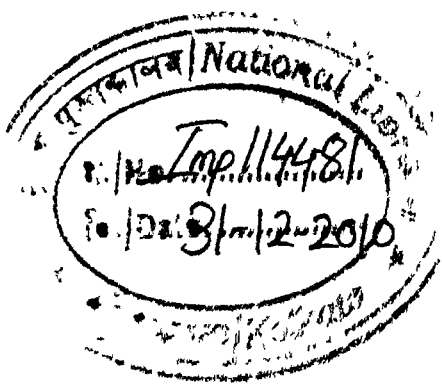
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PREFACE.

HUNDREDS of my educated countrymen travel every year in Northern India and visit places described in these pages. It is hoped that with this little book in their hands they will feel a higher pleasure in their travels and a keener interest in the places which they visit.

DARJEELING,
June, 1895.

R. C. DUTT.

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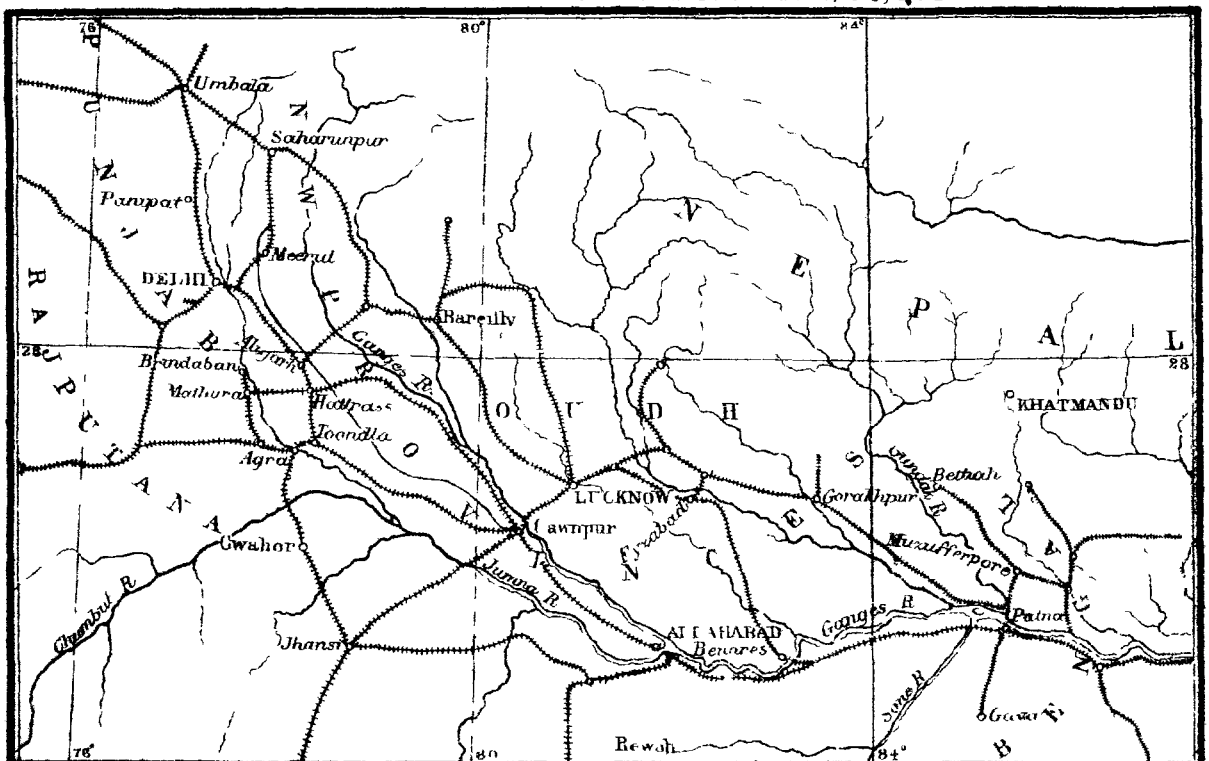
The plates have been printed at the Brahmo Mission Press.

BENERAS TO MATHURA.

MAP SPECIALLY PREPARED FOR RAMBLES IN INDIA BY R C DUTT, C S, C I E



RAMBLES IN INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

BENARES TO MATHURA, IN 1876.

FOR a Hindu of Bengal, his first visit to Northern India is an important event in his life. All that is heroic in Indian history and traditions, all that is brilliant in Sanscrit literature and poetry, all that is sacred in ancient Aryavarta, connect themselves with Northern India. Hindu science and philosophy have been developed in this land, Hindu poetry has shed on it the light of its magic lamp, and Hindu history is recorded on its ancient ruins. A visit to Northern India is an education which our schools do not impart; it tells a history which our text books do not record.

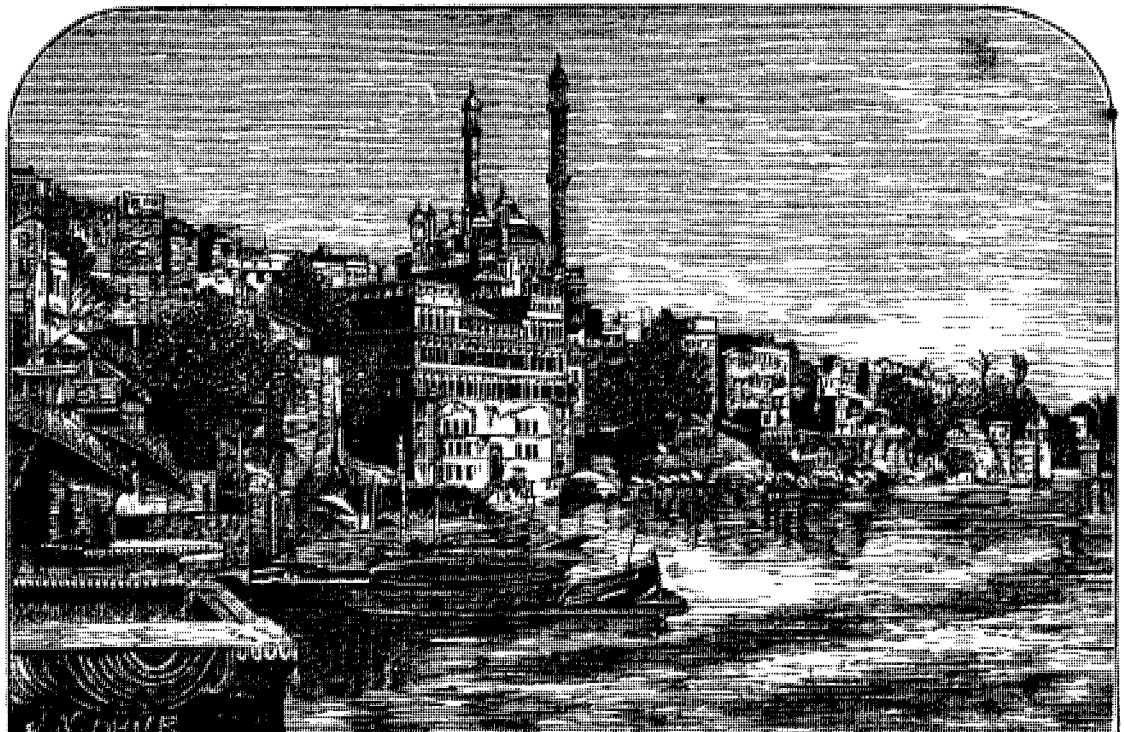
Benares.

The narrow and shaded streets of Benares, winding between lofty buildings, lined with quaint old temples and shops, thronged by men and women in various costumes, and frequented by painted

mendicants and sacred bulls, form a picture which, once seen, is never forgotten. As we stroll through these narrow and crowded lanes, we seem to be withdrawn for a while from the precincts of modern life, and to live once in the past, and amidst past recollections and past incidents! Ancient learning is still cultivated in the precincts of many temples, and ancient hymns which were chanted by Hindu Aryan settlers in this spot thousands of years ago, are still chanted by students who come from all parts of India to learn the Vedas, and to inherit the inestimable treasure which has been handed down to us through untold centuries.

Temples.

Among the numerous temples of Benares the most famous is Visvesvaŕa temple with its guilt dome, its red conical tower on one side, and a guilt tower on the other. The towers and dome were covered by gold plates by Ranjit Sinha, early in this century, and one of the temples of this group was built by Ahalya Bai of Indor in the last century. Close to this is the temple of Annapurna built by the Peshwa Baji Rao in 1721. Next to these in importance is the Durga temple constructed in the last century by the illustrious Rani of Nattore, and numerous monkeys which inhabit the precincts



Benares

of this temple are fed by pilgrims and travellers who visit the place. Man Mandir is an astronomical observatory, constructed by the famous Jai Sinha, founder of Jaipur. He built similar observatories also in Delhi and Mathura, Jaipur and Ojein.

Ghats.

More impressive perhaps than the temples is the line of Ghats which lead down to the sacred river, and which are crowded by tens of thousands pilgrims and bathers from all parts of India ! These crowded Ghats and the whole town of Benares with its numerous temples and towers and domes form an impressive and picturesque view from the river which few places in the world can surpass.

Dasasvamedha Ghat and Manikarnika Ghat are the most famous among the Ghats. Brahma is supposed to have performed ten horse sacrifices at the former, and at the latter place Durga is supposed to have dropped her ear-ring ;—hence the names. Thousands of pilgrims visit these places at all times, and hundreds of thousands during eclipses. Sindia's Ghat was constructed by Baiza Bai, widow of Daulat Rao Sindia, and Bhosla Ghat by the Raja of Nagpur , and both these Ghats are much frequented by Mahratta ladies who visit Benares.

Benares College.

The modern town of Benares is more spacious though less interesting than the older portions, and boasts of the fine College, built in the perpendicular Gothic style, where Sanscrit learning is still cultivated with success. But the glory of Benares is in its past, and the visitor turns from this modern temple of learning, and even from the modern temples and Ghats of Benares, to her past history and traditions extending through thousands of years.

The ancient Kasis.

For the kingdom of the Kasis was one of those great kingdoms which Hindu-Aryan colonists founded in the Gangetic valley, over a thousand years before Christ, when they marched eastwards from the Punjab, and settled in Aryavarta. Three thousand years their golden wings expand over this far-famed city, as the Hindu traveller thinks of the days when the Kurus and the Panchalas lived on the upper course of the Ganges, the Kosalas had an extensive kingdom in Oudh, the Videhas ruled in Northern Behar, and the Kasis flourished in the site of modern Benares ! Visions of ancient civilization rise before his eyes when he thinks of Janaka king of the Videhas, and his priest Yajnavalkya, the compiler of the White Yajurveda.

And ennobling recollections throng on his mind when he thinks of the learned king Ajatasatru, who ruled over the Kasis, and preached the religion of one God, even to learned Brahmans who came to seek of him the truth. The story of Balaki and Ajatasatru is three thousand years old, but the Upanishads are as fresh, as instructive, as life-giving now as they were of old ;—indeed more needful and more indispensible in the present day, when we seem to have lost our faith in the past, our trust in the future.

Ajatasatru & Balaki.

THE LEGEND OF BALAKI.

1.

Balaki, a learned Brahman,
Proud of knowledge, proud of lore,
Versed he was in many a sastra,
Travelled many a distant shore.
In the land of Usinara,
And in Matsya he had been,
Panchala and Kuru country,
Videha and Kasi seen.

2.

Ajatasatru, learned monarch,
Ruled in Kasi's mighty land,
Unto him repaired the Brahman,
In his palace rich and grand.

"Blessed be thy rule, O monarch!
O'er this kingdom rich and broad,
I will speak to thee of Brahma,
I will speak to thee of God."

3.

"Welcome, welcome, learned Rishi",—
To him thus the king replied,—
"For thy speech accept a thousand
Milch-kine of finest breed!
Every learned Brahman goeth
To Janaka, holy king,
Welcome thou to Kasi's mansions,
And a Brahman's blessings bring!"

4.

"List then, king! to words of wisdom",—
Proud Balaki thus began,—
"Knowest thou, king, the Soul all—radiant
Dwelleth in the radiant sun?
Him I worship", said Balaki;
"Not so", answered thus the king,—
"For the sun is glorious, mighty,
But is a created thing!"

5.

"Knowest thou, king, the lunar crescent
Shining in the starry sky?
Knowest thou, king, the Soul all—beauteous,
Dwelleth there serene and high?
Him I worship", said Balaki;
"Not so", answered thus the king,—
"For the moon is beauteous, mighty,
But is a created thing!"

6.

"Dost thou know the forked lightning,
Flashing through the lurid sky?
Dost thou know the Soul terrific,
Dwelleth there, sublime and high?
Him I worship," said Balaki,
"Not so",—answered thus the king,—
"For the lightning's dread, terrific,
But is a created thing!"

7.

"Dost thou know the deep voiced thunder,
Pealing through the echoing sky?
Dost thou know the Soul that dwelleth
In that sound, terrific, high?
Him I worship", said Balaki,—
"Not so",—answered thus the king,—
"For the thunder's sound is mighty,
But is a created thing!"

8.

Long he toiled, the learned Brahman,
Power Almighty to explain,
Quoted he from holy sastras,
Argued long but argued vain!
To his reasons, to his learning,
Ever answered thus the king,
"Mighty wondrous is all Nature,
But it is created thing!"

9.

Still he toiled, the learned Brahman,
To explain the God on high,
Spoke of fire and spoke of ether,
Spoke of water and of sky,

Spoke of shadow and reflection,
Spoke of echo and of sound,
Argued about dreams and slumber,
But solution none he found!

10.

Silently the boastful Brahman
Bent his head in grief and shame,
Sad he was,—the learned Brahman,—
To a wiser king he came!
"Thus far",—said the monarch gently—
"Thus far doth thy wisdom go!"
"Thus far! wise and learned monarch!
Teach me what you further know!"

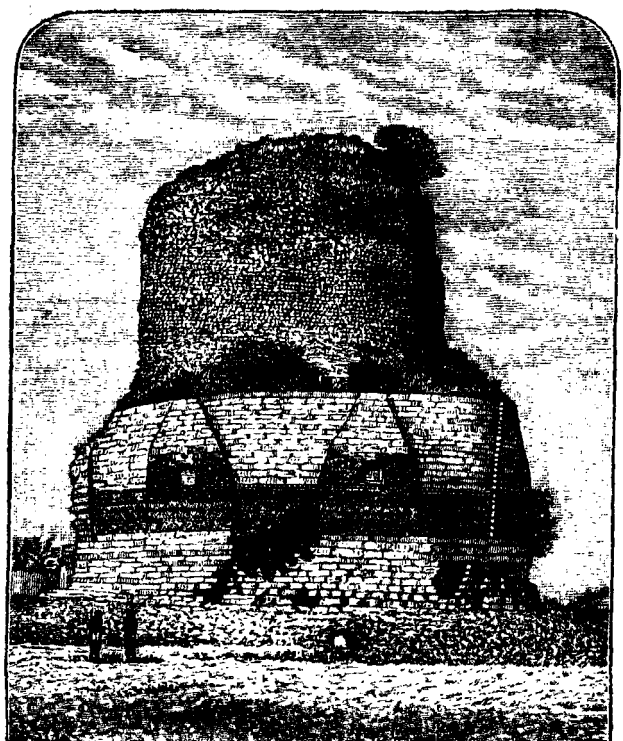
11.

With the fuel, meek and humble,
Balaki as student came,
Seeking knowledge from the monarch
Great in learning as in fame.
"He who made the moon's bright crescent,
Sun and sky and earth so broad,
He who breathed forth mighty nature;
He is Brahma, He is God!"

Abridged from the *Kaushitaki Upanishad* in *Lays of Ancient India*, *pp. 76-80*.

Gautama Buddha.

Such is the ancient tradition connected with the name of Ajatasatru, but it is not the only ancient tradition of this holy place. A few centuries after Ajatasatru and Balaki lived a teacher greater than they, and Gautama Buddha proclaimed in



Sarnath Tope—Benares.

the Deer-park of Benares that religion which is now the religion of a third of the human race. Let not the visitor to Benares forget to pay a visit to Sarnath, with its ancient tope, and the ruins of its ancient monastery.

Sarnath Tope.

The tope or *Stupa* consists of a stone basement, 93 feet in diameter and rising to a height of 43 feet, above which is brick-work rising to a height of 110 feet. The monastery or *Vihara* exists no more, except in its foundations. Let us glean some facts then from the account which is left to us by the pious pilgrim Houen Tsang who visited this spot in the seventh century after Christ.

"To the north-east of the town was a Stupa, and in front of it a stone pillar, bright and shining as a mirror, its surface glistening and smooth as ice. About two miles from the river Varana was the great Sangharama of the "Deer Park." Buddha first proclaimed his religion in this Deer Park. The Sangharama was divided into eight portions, and the storeyed towers, with projecting eaves and balconies were of very superior work. In the great enclosure was a Vihara 200 feet high, and above the roof was a gold covered figure of the mango fruit. The foundations of the

Vihara were of stone, but the towers and stairs were of brick. In the middle of the Vihara was a life size figure of Buddha, represented as turning the wheel of law. A fit representation, on the very spot where the great preacher had set the wheel of his religion rolling." *Civilization in Ancient India*, (Trubner's Oriental Series) Volume II., page 145.

The traveller who visits these parts to witness the scenes where Buddhism flourished will not content himself with visiting Benares alone. He will visit Rajagriha the capital of ancient Magadha, where Buddha often strolled and begged his bread, and where king Bimbisara welcomed the venerable mendicant, and the queen Kshema embraced his lofty faith. He will visit Buddha Gaya where Buddha sat under a Bodhi tree in contemplation and conceived that noble religion which he afterwards proclaimed in the Deer Park in Benares.

Rajagriha.

The ancient temple of Buddha Gaya has lately been restored, and pious Buddhists come to visit the spot from Burma and Ceylon and other parts of the earth, as they did in the days of Houen Tsang.

