

(2) HIMALAYAN WONDERLAND: TRAVELS IN LAHAUL-SPITI: by M. S. Gill, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 5, Daryaganj, New Delhi-6. Rs. 25.

This charming travelogue about a remote Himalayan valley near the Indo-Tibetan border, brings to us the grandeur of a spot where 'the gods live'. While we are familiar with the beauty of the Kulu valley, we know very little about Lahaul-Spiti which is now a district of the Himachal Pradesh with headquarters at Kyelang. The book, a lively account of this strange and romantic land, has been written by one who was privileged to know the area very intimately as the Deputy Commissioner of Lahaul-Spiti about a decade ago.

The narration is both subjective and objective. Like a skilled artist the author has been able to capture the enchanting beauty of this valley as viewed by him both in summer as well as in winter. He also took part in the festivals and fairs of the people and identified himself with their lives and longings. He has appropriately described how 'the setting up of a district administration with concentrated work on community de-

velopment, health and education, was bound to have an impact on the people very soon'. The author is perfectly right when he says that time-honoured traditions and social values are bound to change with the change of time. He has therefore thought it right 'to record and preserve something of the life and values of the people' inhabiting this picturesque Himalayan Valley, before they vanish altogether under the impact of a new cultural influence. The chosen photographs have added charm to the charming text of the narrative.

—MONI BAGCHEE