugyen had become a famous man of unlimited wealth accumulated from business through hardship and tirelessness. He had undying faith in the Buddha's activities in general and the Pelden Drukpa Tenpa Rinpoche in particular. In addition to his deep faith and devotion to Zhabdrung Jigme Chogyal, he had offered a great deal of possessions, objects and silk and gained popularity. Due to Drukpa Jaboed Ugyen's fame, the Zhabdrung felt confident that he should be appointed a minister, desirable and of service to the Lotus Feet of the Lord. After they (the Lord and Jaboed Ugyen) met for the first time in Bumthang Kurjee, the Lord felt happiness beyond description, as though he came across his own son. They had lively discussion at great length without feeling tired. The Lord felt great pleasure. The Lord inquired about his ancestral genealogy. Ugyen said that his maternal pedigree is Tsentongpa and paternal pedigree is the side-son of Dungkar Pala Gyeltshen known as Shangpa Puenchog. The Lord remarked, "We are definitely sons of brothers". Since then, the Lord and Ugyen privately maintained intimate relationship of brothers, while in public they were the Lord and the servant. Ugyen had then pledged constant loyalty and *damtshig* through his body, mind and speech that he would serve the Lord with everything including material and physical resources and without caring for his own life. As pledged, he continued his loyalty and dedication to the Lord. Not so long afterwards, the Lord also conferred the post of Pasakha Kutshab on Ugyen.

Thereafter, *Chos-Lyon* Ugyen submitted details regarding immediate and ultimate trends and situations (of the neighbouring countries) and suggested that it would be constructive if the Lord visited Tibet. Divinations to foretell future were sought from deities and lamas. Accordingly, extensive rituals were performed to overcome obstacles.

In the first month of the Wood Dragon Year (1905), trusted servants of the Lord were selected to accompany him. Among the fifty people, the principle servants were Kazi Ugyen, Wangdi Dronyer Kunzang Domchug and Tsongpon Darjay of Tashigang. Even though they reached Phari, Sa Wang Lhalu of the Government of Tibet, Younger Prince Kushu of Kuentse Lhajarey and Prince of Traling did not agree to settlement. As a result, fight broke out in Jangtse. Tibetan forces failed to resist the external forces that they reached Lhasa. The monasteries of Sera, Drepung and Gadan rose in force. But, Drepung was on the verge of being destroyed. The Lord felt greater love and care for Tibet than his own country. With the Lord's resourcefulness and ingenuity, he discussed in depth with the British envoy, Colonel and stopped the enemy forces. There was no damage to any of the monasteries, due to the responsibility shouldered by the Lord for the benefit of the Tenpa. Hence, until now, there are seven thousand and seven hundred in Drepung, five thousand and five hundred in Sera, and three thousand and three hundred in Gadan.