Buddha Gaya.

Pataliputra.

The traveller will also see what can still be seen of ancient Pataliputra or Patna which was built by Ajatasatru the successor of Bimbisara to beat back the Turanian races who had poured into North Behar through Nepal. And he will see the site of the ancient University of Nalanda, which was perhaps the noblest institution of learning in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries after Christ.

Nalanda.

"The day is not sufficient," says the faithful chronicler Houen Tsang, speaking of the Nalanda University which he visited in the seventh century, "for asking and answering profound questions. From morning till night they engage in discussion; the old and the young mutually help one another. Those who cannot discuss questions out of the *Tripitaka* are little esteemed, and are obliged to hide themselves for shame. Learned men from different cities, on this account, who desire to acquire quickly a renown for discussion, come here in multitudes to settle their doubts, and then the streams (of their wisdom) spread far and wide." *Ancient India, Vol. II., p. 148.*

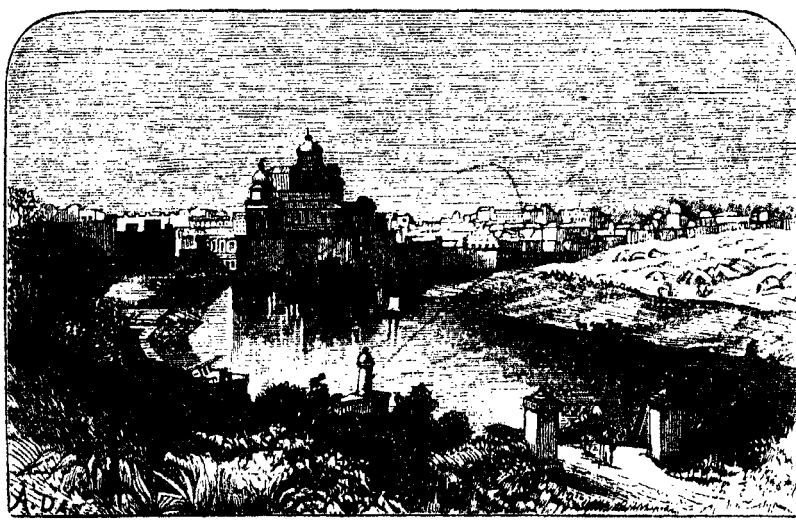
But Buddhism never supplanted Hinduism in Benares or elsewhere in India, on the contrary

the newer religion, sprung from the bosom of the ancient Hindu faith, ran parallel to the mother current for a thousand years in India, spreading its waters far and wide, and refreshing and vivifying wherever it spread. Buddhism gradually declined as the Puranic or modern form of Hinduism began to spread,—some centuries after 'the time of Houen Tsang'; but nevertheless, down to the date of the Mahommedan conquest, Buddhism flourished in Benares, side by side with Hinduism. After that conquest, Buddhism completely disappears from our view, and the ancient Hindu temples and shrines of Benares also shared a common ruin.

Jai Chand of Benares.

A Hindu bard sings of the unhappy disputes between Prithu Rai of Delhi and Jai Chand, king of Benares; and it is said Jai Chand invited the foreign invader Muhammad Ghori. The result was fatal. Muhammad Ghori defeated the chivalric Prithu Rai of Delhi in the second battle of Terrouri, and his general Kutb-uddin defeated Jai Chand of Benares "whose army was countless as the sand." Both the Hindu princes were slain, and Northern India submitted to the rule of the Mahommedans. It is said that Kutb-ud-

Mahommedan conquest. Destruction of ancient temples.



Lucknow.

din and his successors destroyed a thousand temples in Benares, and there is no temple now in that ancient city which is more than two or three centuries old.

Lucknow.

From Benares I went by the Oudh and Rohilkhand line to Lucknow, where the Nawabs of Oudh ruled for a century, and which afterwards became the scene of many stirring events connected with the Sepoy War. The Residency is one of the first places visited by travellers, and contains a subterraneous apartment where English women took shelter during the dark days of the war. Close to it is the Lawrence Memorial,—a mound with a white marble cross,—and with an inscription in memory of Sir Henry Lawrence. A simple tomb marks the spot where Sir Henry lies buried, with the touching and noble epitaph dictated by himself,—"Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty."

Residency.

Machchi Bhawan.

To the north-west of the Residency are the Machchi Bhawan and the Imambara. The original Machchi Bhawan was built by the princes of Lucknow, two centuries ago, and the fort was blown up

during the Sepoy War. A spot here is called Lakshmanapura, and is said to have been the site of the original town built by Rama's brother Lakshman,—hence the name Lucknow. The Rumi Darwaza of the great Imambara is said to have been constructed by Asafuddaula in imitation of the great gate of Constantinople from which the Turkish Government derives the name of "Sublime Porte."

Palaces &c.

Other structures, palaces and mosques attest to the greatness of the Nawabs who held sway here for a hundred years. The Jumma Masjid is a beautiful mosque, and the Husainabad built by Adil Shah, as a burial place for himself, is a superb place with a marble reservoir of water, crossed by a fanciful bridge. The Farad Baksh Palace, the Chattar Manzal, the Kaisar Bagh, the Moti Mahal, the Shah Najaf, the Khurshed Manzal and many other places recall to the traveller the glory, power and luxury of the Nawabs of Oudh, who have now ceased to exist.

La Martiniere College.

La Martiniere College built in the Italian style is a striking building with four towers and a central one supported by flying buttresses.

It was with regret that I had to leave Lucknow without paying a visit to the ruins of the ancient city of Ayodhya, situated on the Gogra, called Sarayu in the ancient days. It was the famed capital of the mighty Kosalas who occupied the whole tract of the country between the Ganges and the Gunduck, three thousand years ago, and whose glory has been immortalized by one of the Great Epics of India.

Ayodhya.

Later on Gautama Buddha often came to preach his religion in this town Ayodhya,—then called Saketa,—but the seat of government had been removed further north to a newer town Sravasti. We are told in Buddhist Scriptures of a religious controversy between the King of Kosala and the Queen Kshema of Magadha, when travelling between Saketa and Sravasti. Houen Tsang visited both these towns twelve centuries after the date of Buddha. Puranic Hinduism then gradually replaced the Buddhist religion in northern India, and was supreme in Oudh when Jai Chand the last Hindu King ruled in Oudh and Benares. A copper grant of Jai Chand dated 1187 A. D., has been found near Faizabad. Six or seven years after this date, his rule and Hindu

independence were swept away by Muhammad Ghori.

Topes discovered in Ayodhya.

There are great mounds or hills in Ayodhya, which are interesting to the antiquarian. General Cunningham holds that the Sugriva Parvat, 300 feet high, contains the ruins of the Buddhist monastery which Houen Tsang visited, and that the Mani Parvat 65 feet high, marks the site of the Stupa built by Asoka on the spot where Gautama Buddha preached, when he visited Saketa.

Delhi.

From Lucknow I went by rail to the far-famed city of Delhi, the centre of ancient Aryavarta, the metropolis of ancient India!

The ancient Epic Age.

Standing on the banks of the Jumna, the thoughtful Hindu calls back to mind the ancient days, when the Kurus ruled in Hastinapura and the Pandavas in Indraprastha over three thousand years ago. He recalls all that has been preserved in an imperishable Epic, of their ancient civilization, of their schools of learning, of their valour in war, of their virtue and worth. He recalls the deeds of the mighty Panchalas who lived lower

down the course of the Ganges, of the Yadavas who migrated from the banks of the Jumna and founded a kingdom in Gujrat, of the Viratas, the Surasenas, and the countless warlike tribes who peopled the Gangetic Valley in the Epic Age, and fought the great war which poetry has immortalized, and religious legends have sanctified. It is not many hours' journey by rail from Delhi to the field of Kuru-kshetra which I have visited since. The ancient Sarasvati still flows by this classic spot, though almost choked and dried up, except during the rains. The temple of Thanesvar still attracts crowds of pilgrims. And the great lake of Kuru-kshetra and the surrounding places connected with the incidents of the war are still pointed out to the curious traveller.

Kuru-kshetra and the Sarasvati.

The Kurus and the Panchalas and other ancient races declined in power after the Epic Age, and Delhi and Kanouj owned the supremacy of Magadha under the great Chandragupta, and his grandson the greater Asoka. But after the decline of Magadha, Kanouj once more rose in power, and was the seat of that great empire which the

Rise of Magadha.

Rise of the Guptas.

Guptas extended over all India in the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ. Then came Vikramaditya on the scene, and he was the monarch of Kanouj as well as of Ujjain. A successor of his, Siladitya II. ruled in Kanouj in the seventh century, and celebrated there those great Buddhist rites which twenty kings from different parts of India came to witness, and which the Chinese traveller Houen Tsang has described in his narrative. Ancient races declined once more, and the Rajputs came to the forefront in the tenth century. Their supremacy in Northern India lasted for two centuries, and Delhi and Kanouj were the foremost towns in India once more during these centuries. But a storm swept over them from the west, and Prithu Rai of Delhi and Jai Chand of Kanouj and Benares fell after a brave but fruitless resistance.

Vikramaditya and Siladitya.

Rajputs.

Delhi and Agra continued to flourish under the Pathan and the Mogul, and marble palaces, mosques and minars attest the splendour and pomp and luxury of their Moslem rulers.

The ruins near Delhi extending over ten miles

Kutab Minar—Delhi.

to the south of the modern town are the remains of no less than seven cities which have successively risen on this classic site. Two of them were Hindu towns, *viz.*, Lalkot built by Ananga Pal in 1052, and Rai Pithora built by Prithu Rai, the last Hindu King of Delhi, in 1180. These two ancient forts are close to each other, and close to the great column called the Kutb-Minar. Nearer to the modern town of Delhi is another fort called Indrapat, built probably on the site of the ancient Indraprastha, which was the capital of the Pandavas over three thousand years ago.

Ruins of Delhi.

The first great structure built by the Moslem conquerors was the stupendous Kutb-Minar begun by Kutb-ud-din the first Afgan king of Northern India. It is 240 feet high, and can be seen from miles all round.

Close to it is Kutb's mosque, imposing even in its ruins, and raised on the site of Prithu Rai's great Hindu temple which was demolished by the conquerors. So great was the bigotry of the conquerors, that every figure on the pillars and stone walls of the Hindu temple has been broken, and the face of every Hindu god defaced. But

the old iron pillar raised on this spot, probably by the Gupta emperors of India, is still entire and uninjured by time or by foemen. It is a solid shaft of wrought iron 16 inches in diameter, and 22 feet above ground, besides nearly 2 feet under ground. "It opens our eyes," says Dr. Fergusson "to an unspected state of affairs to find the Hindus at that age forging a bar of iron larger than any that have been forged even in Europe to a very late date, and not frequently even now. * * It is almost equally startling to find that after an exposure to wind rain for fourteen centuries, it is unrusted, and the capital and inscription are as clear and as sharp now as when put up, fourteen centuries ago."

As the traveller returns from this site of the old Hindu town to modern Delhi, he visits several interesting spots on his way. The tomb of Feroz Shah, one of the last of the Afgan kings is interesting; and the tomb of Humayun, the second Mogul Emperor of India, is still more interesting, and was erected by his favourite wife Hamida Banu Begum. Not far from this is the "Chausat Khamba" or the hall of sixty-four marble pillars, and the resting place of Akbar's foster-brother. Close to this spot is the tomb of Amir Khasru the

greatest Moslem poet of India, and the contemporary of the great Sadi of Persia. The tombs of the saint Nizamuddin, of Jahan-Ara the daughter of Emperor Shah Jahan, of Muhammad Shah one of the last Mogul Emperors, and several other tombs in this neighbourhood are of interest to the student of Indian History.

The traveller then passes by Indrapat of which we have spoken before; and close to modern Delhi he visits the pillar of Asoka now erected on Feroz Shah's Kotila a three storied building.

Asoka's Pillar.

This is one of the pillars erected by the imperial Asoka over two thousand years ago, and covered with Pali Inscriptions which defied the skill of Sir William Jones and of Colebrooke. James Prinsep made himself immortal by decyphering these edicts; and these edicts, as well as various other edicts of Asoka have since been discovered in various parts of India, from the Punjab to Mysore. Nor was Asoka's religious zeal confined within the limits of India; for he sent Buddhist Missionaries to all parts of the then civilized world, —to Ceylon and to Bactria, to Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Epiros and Macedon! These missionaries formed religious bodies, like the Therapeuts and

the Essenes, living a celebate life, avoiding animal food, and proclaiming the high moral precepts which Gautama Buddha had proclaimed in India. These Western Buddhists were sti l flourishing and preaching in Palestine when Jesus Christ was born, and much of the noble precepts and lofty disinterestedness of Christianity is a reflection from the older creed of India. "The world owes to India" as I have said elsewhere, "that higher system of ethics and nobler code of morality which distinguish the modern religion from the religions of the ancient world."

But let us return from this digression to the modern town of Delhi. Before returning into that town, the traveller will no doubt have a look at Jai Sinha's observatory which is close to the town, containing an immense equatorial dial with a hypothenuse of nearly 120 feet. It was constructed in 1724 by the same Jai Sinha who constructed similar observatories in Benares, Ujjain and Jaipur.

Delhi Fort.

The fort is the first place which the traveller visits inside the modern town of Delhi. Inside the fort are the magnificent Diwan-i-Am, or public hall of audience with its rows of red sand-stone pillars;

the gorgeous white-marble pavilion of the Diwan-i-Khas or private hall of audience ; the Begums' apartments and baths; and lastly the Moti-Musjid, verily the pearl of mosques !

Jumma Musjid.

Outside the fort, the most imposing structure is the Jumma Musjid, said to be unrivalled in its size among the mosques of the world. It was built by the great emperor Shah Jahan, and the top of a hill was levelled for the construction of this superb structure.

The Chandin Chauk is the principal street of the city, and the "golden mosque" in this Chauk is still pointed out as the spot where the terrible Nadir Shah sate when he ordered a massacre of the citizens.

Mutiny Memorial and Asoka's Pillar.

To the North-west of the town, and about a mile from it is the ridge where the British troops had their quarters when Delhi was taken by the Sepoys in 1857. The Mutiny Memorial, an octagonal Gothic spire has been built here in memory of those who fell in those dark days. But what is more interesting to the traveller is another pillar of Asoka which was originally erected at Meerut, in the 3rd century B.C., and

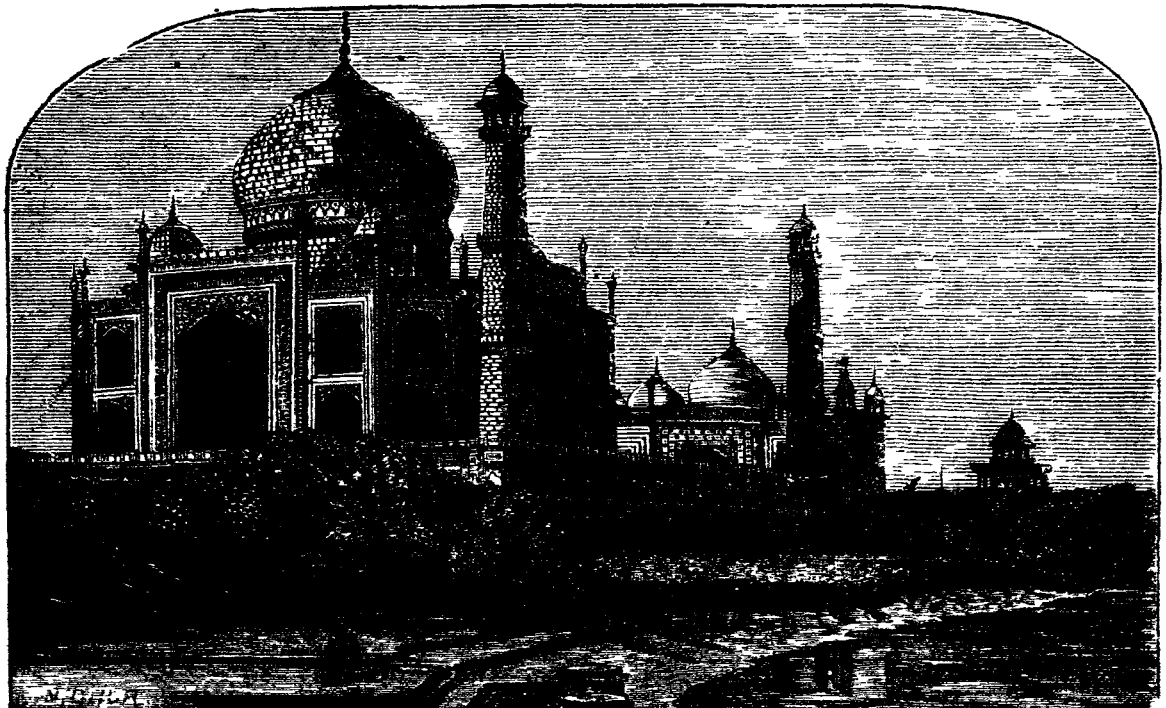
was removed to Delhi by Emperor Firoz Shah in 1356.

Agra and its Fort.

In Agra the traveller sees much the same style of architecture as in Delhi. Inside the fort are the Moti Musjid, the Dewan-i-Am and the Dewan-i-Khas and the baths and the apartments of Begums. Outside the fort is the Jumma Musjid, far inferior to the structure of the same name at Delhi. But the glory of Agra is the Taj Mahal, the tomb of Mamtaz Mahal, the neice of the celebrated Nur Jahan, and the queen of the Emperor Shah Jahan. It has been called a "poem in marble," and to appreciate it the visitor should come more than once. I was disappointed when I saw it for the first time; but when I came again, years after, and passed an evening in the gardens of the Taj, and viewed the superb edifice in the soft light of the evening, and in the midst of the luxurient gardens, I confessed to myself that there are few buildings in the world which can fill the mind with such silent rapture by its matchless and superb beauty.

Taj Mahal.

Interesting also to travellers is the tomb of Itmad-ud-daula, erected by his daughter the cele-



Taj Mahal.—Agra.

brated Nur Jahan. Far more interesting however than either of these edifices is the tomb at Sekandra of the great Emperor Akbar,—the greatest monarch who has ruled in India within a thousand years and more. Inheriting only a few unsettled provinces from his father and his grand-father, it was Akbar who really founded the Mogul Empire and spread it over the whole of Northern India from the Punjab to Bengal, and from Kashmir to Ahmadnagar. He broke down and crushed all opposition by his matchless bravery and energy; and he conciliated foes and welded together a great empire by his generosity and his remarkable catholicity. And when we remember that this wonderful man was really illiterate and owed all his gifts to nature, we cannot help thinking that he was one of those born heroes who are sent to found empires and restore order in times of trouble and disorder.

Akbar's tomb at Sekandra.

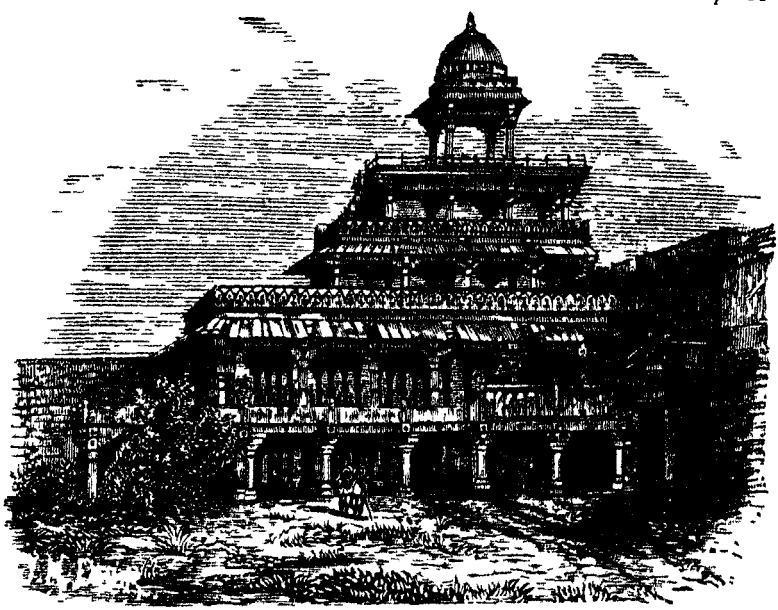
The mausoleum of Akbar is a pyramidal building of four stories, three of which are of red sandstone, and the fourth, containing Akbar's cenotaph is of white marble. The mausoleum is surrounded by grounds well laid out, and the gateway to these gardens is imposing.

Akbar's Palaces at Fatehpur Sikri.

In some respects, Fatehpur Sikri is the most remarkable place that exists! It is a noble and perfect palace—with audience-halls, lofty chambers, royal offices, and rooms for queens and Begams,—all deserted and desolate! It is like the city of the dead that we read of in the Arabian Nights, a city, splendid in its streets and houses and public marts, but without inhabitants, without the trace of life!

The palace was built by the great Akbar who intended to make it his capital. It is difficult to imagine what induced the great Emperor to leave it and to remove his court to Agra. The most plausible conjecture is that want of good drinking water or the prevalence of some illness in this place persuaded the great ruler that the place was not fit for a great capital.

Among the rooms and edifices in this deserted palace the traveller will visit with interest the rooms of Jodh Bai, the Rajput queen of Akbar, the finely decorated apartments of his favourite Turkish queen, and the rooms of Miriam, his Portuguese Christian queen. The Panch Mahal is a five storied colonnade, built as a pleasure resort for the ladies of the Court, and the first floor



Panch Mahal—Fatehpur Sikri

is remarkable for its 56 columns, no two of which are alike in design. But the finest architectural work in this place is the southern gate which, Fergusson says, is noble beyond any portal attached to any mosque in India, perhaps in the whole world.

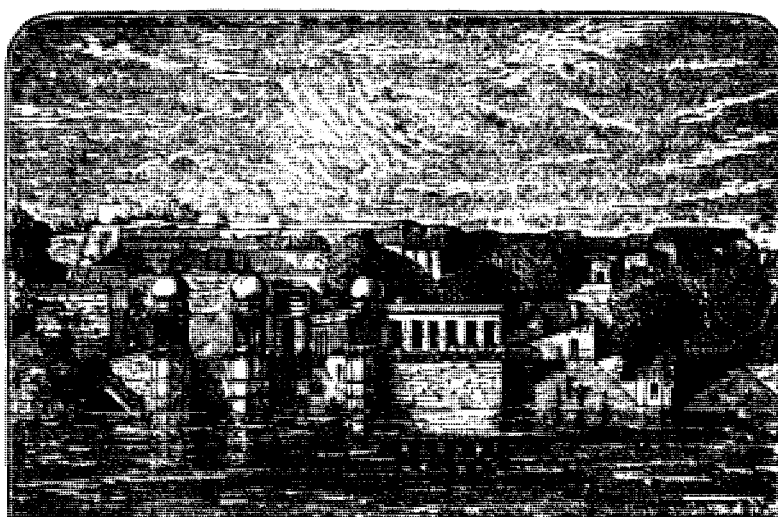
The Taj Mahal, the tomb of Sekandra, and the deserted but unique palace of Fatehpur Sikri make the environs of Agra among the most interesting spots in the world for the tourist and the traveller. But the Hindu tourist turns from these interesting places to the far more ancient and interesting spots,—Mathura and Brindaban! I visited these places some years after I visited Agra, but an account of these places should naturally follow that of Agra, and I include it therefore in this place.

Mathura.

I shall never forget the feeling of joy with which I first gazed on the panorama of the buildings and ghats of Mathura, which rose as a vision before my eyes, across the spacious and limpid Jumna. I jumped from my seat in the railway carriage and rushed to the window and looked with delight on the far-famed classic town! The sacred Jumna flowed before me, temples and towers and graceful edifices rose beyond and

were bathed in sunlight, and the memories of three thousand years sanctified the lovely scene. My thoughts flew back to the time when Mahmud of Ghazni, found it in all its loveliness and left it a ruin,—back to the time when Houen Tsang and Fa Hian found it ringing with joyous Buddhist celebrations and pompous gatherings,—back to those dim ages when Krishna and the Yadavas went as colonists from this spot and Hinduised the far shores of Gujrat! It is difficult to avoid sentimentalizing when standing on this spot, for there are few spots which recall to the Hindu more vividly the memories of an ancient world and an ancient civilization.

My feelings were not less keen when I entered Mathura, and when in the cool of the evening I strolled along its streets lined with ornate and beautiful old Hindu-style buildings, and paused on the river bank to witness religious celebrations. Sacred hymns were uttered and the sacred fire was lighted, and a crowd of pious and simple-hearted men and women rushed forward to receive the blessings and the benefit of the evening service. We took a boat the next morning and glided up and down the river, and we saw many a devout worshipper standing in water,



Mathura.

and hailing the rising sun with sacred hymns which were uttered by their ancestors in this same spot, three thousand years ago. The nation which has a past has a future also ; and the faith and destiny of the great Hindu nation will survive the degradation of the present.

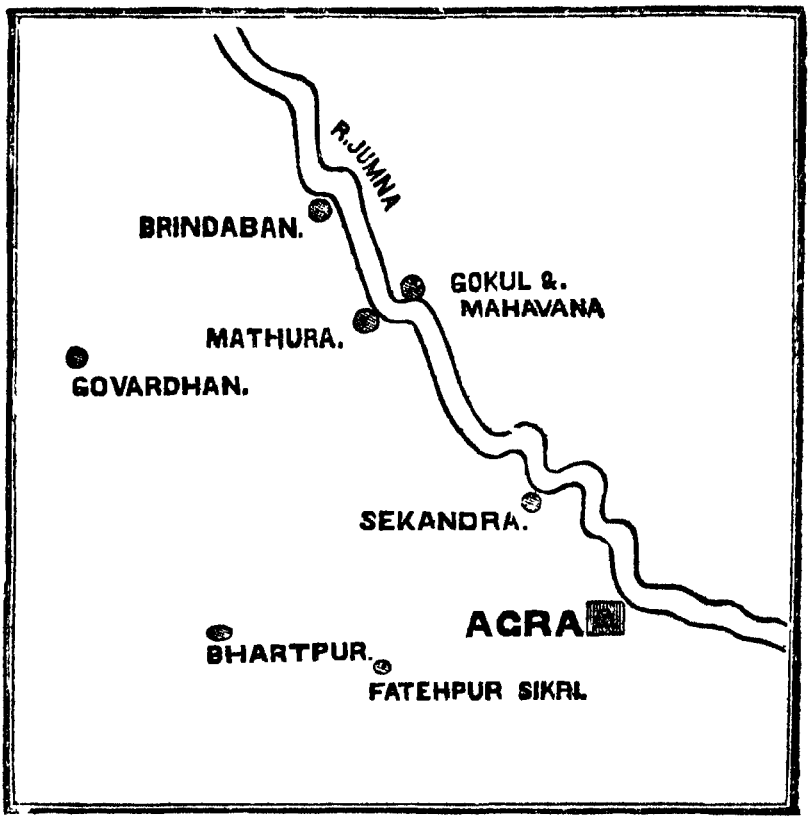
Fa Hian visited this place early in the fifth century after Christ and found here 20 Buddhist temples and 3,000 Buddhist monks. And it was when writing about Mathura that this traveller recorded a pleasing picture of the system of administration which prevailed over the whole of Northern India, then called Madhya Desa or the middle-country. "The people are well off, without poll-tax or official restrictions ; only those who till the royal lands return a portion of profit of the land. If they desire to go, they go ; if they like to stop, they stop. The kings govern without corporal punishment ; criminals are fined according to circumstances, lightly or heavily." *Ancient India* Vol. II., p. 56. Megasthenes, who visited India over seven centuries before Fa Hian gives us a similar pleasing account of Hindu administration. He also informs us that the greater part of the soil was under irrigation, and "famine has never visited India, and

that there has never been a general scarcity in the supply of nourishing food."

Many discoveries have been made in Mathura in recent times. The remains of the Upagupta monastery, of one Vaishnava and two Jaina temples, of a Jaina stupa, and hundreds of valuable sculptures and inscriptions have been found. They illustrate the ancient Hindu architecture of India which still flourishes in Hindu towns like Mathura, Ujjain and Gwalior, and which has blended itself with the Saracenic style in Delhi and Agra.

Hindu travellers visit several places of interest round about Mathura. On the left bank of the river is the Mahavana of Gokul, where Krishna is said to have tended his cattle. The reputed palace of Nanda where Krishna passed his infancy is also pointed out. On the right bank of the river, and six rules to the north of Mathura, is Brindaban also connected with the legends of Krishna's amours. Among the many temples of Brindaban that of Gobinda Deva built in 1590 A.D., is the most famous and magnificent. Fergusson justly calls it one of the most interesting and elegant temples in India. But the magnificence of the structure gave pain to the bigoted Aurungzebe,

and he almost destroyed the noble edifice. It has since been partly restored by the British



Government. The temples of Madan Mohan, of Gopi Nath, of Jugal Kisor, and of Radha Ballabh are also worth visiting.

And lastly, fourteen miles to the west of

Mathura is the famous hill of Gobardhan which Krishna is said to have lifted up in his might.

Legend of Krishna

Strange, passing strange, are the legends of Krishna! We view him, first as a cow-herd sporting with the cow-herds of Gokul,—then as a youth feasting on the smiles of the milk-maids of Brindaban,—then as a great chief negotiating with princes or battling with warriors,—and lastly as a bold colonist who led bands of the Aryan Yadavas from the banks of the Jumna to found an Aryan kingdom on the shores of the Arabian Sea! What do these legends signify? What is the solution of this mystery? What is the purport of this wonderful myth?

The greatest modern writer in India, Rai Bankim Chandra, devoted years of study to the solution of these legends, and thanks to his labours we know now which of them are ancient and which of them are modern. We know that Krishna, as he appears in the oldest portions of the Mahabharata, was a great chief and a great politician, seeking to preserve peace among warlike nations, but ready to war when war was inevitable. We know that he was a chief of the powerful Yadavas in that ancient Epic Age, when the Yadavas vied

with the Kurus and the Panchalas in power and glory. And we know that when a great internecine war was over, Krishna retired to Gujrat and founded Dwaraka. And colonists from Gujrat calling themselves Pandyas sailed down at a later date to Cape Comorin, founded a new Hindu kingdom there, and called its capital Mathura or Madura. Megasthenes speaks of the Pandyas in the 4th century B.C., Asoka alludes to them in his inscriptions, and Strabo and other classical writers speak of the trade of the Pandyas with Rome.

But let us return to Krishna. Taking him to be a Yadava warrior and the founder of a colony at Gujrat,—whence the legends of the milkmaids of Brindaban which connect themselves with his name? These legends which fill our recent Puranas are not found in the Mahabharata or in other ancient Hindu works;—they are undoubtedly later additions, recent interpolations into the ancient story of Krishna.

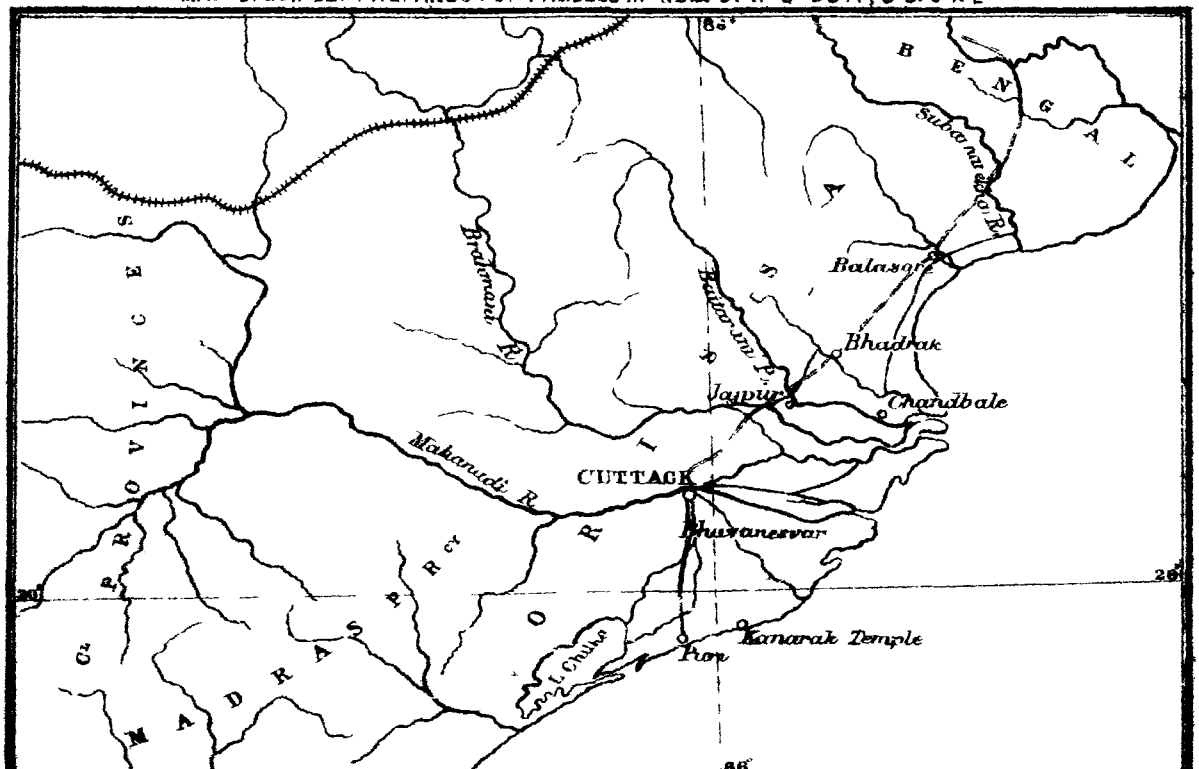
Whence the idea? Why should the ancient Yadava hero be represented as courting the favours of the rustic beauties of Brindaban? How did the story of his amours come to be superadded to the older story of his deeds as a warrior and colonist?

A student of Sanscrit literature need not be at a loss for a reply. In many Sanscrit dramas, like the Sakuntala, the Ratnavali, and the Malati Madhava we find that in ancient times the spring was celebrated by a festival to Kama or the god of love, and red powder was thrown by the joyous people at each other. The custom was, and still is universal in India, only the name of Kama has dropped out, and the name of Krishna has come in, and is connected with the *Holi* festival. In course of centuries, Krishna, the hero of the Mahabharata, became so great a favourite with the Hindus, that legends which moved the multitude, and festivals which delighted the million, came to be connected with Krishna. Hence Kama was replaced by Krishna, as Sita the Vedic goddess of corn and plenty has been replaced by Lakshmi.

All the legends of the amours of Krishna are therefore pure allegories,—pure inventions,—a survival of the legends of Kama who was himself an allegory. Leave them out, and the great figure of the mighty Yadava leader looms out from the historic past full of lessons for the present, and for the future.

ORISSA.

MAP SPECIALLY PREPARED FOR RAMBLES IN INDIA BY R. C. DUTT, C.S.C.I.E.



CHAPTER II.

ORISSA, 1882.

IN our younger days we scarcely suspected that the backward province of Orissa has a connected history which goes back fifteen centuries, that it boasts of temples which are among the finest specimens of Hindu architecture. And we were scarcely prepared to admit that over two thousand years ago this province received Buddhism and Aryan civilization from the west, and that the Buddhist caves of Orissa are among the earliest that we find anywhere in India. And yet such is the case. Wherever we lift the veil of darkness which hangs over modern India, we descry long and glorious vistas into the past, rich with memories of great achievements in war and in peace. And the modern Hindu, whose early education consists in prolonged lessons about his own littleness, has to unlearn this false teaching and to learn for himself that he has a past.

Subarnarekha.

The traveller is in the classic land of Orissa after he has crossed the Subarnarekha river. In the rains

he will meet with thousands of pilgrims, hailing from all parts of India, and proceeding in a continuous stream by the Grand Trunk Road to the great shrine of Jagannath. And even in the cold season, when travelling is more convenient for ordinary travellers, bands of belated pilgrims, returning from the sacred temple, will greet his eye. Among them he will occasionally meet with pilgrims who measure their lengths from their homes to Puri and back again, and the still more wonderful and austere men who have held up their hand night and day in performance of a vow, until it is now a rigid and inflexible bone! Wonderful is the fortitude which religion inspires in India.

Baitarani.

From the Subarnarekha to the Baitarani is a long tract of country which has no interest for the antiquarian. But the Nilgiri hills to the west are pretty, and the traveller passes through Balasore and Bhadrak, the head quarters of a district and a sub-division respectively.

Jajpur.

Crossing the Baitarani, and turning a little aside from the main road, we come to the ancient town of Jajpur, one of the most interesting places in India.

The ancient Dantapura where the supposed tooth of Buddha was kept in the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ was near Jajpur; and when Yayati Kesari founded the Kesari dynasty in 474, and established Hinduism in Orissa, he selected Jajpur as one of his capitals. The town flourished for over a thousand years under the Kesari and then under the Ganga dynasty, until the conquest of Orissa by the Moslems under the renowned Kalapahar about 1560. Kalapahar demolished all the Hindu temples, and the accumulated art treasures of a thousand years were lost for ever.

What yet remains in Jajpur attests to its former glory. Close to the mosque of the 17th century are three ancient Hindu statues of blue chlorite stone. One is Indrani, and the second is the wife of Vishnu with her infant on her knee. The third is the most striking, and is of Chamunda the wife of the all destroying Siva. It is a colossal naked skeleton, with the skin hanging to the bones, and the veins and muscles standing out in ghastly fidelity. The figure attests to the boldness of the Hindu sculptor of the ancient days.

In a gallery overlooking the bed of the river are seven images, elaborately carved, and each made of one block of chlorite, six feet high. Six

are goddesses, Kali, Indrani, Lakshmi, Parvati, Savitri and Yami ; and the seventh is Narasinha.

Close to the gallery is a temple containing an image of Ganesa, and opposite the gallery, in a wooded island in the river, is a second temple dedicated to the Varaha incarnation of Vishnu. But the most beautiful object in Jajpur is the Gorada Pillar, 32 feet high, and beautifully carved out of one piece of stone. The figure of Garuda which adorned the top is said to have been hurled down by the Mahommedans when they conquered the country. But the Mahommedans were not the only destroyers. The ancient palace of Jajpur was destroyed by the officers of the Public Works Department who used the stones to build bridges along the Grand Trunk Road ! Many fragments of halls and temples, all built of stone, are still however to be found in the town, and a mile and a half to the east of Jajpur a colossal figure of Padmapani, now called Santa Mahadeva, was dug up. It is over 17 feet in height.

Brahmani and Mahanadi. Cuttack.

Proceeding along the Grand Trunk Road, and crossing the Brahmani and then the Mahanadi river, the traveller at last comes to Cuttack, founded by Nripa Kesari in the tenth century,

and now the chief town of Orissa. The fort called Barabati is said to have been built by Hindu kings in the fourteenth century, and it is stated in the Ain-i-Akbari that there was within the fort the famous palace of Raja Mukunda Deva, nine stories high. No trace of it is left now, and the arched gateway is all that is left of the fort.

A weir over a mile long has been constructed across the Mahanadi for storing water for the supply of canals. Steamers ply between Calcutta and Chandbali, and from Chandbali passengers can come to Cuttack through canals.

Further south from Cuttack and within twenty miles of that town are the far-famed temples of Bhubaneswar and the caves of Udayagiri and Khandagiri, the most interesting objects in all Orissa. Before the time of Asoka and even of Alexander the Great, Buddhist missionaries penetrated into Orissa and excavated rude cells in the rocks of Udayagiri and Khandagiri, there to pass their lives in contemplation. As time went on princes and princesses followed the example, and the remains of palaces excavated out of solid rock attest to the greatness of forgotten kings and queens.

Udayagiri is a range over a hundred feet high, and the caves are excavated in eight stages. The lowest is the famous Raj Rani cave consisting of two rows of cells one above the other, shaded by pillared varandas with a court-yard cut out of the hill side. There is a remarkable frieze here, much delapitated so that portions of it only can be described. Four female figures look out of doors in one part, a priest and devotees appear in another, a saddle-horse with attendants appear in the third, and female figures carrying pitchers are seen in the last portion.

Udayagiri.

Ganesha cave is one storied, and the frieze has the same story sculptured on it as on the Raj Rani cave. Hathi-gumpha or the Elephant cave has an inscription of Aira, king of Kalinga, who reigned some centuries before Christ, and Bag-gumpha or the Tiger cave is cut externally into the shape of a tiger's head with the jaws agape.

The Khandagiri range is somewhat higher than the Udayagiri and has the famous Ananta cave. There is an image of Buddha here in bas relief, and the frieze has figures bringing offerings, or fighting with lions and bulls.

Khandagiri.

As elsewhere in India, Buddhism declined after the fourth and fifth century after Christ, and the forms of popular Buddhist worship were assimilated with Hinduism which began to flourish in its Puranic form in the subsequent centuries. Siva or Bhuvaneswara was the first popular god of the Puranic Hindus, before Vishnu or Krishna supplanted him in popularity, and the early Kesari kings of Orissa erected temples to Siva which are among the finest specimens of Hindu architecture. Not far from the Udayagiri and the Khandagiri hills is Bhuvaneswara, the ancient capital of the Kesari kings, now a collection of magnificent but deserted temples. Seven thousand temples are said to have, at one time, encircled the sacred lake of Bhuvaneswar; and some five hundred still remain, exhibiting every stage of Orissa art, "from the rough conceptions of the sixth century, through the exquisite designs and ungrudging artistic toil of the twelfth, to the hurried dishonest stucco imitations of the present day."

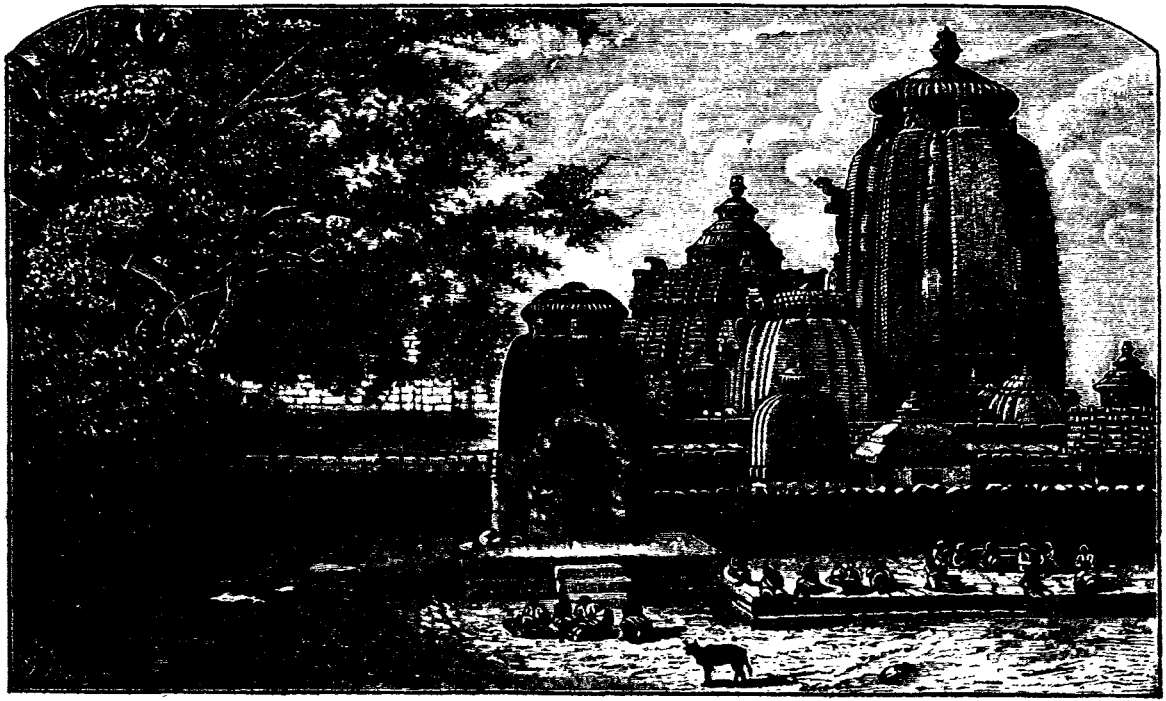
Bhuvaneswar.

It is unnecessary, and impossible within my limits to give an account of the numerous fine temples which still decorate the place, all covered with elaborate sculpture which displays the art in a

high stage of advancement. The Great Temple however deserves a passing word. The tower is 55 feet high, and every inch of the surface is covered with carving in the most elaborate style. The whole of Hindu life,—life at home, life of labourors, and manufacturers, festivities and religious processions, social life and religious worship—is pourtrayed in imperishable stone in a style which fills the modern Hindu with wonder and bewilderment. The temple of Raj-Rani has three remarkable statues executed with elegance and vigour; that of Mukteswara is a handsome little temple with the most elegant and effective statuettes; while the temple of Kedareswara has a chlorite statue of Durga which has the finest female head of all statues in Bhubaneswar.

As we have said before, Krishna supplanted Siva in popularity in the later centuries all over India, and a dynastic change in Orissa marks this change in faith. The Ganga kings who succeeded the Kesari kings appear to have favoured the worship of Vishnu or Krishna, and some thirty miles to the south of Bhuvaneswar stands the far-famed temple of Jagannath, built in 1198, and the most popular

Jagannath.



Great Temple.—Bhubaneswar.

place of pilgrimage to the present day. Over five thousand priests cater to the religious wants of the pilgrims, and over twenty thousand people of all classes are dependant, directly or indirectly on Jagannath. As a specimen of architecture however, the temple of Jagannath is poor and degenerate, compared with the earlier and chaster structures of Bhuvaneswar.

Millions of Hindus have visited the temple of Jagannath, but not many of them care to go a little beyond and visit the far-famed temple of Kanarak on the sea-shore. And yet from the accounts written of it (for I have not visited the place myself) it is one of the most interesting specimens of Hindu architecture. Sterling fixes the date of its construction in the thirteenth century, but Fergusson, a higher authority on architecture, judges from the chaste design and execution of this temple that it was erected in the ninth century.

Kanarak.

But the great tower of this temple is now a mass of ruins, and the porch is the only part now standing. The whole roof is excessively beautiful, and Fergusson remarks that there is no roof in India where the same play of light and shade is obtained, with an equal amount of richness and

constructive propriety, nor one that sits so gracefully on the base that supports it. The floor is 40 feet square ; the roof slopes inward till it contracts to about 20 feet, where it is ceiled with one flat stone roof supported by wrought iron beams, over 20 feet long, shewing a knowledge of forging iron which has been lost to modern Hindus. The exterior says Fergusson is carved "with infinite beauty and variety on all their twelve faces and the antefixœ at the angles, and bricks are used with an elegance and judgment, a true Yavana could hardly have surpassed."

Such are some of the remains of ancient Hindu architecture which the traveller still witnesses in Orissa. India is a land of recollections, and there is scarcely an ancient site of an ancient ruin which does not open up a vista of ancient history and ancient traditions. The Hindu lives in these traditions, and cherishes these recollections, and he may well explain of his native land what the poet has said of Rome.

> The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
> Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe ;
> An empty urn within her withered hands,
> Whose holy dust was scattered long ago.

The ocean hath its chart, the stars their map,
And knowledge spreads them on her ample lap,
But Ind is as a desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections!

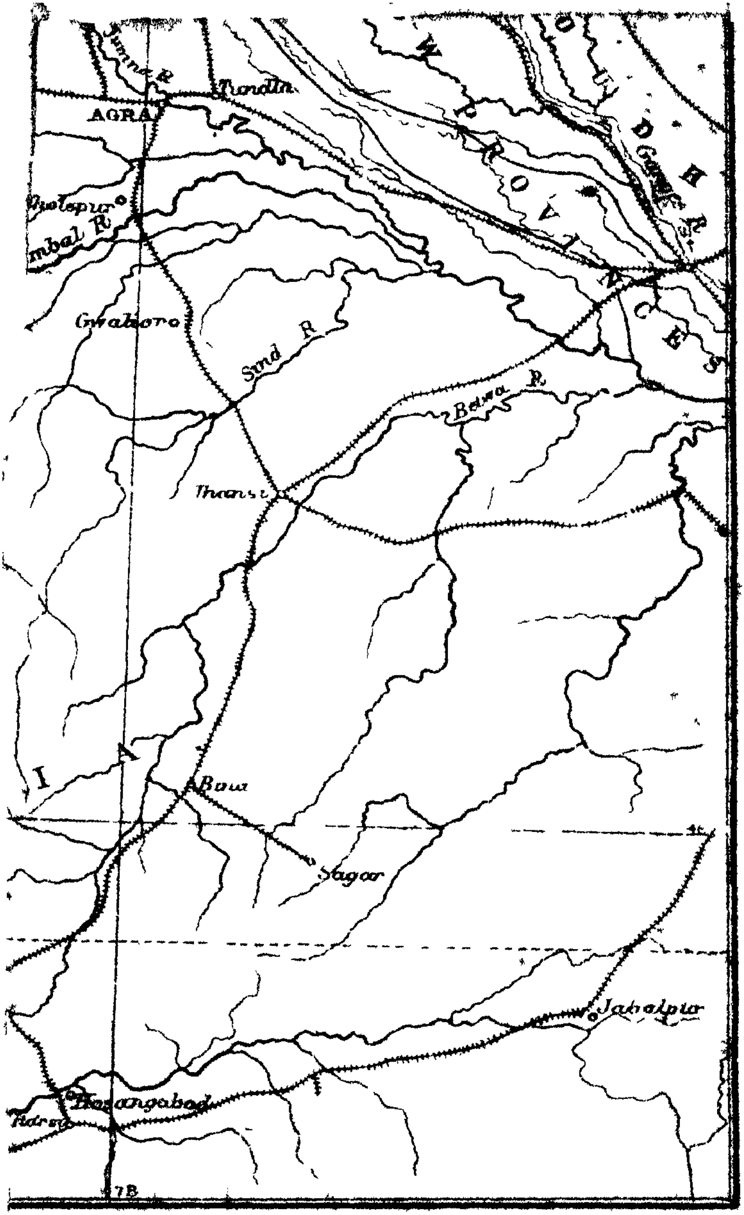
CHAPTER III.

RAJASTHAN AND CENTRAL INDIA, 1885.

JAIPUR is a shew town in India. Though not so large as Calcutta or Bombay, and not so splendid as Delhi or Agra, it is gayer and brighter! Not so interesting as the ancient Hindu cities of Benares and Mathura, it has partaken more freely of the conveniences of modern life and civilization. Not connected with heroic associations like Udaipur and Chitor, it is the most forward and go-ahead town of Rajasthan. And the traveller must be hard to please if the gay and cheerful and joyous city of Jaipur, with its past history and associations blended with modern improvements and beauty, does not please him.

Jaipur.

After a visit to the fort of Bharatpur on my way, I came to Jaipur on the 15th of October 1885, accompanied by an enthusiastic fellow-traveller, a companion in my travels in Europe and in India, a sympathising and true friend through the journey of life. On the next day we drove through the spacious city, admiring its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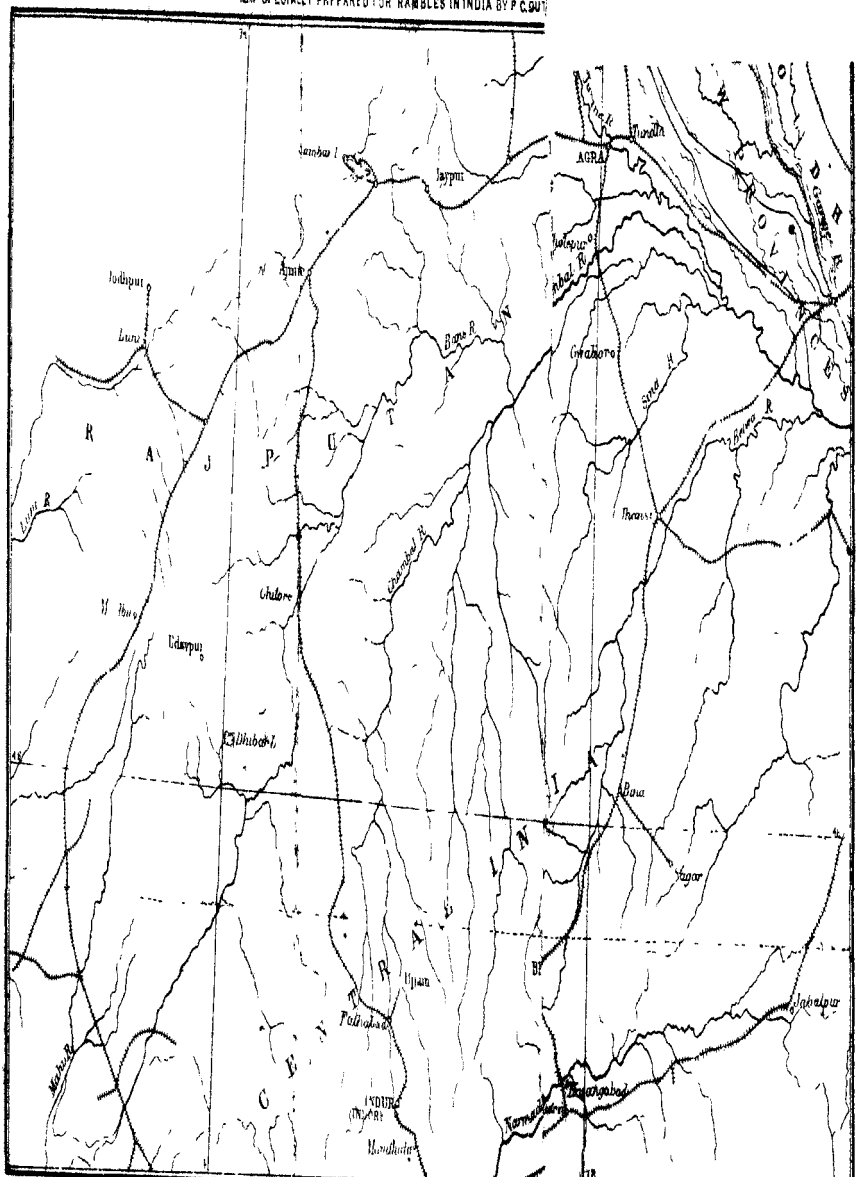
RAJASTHAN AND THE CENTRAL

MAP SPECIALLY PREPARED FOR RAMBLES IN INDIA BY P.C.GUT



pink-coloured houses, lovely gardens and fountains. The Maharaja's palace with its pleasure grounds and gardens occupies the middle of the city. The Chandra Mahal is the centre containing the noble Dewan i-khas and the Dewan-i-Am ; the Observatory is to the east of Chandra Mahal ; and adjoining the Observatory is the Hawa-Mahal a fantastic and elaborate building.

Outside the walls is the public garden, laid out at a cost of four lacs of Rupees, and one of the finest gardens in India. The Maharaja's college too is a noble institution, but still more interesting is the school of art with classes for reviving various branches of ancient industry like sculpture, metal work, enamelling, embroidery, weaving &c. Jaipur jewellery and enamel-work and cutting and setting of garnets and other stones are known all over India. The water-works of Jaipur are also worth a visit.

Jaipur was built by Jai Sinha II., in 1728. The more ancient capital of this State is Amber. The picturesque situation of Amber at the mouth of a mountain gorge has been admired by all travellers. It is said to have been a hold of the aborigines in olden days, and was taken by the Rajputs in

Amber.

1037 A.D, and was the capital of the State until Jaipur was founded in the last century. Every student knows that the Rajas of Jaipur have played an important part in Indian history; and the great Man Sinha of Amber conquered Bengal and Orissa for the Moguls, and carried the victorious banners of Akbar to the Hindu Kush in the west. Man Sinha's palace is at the foot of the hill, and is reflected on the lake below. It is a noble pile of buildings with its Dewan-i-Am and its apartment for ladies. The Sohag Mandir, the Jai Mandir, the Jasa Mandir and the Sukha Nivas are lovely places which delight the visitor and recall to his mind interesting traits of Hindu royal life. Near the Dewan-i-Am is a temple where a goat is daily offered to Kali, it is said, to keep up the memory of human sacrifices performed here in pre-historic times. The image is said to have been brought by Man Sinha from Bengal.

Dasahara Festival.

I returned from Amber to Jaipur, and nothing that I have ever seen has impressed me more than the celebration of the autumnal Dasahara in Jaipur. The Rajputs worship the sword on this occasion, and in the olden days their chivalric wars, which fill many a bright page in modern Hindu history

commenced after this significant worship. I witnessed the Maharaja performing the worship, assisted by his priests and ministers ; I saw the Maharaja going out in a procession among joyous and enthusiastic crowds of people ; and I also witnessed the grand closing review and festivities in an open plain adjoining the town. Fire works and illuminations closed the scene, and as I came back to the city among tens of thousands of joyous, enthusiastic and loyal citizens crowding round their chief—the descendant of a long line of heroic kings who have maintained the independence of the Rajputs of this State through a thousand years—I could to some extent realize their loyalty, their pride, their joyousness.

Ajmir.

On the 20th October my friend and myself went to Ajmir, one of the capitals of the famed Prithu Rai, the last great Hindu king of Northern India. The city is situated at the foot of the hill on which Prithu Rai built his fort and named it Taragarh after his mother's name. There is a bridle path up this steep hill, and the view from the top is magnificent. The Residency is on the brink of an artificial lake constructed in the eleventh century, and Akbar's palace is to the east of the city. The

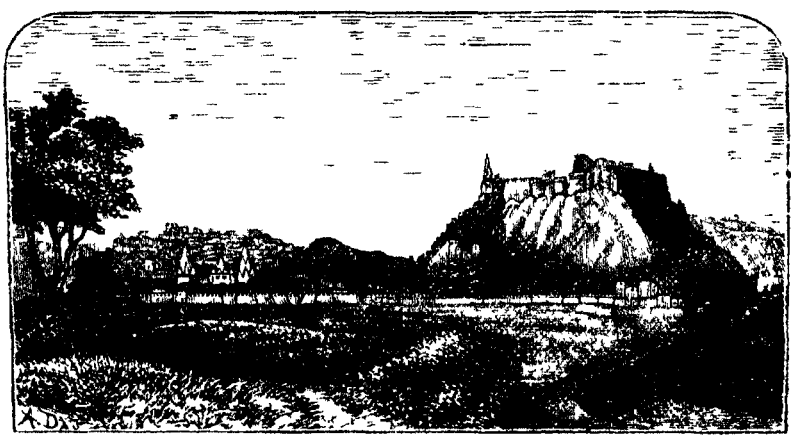
Dargah is famous, and there is a fine mosque of white marble here, built by Shah Jahan.

Pushkar Lake.

The sacred lake of Pushkar, seven miles from Ajmir, is known to all Hindus. It is in a narrow valley overshadowed by fine rocky peaks; and its shores are covered by temples built by the foremost royal houses of India. Brahma is supposed to have performed a great sacrifice here, and the temple of Brahma on this lake is said to be the only temple dedicated to that deity in India. Vishnu and Siva are more popular deities, and have temples everywhere. The sanctity of this lake is undoubtedly owing to the fact that it is a great freshwater lake on the skirts of a great desert. Travellers crossing the pathless desert from Multan, Jesulmir, Bikanir and other western places come to the shores of this lake with feelings of gratitude and joy, and religious emotions naturally invest the lake with a high sanctity. We saw camels starting from this place to cross the desert, carrying men and women with their packages and supply of food and water.

Jodhpur

Few places in India are more interesting and striking than the "castled crag" of Jodhpur. It is a steep



Jodhpur

precipitous hill rising abruptly from the plains, and bearing a crest of palaces and temples and fine edifices on its top. It is one of those natural hill-forts of India, like Gwalior and like Chitor, which have become famous in the annals of Indian warfare ; and the enemy has often wasted a campaign in trying to take such an impregnable fort defended by brave and desperate men.

But Jodhpur is more than a striking hill-fort ; it has been the capital of the bold and unconquered Rathores for several centuries. Jodh Rao made it the seat of government in the fifteenth century, a princess of this house married Akbar in the sixteenth century, and Jaswant Sinha of Jodhpur took an important share in the wars of the seventeenth century. Our readers will remember the brave resistance he made against Aurangzeb and Murad who were coming from the south to wrest the empire from their father. Jaswant was beaten after a heroic resistance and retreated to Jodhpur, but his more heroic queen shut the castle gates against the worsted chief, declaring that a true warrior wins or falls in battle, but does not retreat from the field !

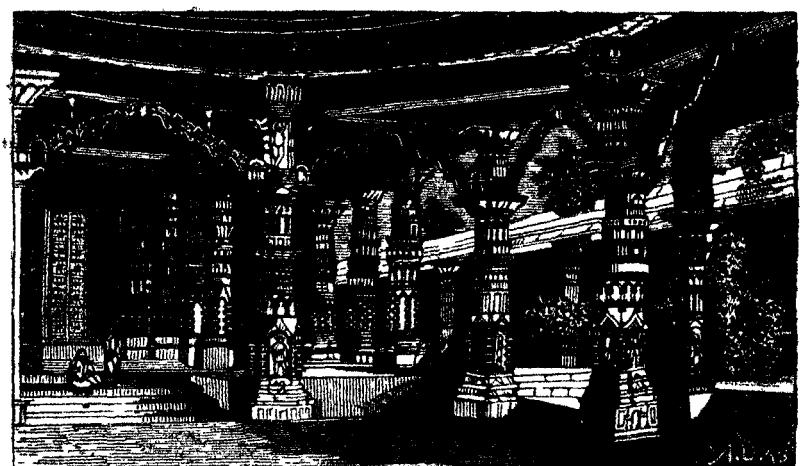
The city is built at the foot of the hill, but the fort stands up boldly on the rock, 300 feet above

the city and plain, and presenting a magnificent appearance. The old palaces with their courtyards within courtyards, their lattice windows and beautiful architecture, are full of interest. The way to these palaces winds up the rock, and is lined with shops and dwellings, and camels slowly wind up this way with their supply of water from the tanks below. The Padma Sagar, the Rani Sagar, the Gulab Sagar and other tanks furnish water to this city of the desert.

Abu.

The traveller in Rajputana never fails to visit the far-famed temples of Abu. From the railway station we went up by a winding road to the hill station, 4,000 feet high, and did not reach there till after dark. This was the first hill station I visited, and as we rode up the steep path in the light of the evening, we looked down on deep gorges and magnificent woods below, and admired the high precipices above us. There is a lake in this hill-station, and the crags surrounding this sheet of water are picturesque.

The Dilwara temples at Abu are the pride of Jaina architecture in India. The more modern temple was built by the brothers Tejpala and Vastupala between 1197 and 1247 A.D., and "for



Abu Temple

minute delicacy of carving," says Fergusson, "and beauty of detail stands almost unrivalled even in the land of patient and lavish labour." The older temple was built by another Jain merchant Vimala Sah about 1032 A. D., and is "simpler and bolder, though still as elaborate as good taste would allow in any purely architectural object."

About two or three miles from the Dilwara temples are the temples of Achilgarh. As we rode to this place over the rocky path, the view of the valley below was magnificent. A finer site could not have been chosen for temples, and if the Achilgarh temples lack the size and finish of the Dilwara temples, they have an air of antiquity, solidity and repose which make them quite as interesting.

After thus visiting Jaipur and Ajmir, Jodhpur and Abu, we at last came to the most famous spot of the far-famed Rajasthan,—the hill-fort of Chitor! History loves to dwell on the great deeds which have sanctified this spot, legends and songs cling round this ancient capital of the Ranas of the Solar Race, tradition hands down to us the heroism of the chiefs in many a battle and many a historic siege, and poetry and drama immortalize the devo-

Chitor.

tion and determination of the maids and matrons of Chitor who nobly perished on the pyre, when the chiefs fell in battle, and all was lost, save honour!

Stirring memories are connected with the names of Padmini and the great Lakshman Sinha, who nobly but vainly defended this fort against Allau Idin Khilji. A blaze of glory still illumines the name of Rana Sanga who fought with Baber the Emperor of India in the memorable field of Fatehpur Sikri. And lofty associations sanctify the life-long labours of Pratap Sinha, who defended the last relics of Rajput independence against the conquering arms of Akbar.

The abrupt hill crowned by the fort of Chitor is 500 feet above the surrounding plains, and is over three miles in length. The steep sides are clad with jungle, and the summit is covered with the ruins of palaces and temples. There is only one way leading up to this rock, and it is defended by seven monumental gates. No wonder such a steep hill-fort, when defended by brave men, was impregnable until water and provisions failed.

The old Kirti Stambha is one of the oldest Jain edifices, standing out 80 feet high, on the eastern rampart. An inscription which once ex-

Kumbhu's Jaya Stambha —Chitor.

isted at its base gives its date as 896 A.D.; it is dedicated to Adinatha one of the Jaina Tirthankaras, and is adorned with sculptures and mouldings from the base to the summit. It consists of seven stories with a narrow staircase leading to the top. More modern and more magnificent is the Jaya Stambha of Rana Kumbhu. It commemorates Kumbhu's victory over the king of Malwa in 1439 A.D., and is, as Fergusson states "a Pillar of Victory like that of Trajan at Rome, but of infinitely better taste as an architectural object." It has nine stories, each of which is distinctly marked on the outside. A stair in the centre leads to each story, the two upper ones being open, and more ornamented than those below. It is 30 feet wide at the base and more than 120 feet high, the whole being covered with ornaments and sculptures.

The palace of Rana Kumbhu near the eastern rampart is a fine example of Rajput architecture; but more interesting to the student and traveller is the older palace of Rana Bhim Sinha, and that of his queen Padmini overlooking a large and beautiful lake. The fame of Padmini lives in history and in song, her beauty was the glory of Chitor and the cause of its invasion and fall!

Numerous other edifices and temples, many of them in ruins, attract the attention of tourists, and recall to his mind stirring scenes which lend a halo of glory to this deserted fort. The place where Rajput women perished on the pyre more than once to save their honour is still pointed out to the curious visitor.

Udaipur, the modern capital of Mewar is connected with Chitor by a good road; and I shall always regret that I was compelled to leave Rajasthan without seeing this marvellously picturesque place. Those who have seen Udaipur say that it is difficult to conceive anything more lovely than the beauty of this city, "when the early sun lights up the marble of the water palaces, with the dark water beyond, and the still darker background of the hills."

Ujjain.

If Chitor is perhaps the most famed spot in modern Indian history, Ujjain or Ojein is one of the most famous in ancient Indian history. For centuries before the Christian era it was the capital of Malwa, and Asoka the Great is said to have ruled here as a Viceroy when his father was the Emperor of Northern India, and ruled in Patali-putra or Patna. Later on, Ojein was the capital of

Vikramaditya the Great, and poetry and learning have shed a lustre on his name which has only glowed brighter in the gloom of succeeding ages. It is difficult for a Hindu, even in these matter of fact days, to walk through the bazars and stony streets and dark lanes of the ancient city without recalling to mind the glory of Vikrama's court, and the creations of Kalidasa's genius !

The traveller who visits Ojein and desires to recall its past days will find the ancient Hindu drama Mrichchhakati most interesting and instructive. He will find in that play a realistic description of this town in its ancient days, of its people and their ways and manners, of its police and its court of justice, of its manufactures and arts, of its buildings and suburban gardens, and even of its gambling houses, its grog shops, and its courtesans.

Probably a few centuries after the time when this drama was written, Ojein was visited by the famous traveller Houen Tsang. "Two countries," says Houen Tsang, "are remarkable for the great learning of the people,—Malava on the south-west, and Magadha on the north-east." This was in the seventh century when the memories of Vikramaditya and of Kalidasa were still fresh

in the land. But four centuries later, even after the invasions of Mahmud, Malwa still remained the seat of learning. And we learn from the pages of Alberuni that the enlightened Bhojadeva ruled for nearly sixty years (A.D., 997 to 1053) and revived in his capital at Dhara the memories of the reign of Vikramaditya.

After the conquest of Northern India by the Mahomedans at the close of the twelfth century, the Hindus kept up their struggle for independence at Ojein. Ferishta tells us that, Ojein and the whole of Malwa were finally conquered by the Mahomedans in the time of Allauddin Khilji. Subsequently Malwa became an independent Mahommedan kingdom, and the seat of government was removed to Mandu. The province was once more united to Delhi by the great Akbar, but with the decay of the Mogul power it passed under the rule of the Mahrattas. The Sindia House ruled in Ojein until 1810 A.D., when Daulat Rao Sindia removed the seat of government to the hill-fort of Gwalior.

In Ojein I visited the Mahakala temple, probably located on the same site where stood the great temple which Kalidasa describes in his Cloud-Messenger. And I passed the afternoon in walk-

ing through the rough paved and narrow streets of this ancient city. The people are simple and open and demonstrative in their nature, light-hearted and joyous, like the people of most Native States that I have visited ; and they give one a pleasing impression of the natural candour and simplicity of the Hindu character. The bazar was thronged with people, the houses were in the quaint old Hindu style, and the memories of a past age still lingered in the precincts of this ancient seat of Hindu learning. Jai Sinha's Observatory is at the south end of the city, and the city marks the first meridian of Hindu geographers. The classic stream of Sipra flows by Ojein, and falls into the Chambal after a total course of 120 miles.

Our ancient poets' description of this ancient city will interest our readers.

What though to northern climes thy journey lay,
Consent to track a shortly devious way.
To fair Ujjaini's palaces and pride,
And beauteous daughters turn awhile aside ;
Those lightning eyes, those lightning looks unseen,
Dark are thy days, and thou in vain hast been !

KALIDASA (WILSON'S *Translation*)

How wide the prospect spreads,—mountain and rock,
Towns villages and woods and glittering streams!
There where the Para and the Sindhu wind,
The towers and temples, pinacles and gates
And spires of Padmavati, like a city
Precipitated from the skies, appear,
Inverted in the pure translucent wave!

BHAVABHUTI. (WILSON'S *Translation.*)

I have said before that the seat of government was removed from Ojein to Gwalior by Daulat Rao Sindia, early in the present century. And an account of Gwalior, which I visited several years after I visited Ojein, should therefore find a place here.

But although Gwalior is the modern capital of Sindia, it is by no means a modern place. Its history goes back fourteen centuries, and its temples are among the most beautiful specimens of ancient Hindu architecture that can be found in any part of India.

Gwalior.

The early history of Gwalior is connected with the deeds of Toramana the renowned chief who fought against the Gupta emperors of Kanouj in the fifth century after Christ. After the decline of the Guptas, the Kachhwaha Rajputs founded an independent kingdom at Gwalior, and were succeeded

Gwalior

by the Parihara Rajputs who ruled until the Afgan emperor Altamsh captured Gwalior in 1232.

The Hindus of Gwalior again became independent under the Tumar dynasty in 1375, and in the following century Dungar Sinha and Kirti Sinha of this dynasty executed those great rock sculptures which travellers still behold with wonder. Man Sinha another prince of this dynasty built his great palace in the sixteenth century, and it is one of the finest specimens of Hindu domestic architecture.

Baber conquered Gwalior from the Hindus, but on the decline of the Moguls, the Hindus under Bhim Sinha reconquered it in 1761. About twenty years after it came under the House of Sindia, and it is now the capital of that Mahratta dynasty.

The hill-fort of Gwalior is one of the finest in India. It is an isolated hill which rises precipetously, 300 feet from the surrounding plains and is over a mile long. The ancient palaces and temples and fort are built on this abrupt hill. I went up the hill on an elephant by the winding northern entrance, defended by six gates. Man Sinha's palace is the first object of interest, but the famed temples of Gwalior are more an-

cient and more interesting. The Teli-ka-Mandir dates from the tenth century and is a massive and lofty building, covered with sculptures. The Sahasrabahu temple is also an ancient temple and is said to have been erected by Raja Mahipal in the eleventh century. The Jain temple is more recent, and the other temples are of less importance. The rock sculptures, figures of Buddha and of Jaina saints carved out of solid rock on the walls of the precipitous hill, have been alluded to before. The image of Adinath is one of the biggest. The iconoclastic spirit of the Mahommedans has left its mark in Gwalior. "Alamgir" says Major Keith, "did his work with an unparalleled amount of diligence ; for amidst hundreds of sculptures both inside and outside the fortress from that of the colossal Adinath in the Urwahi, down to the smallest head, not one escaped mutilation."

Indore.

Indore is the capital of Holkar as Gwalior is the capital of Sindia, but it is a modern town, and has not the same interest for the traveller and the antiquarian. The fame of Ahalya Bai who made Indore what it is, is known all over India, and the wisdom with which she administered the state

for thirty years has been inherited by her successors. Holkar's dominions are among the most carefully administered Native States in India.

Few rivers in India are more wild and picturesque than the Narbadda river, and few spots on the Narbadda river are more wild and picturesque than the far-famed spot where the great temple of Omkarji is built. The temple stands on an island in the river nearly a square mile in extent, and called the island of Mandhata, and the rocks on both sides of the river are bold and picturesque.

Mandhata.

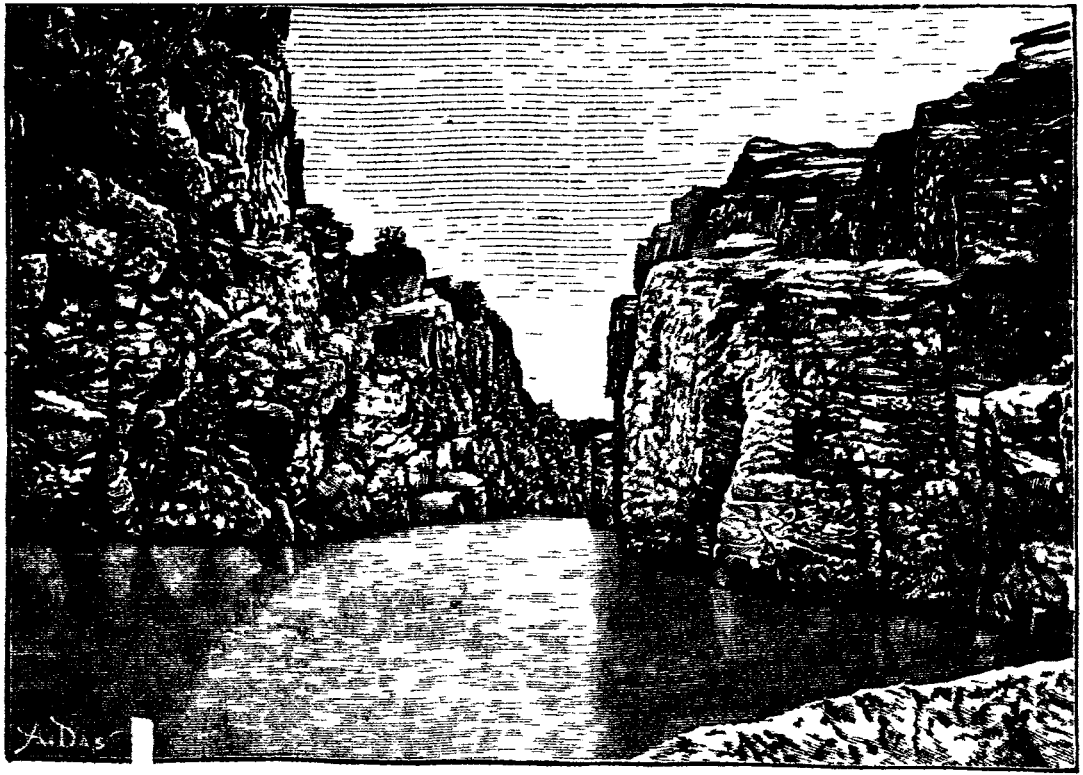
The Raja Mandhata who is the hereditary custodian of the temples is a Bhilala, and claims descent from the Chohan Bharat Sinha who conquered this place in the twelfth century. The old temples have suffered from the hands of the Mahommedans who overturned every dome and mutilated every figure. The oldest temple is that on the Birkhala rocks at the east end, and consists of a courtyard, with a veranda and colonnades supported by massive pillars boldly carved. And on the top of the hill are the ruins of a very fine temple to Siddeswara Mahadeva.

All the temples on the island are dedicated to Siva, but on the north bank of the Narbadda river

there are some old temples belonging to Vishnu, and a group of Jain temples A great fair is held at Omkarji at the end of October, and the Brahmans of Mandhata anxiously expect the time when the sanctity of the Ganges will expire, and will be transferred to the Narbadda.

Jabbalpur.

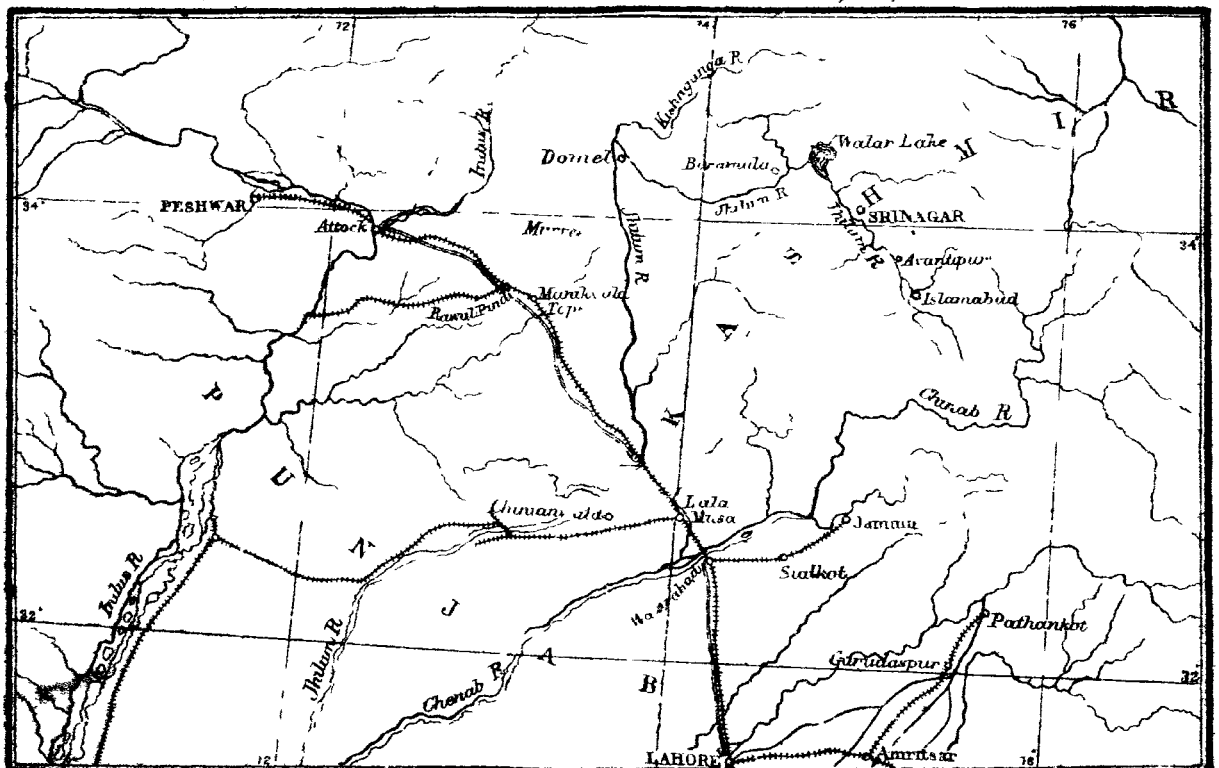
I will not prolong the story of my travels in Central India by an account of Jabbalpur and of the Marble Rocks which most of my readers have seen. The precipitous marble cliffs through which the deep and limpid Narbadda rolls in her beauty, and the cascade nearly a mile beyond the barrier rocks, are not easily forgotten after they have once been visited. Jabbalpur is a modern town well laid out and well kept; and a rock not far from this town, called Madan Mahal, is pointed out as the spot where the heroic queen Durgavati made her stand against the overwhelming forces of Akbar. The annals of Central India are connected with many legends about the struggles of the Hindus against Moslem invasions and conquests, but none of these legends are more stirring and wonderful than those of Durgavati the heroic queen of Gondwana.



Marble Rocks Jabbalpur

KASHMIR AND THE PUNJAB.

MAP SPECIALLY PREPARED FOR RAMBLES IN INDIA BY R. DUTT, C.S., C.I.E.



CHAPTER IV.

KASHMIR, 1892.

ACCOMPANIED by my enthusiastic fellow-traveller I left Rawal Pindi, on the railway line, on the 25th September 1892, and drove up to Murree, one of the finest hill-stations in the Punjab, and 7,000 feet above the level of the sea. A road has been constructed from this place to the Vale of Kashmir, and comfortable Dak Bungalows have been erected at convenient distances, and the journey from Murree to Kashmir can be performed in tongas in two or three days. The whole of this route lies along the Jhelum river which flows out of the Kashmir valley and descends through wild and romantic gorges into the plains of India.

Murree.

We left Murree on the 27th after an early breakfast, and descended from that hill-station, (7,000 feet), to the Jhelum river which is only 2,000 feet above the sea level. We crossed the river at Kohala.

Do-mel.

and passed the night in the Bungalow at Do-mel. It is a lovely spot ; high mountains close the view on all sides, and the mountain stream Jhelum receives the waters of a sister-stream Kishenganga, (hence the name *Do-mel*), and rolls over its stony bed in wild beauty. The moon glimmered over the wild waters and the picturesque scene around, and we loitered long on this enchanting spot before we retired for the night.

The next day, our path gradually ascended (from 2,000 feet to 4,000 feet) along the Jhelum river, and in some places ran through gorges of bewitching wildness and beauty. Precipitous rocks rose on both sides of the river in wild majesty, and the blue waters of the Jhelum clattered over its rocky bed in its resistless course. In the evening we took shelter again in a Bungalow, and made ourselves comfortable.

The next day we ascended another thousand feet (4,000 feet to 5,000 feet) in a drive of four hours, passed through some beautiful pine forests, and about mid-day reached Baramula where the wild mountain gorges open out into the far-famed Vale of Kashmir.

Baramula.

Who has not heard of the Vale of Cashmere,
With its roses the brightest that earth ever gave,
Its temples and grottos and fountains as clear
As the love-lighted eyes that hang o'er their wave.

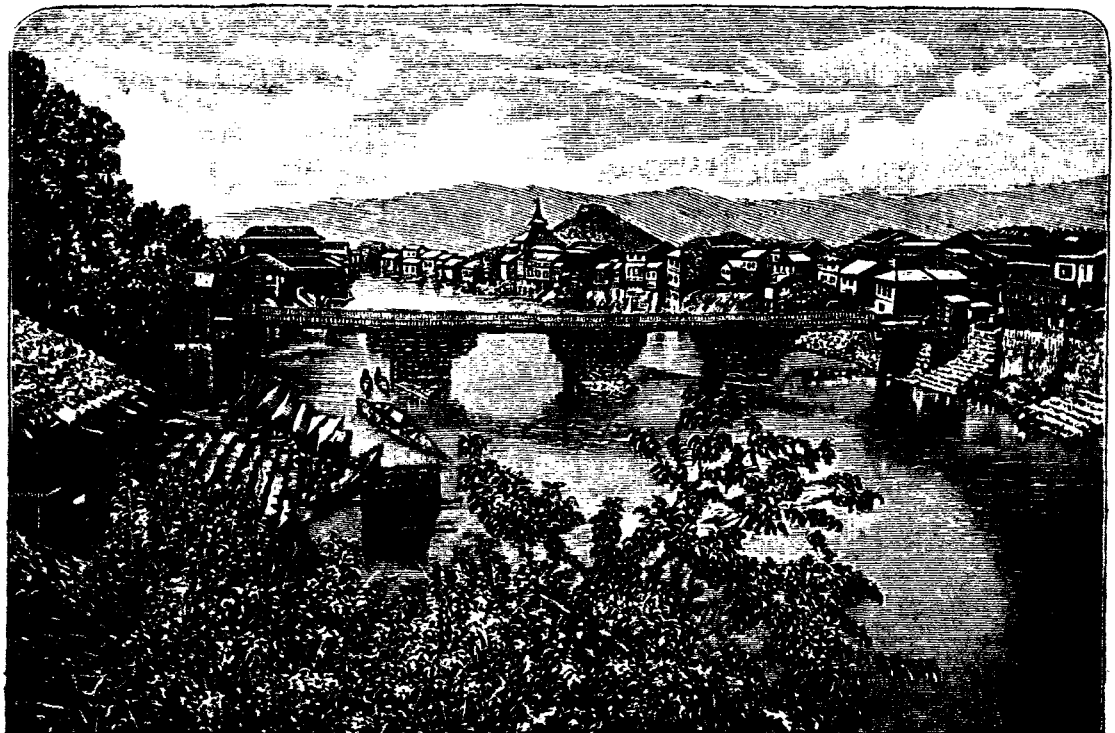
Lalla Rukh.

And yet one forms a mistaken idea of this valley if he thinks it to be a wild country. It is a spacious valley, and not wild mountain country like what we passed through in our journey from Murree. It is a level fertile country with rivers and lakes and cultivated fields and villages, surrounded by a ring of high mountains covered with snow during more than half the year. Imagine a level and fertile Bengal District with its villages and cultivated fields, lifted from the plains to a height of 5,000 feet, and placed within a ring of snow-covered mountains! The valley is 30 or 40 miles broad and nearly 100 miles long, and has been described as an "emerald set in pearls." But the emerald is the green and fertile country dotted with beautiful lakes, and the pearls are the surrounding mountains and peaks covered with snow!

The whole of this level valley must have been one vast lake in some past geological age, surrounded on all sides by the eternal mountains. But the waters have receded and most of the val

ley is cultivable alluvial land with some lakes here and there, like the Woolar Lake, the Manasbal Lake, and the Dal Lake. The first named lake is a mighty sheet of water and is dangerous in rough weather. In calm weather it is lovely in its placid beauty, and the traveller crossing it in a boat loses sight of land on all sides, and sees nothing around him but the wide expanse of glassy water framed by the eternal mountains. He might almost imagine it to be a vast mirror, framed by rocks and lofty mountains, in which the lovely Uma and her beauteous damsels love to see their celestial faces in the loneliness of these secluded heights !

We left Baramula in a boat and went up the Jhelum which is navigable in its entire course through this valley. We stopped at Supur at night, and the next morning we tried one hand at fishing and shooting with poor results. For the much coveted *mahseer* fish had already left this high latitude for the plains at the first approach of the cold season, and the ducks had not come from the higher latitudes yet, as the winter had not yet set in. So we left Supur at 10 A. M. and reached Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, in the afternoon.



Srinagar.

Srinagar is a quaint old town along both banks of the Jhelum river which is spanned by seven quaint old wooden bridges. The houses are of stone and bricks and wood, and look generally untidy, but the finer houses are elegant, and elegant Kashmiri verandas look out on the river. The ghats on both sides of the river swarm with men and women and children, and one sees a great deal of life in going up the river from one end of the town to the other. The people are very handsome and ruddy in their complexion, but dirty in their costume, and they wear one long coat of wool or cotton which they never seem to change. Arriving at the other end of the town we stepped out of our boat and were warmly welcomed by our kind and genial host in his comfortable house.

During a stay of about a week in Srinagar we saw a good deal of the city, its shops and bazars and busy life, its fine walks and lovely Chinar avenues, the neighbouring lake and the surrounding hills. The Maharaja was then in Srinagar, and he is idolized by his people. We visited his palace, and also some of the well-known temples and mosques. The manufacture of shawls is declining

but is interesting even now ; while the manufacture of cheaper woolen things like carpets, rugs, screens and cloths still flourishes. The Kashmerians are real artists in manufacturing silver and copper articles and in painting on wood, and hundreds of travellers return from Kashmir every year with some specimens of the art of this country.

As in Venice, you go almost everywhere by boat, and we enjoyed our evening trips to the Dal lake, a lovely sheet of water reflecting on its bosom the neighbouring hills. And here I am tempted to quote from Mr. George Curzon's graphic description of this beautiful lake. "No visitor to Srinagar goes away without diverging from the river by one of the lateral canals and spending a morning in his boat in furrowing the glassy surface of the Dal Lake, immediately behind the city, and in inspecting the pleasure-gardens and pavilions around its shores that were erected for the diversion or the dalliance of the Mogul Sovereigns. The floating gardens of the lake are famous—great lotus leaves and water lilies quiver idly upon the pellucid surface, wild fowl of every description dart in and out of the rushes, and kingfishers flash like streaks of blue flame amid the trees. Perhaps our destination is the Nasim Bagh or Garden of

Soft Breezes, or the Nishat Bagh or Garden of Bliss, or the Shalimar Bagh—the two latter, the creation of the Emperor Jehangir nearly three centuries gone by. There the water still descends from terrace to terrace and ripples in deftly-constructed cascades ; it still spurts from the Mogul fountains and splashes in the decaying and deserted pools. The gardens, once so trim and neat, though little tended, are still bright with flowers. In the pavilions that are built above the waters one may lie at ease on the very spot where the Emperors and their Sultanas played and quarrelled and were reconciled.. The eye wanders over the terraces and cascades and pools and across the blue levels of the lake. to where the Takht-i-Suleiman and the Hari Parbat, like two grim sentinels, keep watch at the gates of the invisible city at their feet, and at such a moment and from this agreeable distance the beauty of Srinuggur becomes crystallized into a positive sensation."

Kashmir has a history of its own, as every one knows, and Buddhism found its way into this secluded region before the Christian era. At last the great Kanishka became the ruler of the land, established Buddhism on a firm basis, founded the Saka era which runs from 78 A. D., and spread

his empire from Kashgar and Yarkand in the north to Gujrat in the south. His successors sometimes leaned towards Buddhism and sometimes towards orthodox Hinduism, but the two religions existed side by side for a thousand years in Kashmir, as elsewhere in India. The renowned Mihirakula is said to have been a great persecutor of Buddhists, while one of his successors Meghavahana is said to have been inclined in favour of that religion. Both were great conquerors and are said to have gone forth on conquering expeditions as far as the Karnatic and Ceylon.

About five centuries after Kanishka, Vikramaditya the Great ruled in Ojein, and he helped his favourite Matrigupta to the throne of Kashmir. The succeeding reigns are uneventful until we come to the reign of Lalitaditya, who spread his conquests as far as Kanouj early in the eighth century, and brought from that city the renowned poet Bhavabhuti the greatest dramatic poet of India after Kalidasa. The powerful Jayapira ruled later on in this century; he married a Bengali princess of the name of Kalyanadevi, and he collected Patanjali's Mahabhasya, the Great Commentary on Panini. One of his successors Avantivarman founded a new capital in the following century.

In the eleventh century the great Mahmud of Ghazni vainly tried to penetrate into this difficult country, and when Muhammad Ghori at last destroyed Hindu independence in Northern India, the position of Kashmir enabled her to maintain her independence. At last an obscure Mahommedan chief conquered the country in the 15th century, and his successors forced the entire population to embrace the Mahommedan religion. To this day, the entire population, of Kashmir, except the handful of Brahmans or "Pandits" as they are called, are Mahommedans. But they are soft and timid in their nature, and the greatest harmony and good feeling exist between the general population which is Mahommedan, and the rulers and the upper classes who are Hindus. In the sixteenth century the great Akbar annexed this Mahommedan kingdom to his empire, and Kashmir became then the summer resort of the Mogul emperors, and was beautified by those lovely *Bags* or imperial gardens which are admired by travellers to this day.

Such is briefly the history of this interesting country, and the ruins of her ancient civilization and architecture are among the most superb in India. All the great capitals which rose in succes-

sive ages were naturally located on the Jhelum river, and going up from Srinagar to Islamabad by that river, one visits all the most interesting ruins. A brief account is given below.

(1) The *Takt-i-Sulıman* is a lofty hill, 1,000 feet high, near Srinagar town, and on its peak is loftily situated the oldest temple in Kashmir of which any remains can be found. It was built in the third century B.C. by Jalauka a Buddhist king. It is raised on an octagonal base, and its interior is circular, 14 ft. in diameter, enclosed in massive stone walls eight feet in thickness. On these walls rose at one time a lofty tower; but that has long since disappeared, and a flat brick roof has been built instead. Even thus changed, the edifice looks an imposing structure, and can be seen from a distance of ten miles or more. Modern Hindus call it Sankaracharya, probably because the faith of Siva and Linga-worship have now replaced the Buddhist faith in that temple. The Mahomedans used it as a mosque during their rule in Kashmir.

Temples.

(2) *Pandratan* is the name of a small village a few miles up the river from Srinagar. Here too is an ancient Buddhist temple of the third century B.C., which is still entire. It was in the centre of

a small lake or tank, but the land here has risen many feet within the last 2,000 years, probably by the deposit of the silt of the Jhelum river, and so the water of the tank now flows over the floor of the temple, and the walls of the temple emerge from the water. The stone ceiling has carved figures of nymphs holding garlands. It is said that other temples and Buddhist works and images existed here in the olden times, but were burnt down and demolished by Abhimanyu, a Hindu king, hostile to Buddhism. A supposed tooth of Buddha was taken away from this place by a king of Kanouj, about 630 A.D.

(3) On the morning of the 8th October we came to *Avantipur*, named after Avanti Varman who was king of Kashmir in the ninth century. Avantipur was then the capital of the kingdom and was a walled town extending over both sides of the Jhelum. Nothing exists now except an insignificant village, and the ruins of two imposing temples. The roofless gateways of massive stone still stand erect, but the temples have fallen, or have been thrown down by Moslem rulers, and form lofty mounds of stones. Each temple had a quadrangle with a colonnade all round. As the ground has risen many feet, probably by the action of the

river, the base of the pillars is now under the ground. Portions of lofty monolith pillars stand out from this pedestal, and remains of the surrounding cloisters are still visible. Niches are carved in the gateways, but the images of gods sculptured in these niches are no longer there, they have been carefully knocked off by Mahommedan rulers. The massive stones of which these lofty temples were built, some of them 40 inches in depth and several feet in length and breadth, strike the modern engineer with surprise. And in spite of all that time and Moslem bigotry have done, the stalwart gateways, the massive ruins, and the imposing remains of the surrounding colonnades of these temples are among the noblest specimens of the colossal architecture of the Hindus over a thousand years ago.

(4) On the following morning we reached *Bij Bihara* or Vidya Bihar, an ancient Buddhist monastery of the third century B.C. Nothing of the monastery is left now. The old temple of this place was thrown down by the Mahommedan ruler Sikandar who built a mosque out of its stones. Maharaja Golab Sing in his turn knocked down the mosque and has built a new Hindu temple of the same stones One single piece of stone, said

to have belonged to the old temple, is still pointed out to visitors. It is of enormous size and depth, and is hollowed out like a modern bath, and its huge dimensions have probably prevented its being removed from its site.

(5) But the crowning glory of Kashmir, and of ancient Hindu architecture is the temple of *Martand* near Islamabad. "As an isolated ruin" says the French traveller Vigne, "this deserves on account of its solitary and massive grandeur to be ranked not only as the first ruin of the kind in Kashmir, but as one of the noblest amongst the architectural relics of antiquity that are to be seen in any country,—a leading specimen of a gigantic style of architecture that has decayed with the religion it was intended to cherish, and with the prosperity of the country it adorned."

The still stalwart and imposing gateway, the massive ruins of the main building, the remains of the superb colonnade surrounding a large quadrangle, all standing in a lonely site on a high plateau, strike the visitor with admiration and awe ; and the means by which the immense masses of stones, still visible among the ruins, were raised to their present position is still an unsolved problem to engineers.

The date of this temple is said to be between 300 and 500 A.D.

Gardens.

I cannot close my account of Kashmir without saying a few words about those *Bags* or imperial gardens which beautify this lovely valley. Three such *Bags*, the Shalimar, the Nasim and the Nishat are on the banks of the Dal lake near Srinagar town, and the poet Moore has immortalized the first as the place where the Emperor Jahangir was reconciled to his queen Nur Jahan. Some passages I quote below :—

That evening (trusting that his soul
Might be from haunting love released
By mirth, by music and the bowl)
The imperial Selim held a feast
In his magnificent Shalimar,
In whose saloons when the first star
Of evening o'er the waters trembled
The valley's loveliest all assembled;
All the bright creatures that like dreams
Glide through its foliage and drink beams
Of beauty from its founts and streams

— — —

There too the Haram's inmates smile;—
Maids from the west, with sun bright hair,
And from the garden of the Nile,
Delicate as the roses there

Daughters of love from Cyprus' rocks
With Paphian diamonds in their locks;
Like Peri forms, such as there are
On the gold meads of Candahar.

Everything young everything fair
From East and West is blushing there,
Except,—Except—O Nourmahal!
Thou loveliest, dearest of them all.

But what are cups without the aid
Of song to speed them as they flow?
And see—a lovely Georgian maid
With all the bloom, the freshened glow
With a voluptuous wildness flings
Her snowy hand across the strings
Of a Syrinda, and thus sings.

"Come hither, come hither—by night and by day
We linger in pleasures that never are gone;
Like the waves of the summer, as one dies away
Another as sweet and as shining comes on.
And the love that is o'er in expiring gives birth
To a new one as warm, as unequalled in bliss;
And oh! if there be an elysium on earth,
It is this, it is this."

The Georgians' song was scarcely mute,
When the same measure, sound for sound,
Was caught up by another lute,
And so divinely breathed around,

They all stood hushed and wondering,
And turned and looked into the air,
As if they thought to see the wing
Of Israfil the angel there!

"There's a bless beyond all that the minstrel has told,
When two that are linked in one heavenly tie,
With heart never changing and brow never cold
Love on through all ills and love on till they die!
One hour of a passion so sacred is worth
Whole ages of heartless and wandering bliss;
And oh! if there be an elysium on earth,
It is this, it is this."

Starting, he dashed away the cup—
Which, all the time of this sweet air
His hand had held untasted up,
As if 't were fixed by magic there,—
And naming her, so long unnamed,
So long unseen wildly exclaimed,—
"O Nourmahal! O Nourmahal!
Hadst thou but sung this witching strain
I could forget—forgive thee all,
And never leave those eyes again."

The mask is off—the charm is wrought—
And Selim to his heart has caught,
In blushes more than ever bright,
His Nourmahal, his Haram's Light!

On the 10th October we came to another beautiful garden, the Achibal *Bag* situated in a lovely valley situated at the foot of a hill. There is a copious spring near the hill, and the crystal water from the spring is carried through the garden. The ruins of the summer houses and buildings erected by Emperor Jahangir and Nur Jahan are still there, and at one time the place was full of lovely fruit trees, the pear, the apple, the walnut &c. And even now the shady place moistened by the spray of the perpetual spring is one of the loveliest spots you could wish to see.

On the 11th October we left the place and rode 14 miles to another spring called the Veri *Nag*. All springs are called *Nags* in Kashmir, because the water is supposed to come from the region of the subterranean *Nags*. The whole of the valley through which we rode was like a garden. We crossed several mountain streams and had our breakfast on a hill side lawn, and after breakfast we crossed a range of hills. From the top of this ridge we could see the vast valley into which we were descending, and after crossing a mountain stream we reached Veri *Nag*. The spring here is the most

famous in all Kashmir, and is said to be the real source of the Jhelum river; and here too Jahangir and Nur Jahan constructed another lovely *Bag*. The water, as it issues from the earth is collected in a vast basin 110 feet in diameter. Arched alcoves are built on all sides of this basin, and the water is led out of the basin in a long aqua-duct through a lovely garden, until it falls in a cascade and runs into and fertilizes the country. There is nothing very wild or superb about the scenery, but the prospect all round is soft and charming, the spot is quiet and refreshing, and there are few spots on earth so suggestive of quiet repose and soft enjoyments than some of these secluded gardens in Kashmir.

People who seek for wilder scenery leave the open valley of Kashmir and penetrate into some of those narrower gorges through which rivers like the Sind and the Lidar come down to join the Jhelum. I have heard travellers in Kashmir say that nothing can excell the wildness and the beauty of some of these narrow valleys with their rocks and forests, their glaciers and rushing streams. We had come to Kashmir too late in the season however to try any of these wilder valleys, and we were content to see what we

could of the main valley itself. And one must be hard to please if his visit to the valley of Kashmir, with its lakes and quaint towns, its hills and dales, its beauteous gardens and its magnificent ruins, do not please him and amply reward his toil.

After traversing the whole length of the Kashmir valley we went back to Baramula, whence we descended 5,000 feet to the plains of India, along the course of the Jhelum, through the same wild and picturesque scenes through which we had come up to this wonderful and secluded valley.

CHAPTER V.

PUNJAB, 1892.

TO the Punjab at last!—The land of the five rivers, the land of the ancient Rishis, the land of the Rig Veda! One of those sacred lands where man reared his infant civilization, and first cultivated arts, poetry and science! Civilization is the common heritage of modern nations, and it is difficult in the present day to realize that a hundred and fifty generations ago, it was confined to four gifted nations, dwelling on the banks of four rivers, and separated by wide spaces of barbarism. The Ethiopean races developed their early civilization on the banks of the Nile, and have left vast and imperishable monuments which have never been equalled. The Semetic races achieved their earliest results in culture near the mouths of the Euphrates, and made discoveries in science and astronomy which are the heritage of modern Europe. The Turanian races reared their early greatness on the banks of the Hoang Ho, and lighted the lamp of civilization which has burned with unfailing lustre during over four thousand

years. And the Aryan nations obtained their earliest triumphs in enlightenment on the banks of the Indus, and have left lasting records in poetry and thought which are the admiration of the moderns. All the world was filled with darkness when these four nations lighted their magic lamps in four isolated spots in the east and the west, in the north and the south. All the other nations of the earth were nomad barbarians, who roamed with their flocks and tents through the vast regions of the earth, who invaded, conquered and perished, and who lived and died without leaving a trace of their life, without leaving a mark on the history of human culture and progress.

Other nations rose subsequently. The Assyrians and the Phœnicians, the Medes and the Persians, the Greeks and the Romans,—all these are considered ancient nations. But they are infants in comparison with the older nations,—the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Chinese and the Hindus. To these four nations belong the honour of having lighted the lamp of human civilization on earth. And the Punjab was one of the four seats of this early civilization.

These thoughts naturally arise in the mind of a Hindu traveller when he visits the Punjab, but

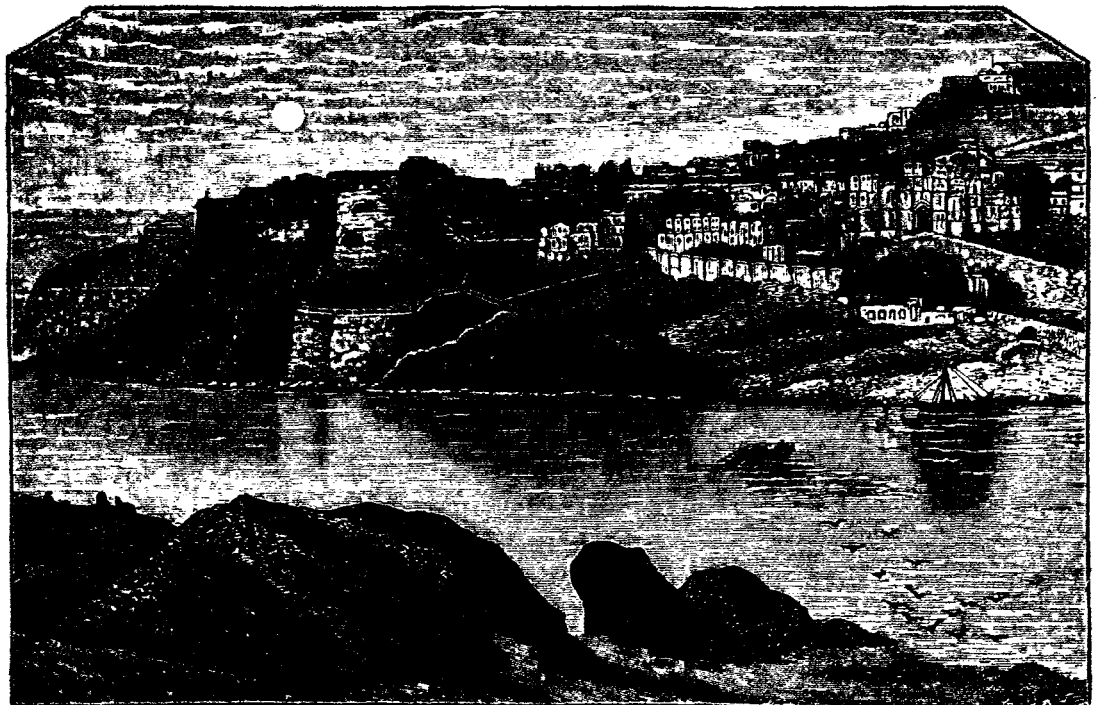
the thoughts come and go like dreams, and there is little in the present state of the country to inspire such ideas. And the traveller goes from Peshawar to Amritsar without witnessing anything to remind him of the very remote past, the days of the Rig Veda.

Peshawar.

Peshawar is the site of the ancient Gandhara kingdom, but the modern population is mostly Mahommedan. Its crowded bazars are well worth a visit, and are frequented by men from Afganistan and Central Asia. Two miles west of the city are the Cantonments looking towards the Khaibar Pass and the range of mountains which is the natural boundary of India. From the top of the Mogul fort we had a good view of this range, and of fort Jamrud where the Khaibar Pass begins.

Attock.

Leaving this last frontier town of India, we turned eastwards and came to Attock about midday. This memorable spot has witnessed the passage of every foreign conqueror who has invaded India from the days of Alexander the Great, and independently of its historic interest it is one of the most picturesque spots in India. On the east bank of the Indus, and situated on a commanding height a little



Attock.

to the south of the point where the Kabul river flows into the Indus, is the imposing fort built by Akbar in 1583. On the west bank of the Indus is the town of Khairabad with its fort, and higher up on this side are the ruins of old Hindu forts. The mighty Indus, after receiving the waters of the Kabul river, flows through the "castled crags" on both sides, and is a rapid narrow torrent here. It has been known to rise 90 feet in high floods.

Rawal Pindi.

About 60 miles further east from Attock is the large town of Rawal Pindi on a fertile plain. The fertility of the plain strikes one after he has traversed the barren and rocky and uneven country all the way from Peshawar. Peshawar itself is in a fertile plain, and so is Rawal Pindi, but the whole of the intervening country traversed by the rail is barren and uneven, with sparse population, and no towns.

Gandhara and Taksha-Sila.

Every fertile spot here was a seat of ancient civilization. Peshawar was the site of the old Gandhara kingdom, and Rawal Pindi with the country around it was the site of the far-famed Taxila (Taksha-Sila) kingdom. A place now known as *Shah-Ka-Deri*, a little to the north-

west of Rawal Pindi, probably marks the site of the old Taksha-Sila capital, which flourished when the Greeks came into India, and later on when Asoka ruled in the west. And another place known as *Manikyala*, to the south-east of Rawal Pindi, is known for the famous Buddhist tope which was explored by Ranjit Sinha's French general Ventura in 1830. Coins of Hashka and Kanishka dating from the first century after Christ were found in the tope, and Cunningham thinks the tope may have been erected by Hashka who deposited in it his own coins, and those of his predecessor the great Kanishka. Two miles to the north of this tope is another which was explored by Court, another French general of Ranjit Sinha. Coins of Kanishka and of the Roman republic were found here, and later explorations made by Cunningham disclosed the walls and cells of a Buddhist monastery forming a square of 160 feet.

In Rawal Pindi itself, ancient lamps and cups have been found under the earth, and ancient coins are found in the Cantonment. The ground is thickly covered with broken pottery, and fragments of metal ornaments are sometimes discovered.

The Cantonment of Rawal Pindi is one of

the largest in India, and the town is interesting and spacious. The population is mostly Mahommedan, and the bazar is large and crowded, and boasts of fruits from Kabul and commodities from various parts of India. Among the private gardens that of Sujan Sinha which we visited is pleasant and well worth a visit.

Jhelum.

Seventy miles to the south-east of Rawal Pindi the railway line crosses the Jhelum, whose infant course we had traced in Kashmir, but which is a mighty and spacious river here. It is the ancient Vitasta which the bards of the Rig Veda loved to invoke along with the other rivers of this classic land.

> "O Ganga! O Yamuna and Sarasvati! O Sutudri (Sutlej) and Parushni (Ravi)! Share this my praise among you. O river combined with Asikni (Chinab)! O Vitasta (Jhilum)! O Arjikiya (Beyas) combined with Sushoma (Indus)! Hear my praise."
>
> RIG VEDA, X, 75, 5.

The rough and uneven country ends here; to the east of the Jhelum river the land is level and alluvial and fertile, and is thickly populated. Ancient pillars have been dug up in Jhelum town, and a human face in the Greek style was found here, and is deposited in the Lahore Museum.

As the traveller runs down by rail from the Jhelum to the Chinab, he passes by many places of note. To the south of Jhelum town is the celebrated field of Chilianwala, where the Sikhs in the pride of their power met and repulsed the British army in a pitched battle. Thirty miles from Jhelum the traveller passes the station of Gujrat,* close to the battle-field of that name, where the flower of the Sikh army at last perished in February 1849, and the glory of the Sikhs departed for ever. And forty miles from Jhelum is Wazirabad, a town which was rebuilt by Ranjit Sinha's French general Avitable when the Sikhs ruled over the Punjab. The traveller here crosses the broad Chinab by the magnificent bridge which was opened by the Prince of Wales in 1876. And twenty miles further is the historic town of Gurjanwala where the great Ranjit Sinha was born. The house in which the greatest Indian of this century had his birth is close to the market place, and not very far off is the place where the ashes of Ranjit Sinha's father lie buried.

Battle-fields.

Wazirabad.

Chinab.

Birth-place of Ranjit Sinha.

Lahore.

At last we came to Lahore, the seat of the Punjab Government and one of the finest towns in India. Akbar enlarged and repaired the fine fort of this place in the sixteenth century, and built the surrounding wall, portions of which still remain. Jahangir often resided in this place, and his remains lie buried in a magnificent mausoleum not far from the town. And lastly the great Ranjit Sinha restored the place to its splendour, and Lahore continued to be the seat of the Sikh empire till the Punjab passed under the British sway in 1849.

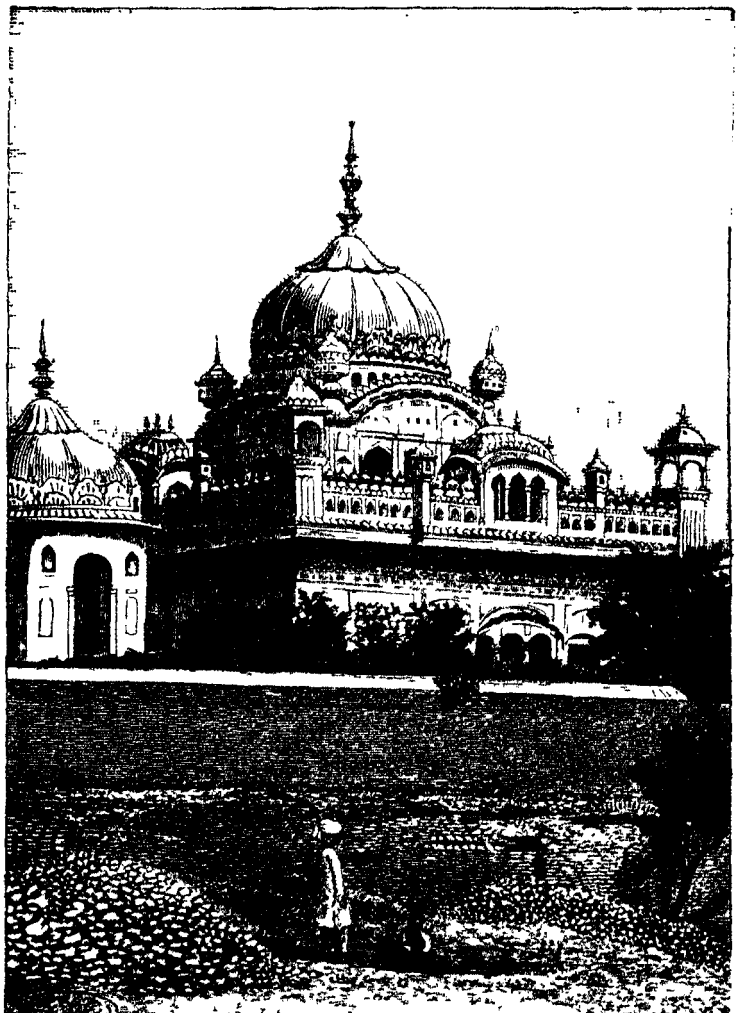
The picturesqueness of the old town with its balconies and projecting oriel windows strikes the most casual observer, and driving through the bazar, he at last comes to the Akbari Darwaza which was formerly the entrance to the fort. On the farther side of it stands the Jumma Masjid on a lofty platform supported by arches, and faithful Musalmans believe that the turbans of Hasan and Husain, the prayer-carpet of Fatima, and a slipper of Muhammad himself are preserved in this mosque. It was built by Aurangzeb in 1674, it was used as a magazine by Ranjit Sinha, and it was restored to the Musalmans by the British Government in 1856.

Ranjit Sinha's tomb.

Close to the mosque, and very different from it in structure, is Ranjit Sinha's Samadhi or tomb. The arches of the interior are of marble, and the ceilings are decorated with traceries in stucco, inlaid with mirrors. In the centre is a raised platform of marble, with a lotus flower carved in marble, and surrounded by eleven smaller flowers. The central flower covers the ashes of Ranjit; and the others those of his wives who became *Sati* and perished on the pyre of their lord. Sikh men and women still come in large numbers to make offerings to the tomb of the great man, whose fame is enshrined in the hearts and lips of the million in this land of warriors.

Fort and Palace.

Let us now enter the fort by the Raushani Darwaza. The palace of Akbar was added to by his successors Jahangir and Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, and at last by the Sikhs. We have the usual Moti Masjid and Dewan-i-Khas and Dewan-i-Am inside the palace. Close to the Moti Masjid is the Nau-Lakha, a marble pavilion which is said to have cost nine lakhs of Rupees, and the Shish Mahal or hall of mirrors built by Shah Jahan, and in which the great Ranjit held his receptions.



Ranjit Sinha's Tomb—Lahore.

Still more interesting is the armoury which still contains the round shield of Guru Govinda, the man who turned a nation of religious devotees into the finest soldiers in the world.

"Pomegranate Blossom."

The tragic story of Anar Kali or the "Pomegranate Blossom", and of her lover the Emperor Jahangir, is widely told in Lahore, and the frail blossom is said to have suffered a cruel death for her secret love. Her cenotaph is of the purest white marble, and the words inscribed on it are exquisitely formed. On its face and sides are inscribed the ninety-nine names of God, and below is written *Majnun Salim Akbar*, or the "enamoured Salim, son of Akbar."

The civil buildings of Lahore are built in half Gothic half Oriental style, and are rather pleasing to the eye accustomed to the tame uniformity of P. W. buildings in other parts of India. The High Court is specially ornate, and the College where young Punjab chiefs are educated is also quite worth a visit. But the most interesting building in Lahore for the historian and the antiquarian is the Museum with its famous collection of sculptures and ancient coins. Among the sculptures are

Museum.

scenes representing Buddha's birth, Buddha preaching to monks, Buddha honoured by angels &c., all excavated from the sites of ancient Takshasila and Gandhara and elsewhere. Inscriptions from the time of Kanishka, and copies of the coins of the Guptas, the Shah Kings and the Chalukyas are preserved.

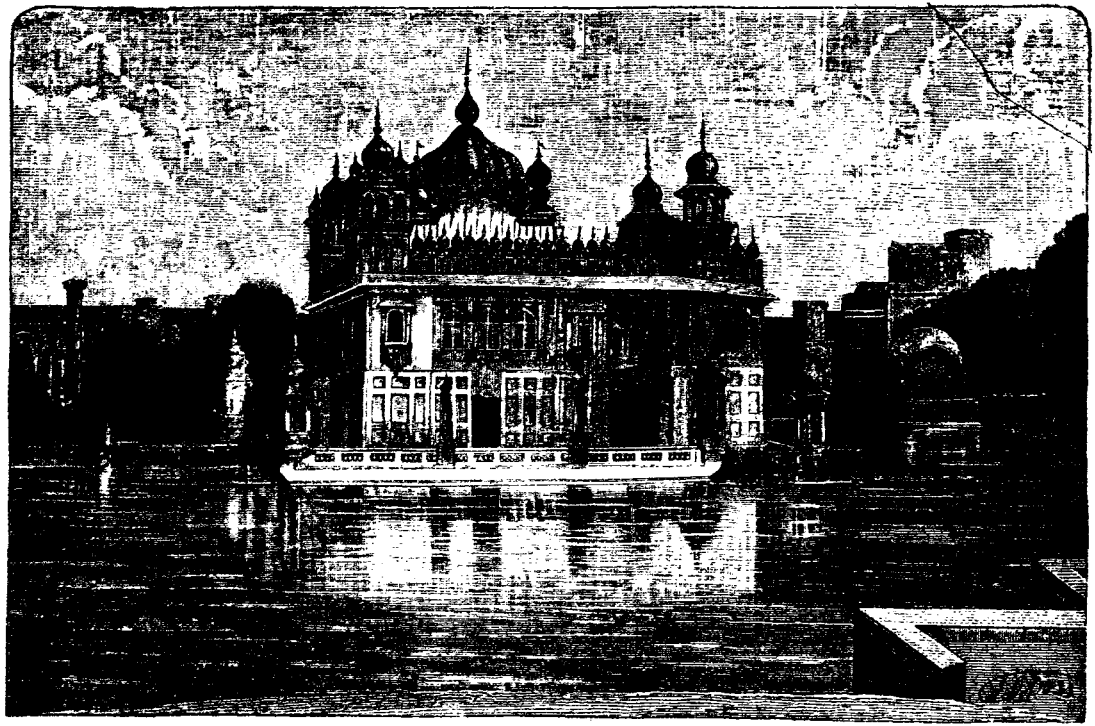
The Shalimar gardens, six miles to the east of Lahore, recall to the mind of the traveller the lovelier garden of the same name in Kashmir.

Jahangir's Tomb & Nur Jahan's Tomb.

The tomb of Jahangir is at Shah Dera about a mile to the north of the railway bridge over the Ravi ; and across the railway is the tomb of Nurjahan, a plain, damp, one storied building, quite unworthy of the most brilliant woman who ever ruled the destinies of India.

Amritsar.

Lahore is the seat of government in the Punjab, but Amritsar is the religious capital of the Sikhs, as well as the centre of manufacturing industry. Kashmir shawls and Rampur chudders, silk fabrics and carved ivory works are manufactured here by thousands of artists, and merchants from Thibet and Yarkand, Afganistan and Beluchistan, Kashmir and Nepal, throng the marts of this interesting



Golden Temple.—Amritsar.

city. But the town owns its celebrity to the famous golden temple which stands in the centre of the holy lake called *Amrita-saras* or the Lake of Immortality, whence the name of the town.

Golden Temple.

It was the great Akbar who granted the site round this lake to the Sikhs. His successors persecuted that religious community, until the great Ranjit Sinha formed them into a great nation. He beautified the temple walls with white marble inlaid with coloured stones, and roofed it with sheets of guilt copper, whence it is called the golden temple.

The temple is beautifully situated in the midst of the lake and is approached by a causeway. Thousands of pilgrims, men and women, frequent this causeway to pay their visit to the temple. Inside sits the high priest, reading from a copy of the *Grantha* which lies before him, whilst pilgrims enter and make their offerings of money or flowers, and join in chanting verses out of the sacred *Grantha* to the music of stringed instruments. The whole scene is solemn and imposing.

From Amritsar I paid a hurried visit to Gurudaspur to see a dear relation and a friend of my early years, whose affection for me and mine

has grown deeper by distance, separation, and lapse of time. I met him after about twenty years, talked with him of by-gone days, and passed a quiet happy day under his roof.

On the 31st of October we left Amritsar for the far-famed Hardwar. The train took us to this holy place in the evening of the 1st November, along with hundreds of pious pilgrims who were crowding there from all parts of India.

Hardwar.

Hardwar or Hardwara has been considered a holy site and a place for bathing for over a thousand years, for Houen Tsang speaks of pilgrimages to this place. The great assemblage of bathers takes place on the 1st of Baisakh when the Hindu year begins, and the exact time for bathing is supposed to be the moment when the sun enters the Ram. But the Hindu calendar has made no allowance for the precession of the equinoxes, and the result is that the Hindu new year's day no long corresponds with the vernal solstice (21st March) but is three weeks behind ! But the thousands of pilgrims who frequent this place to bathe on the 1st Baisakh piously cherish the belief that they are bathing in the right astronomical moment, and are washing away all sins committed in life.

Every twelfth year the planet Jupiter being in the Aquarius, there is a fair of peculiar sanctity called the *Kumbha-mela*; and the number of pilgrims, which ordinarily comes up to a lac on each new year's day, exceeds three or four times that number on these sacred occasions. In the olden days the authorities had to interfere to prevent a pitched battle between the rival sects, the Gosains and the Bairagis. In the present day the authorities have to interfere to prevent the breaking out and the spread of cholera.

Hardwar is situated at the southern base of the Sivalik Range, at the mouth of a gorge through which the Ganges enters the plains of India. But we wished to see the spot higher up where the Ganges issues out of the gorges of the Himalayas. From Hardwar it is about 20 miles higher up to Hreshikesh where the Ganges leaves the Himalayan ranges, and we had but one day left to us to perform this journey and come back to Hardwar. My ingenious friend however was equal to the occasion. Short journeys on the river here are often performed on *charpoys*, floated down on inflated skins, and paddled by coolies with their feet. According to my friend's excellent plan, coolies and skins and *charpoys* accompained us as

we went up to Hreshikesh after an early breakfast; and when the sun was about to set, we launched our *charpoys* over the rapid Ganga, in the hope of floating down to Hardwar before nightfall.

It was an act of rashness to perform this journey in our frail barks after sunset, and over the rapids of the wild Ganga. But I shall never forget the feeling of delight with which we performed this novel moonlight journey. The Ganga is a mountain torrent here, issuing from the gorges of the Himalayas and rolling over an uneven rocky bed. The country on both sides is more or less unpopulated, and to a great extent covered with jungles. A bright moon shone on this wild scene as we drifted down the rapid stream almost with railway speed. The coolies held to the skins and paddled and steered with their feet with unerring skill.

All of a sudden we came to a halt, and the faces of our coolies were pale with fear. Our frail barks were taken under the shelter of a tree bending over the stream, and we waited and watched with breathless silence. A wild elephant was crossing the stream from the jungles on one side to the jungles on the other, and it was believed

the huge beast was the last of a troop which had just crossed. Nothing could have saved us if we had come across the elephant's path and had alarmed him, and so we took shelter under a tree until the elephant had crossed the stream and had disappeared in the jungle.

The moonlight shone upon the white walls and the lonely *ghats* of Hardwar when we at last reached that place after a journey of two or three hours. And it will be long before this wild but delightful trip from Hrishikesh to Hardwar is effaced from my memory.

I cannot close this Chapter better than by quoting some lines from a poem on India, composed by a near and dear relation who is now no more. He loved his country and felt for his country, and expressed in English verse, half a century ago, those thoughts and ideas which come uppermost to the mind of the Hindu traveller during his Rambles in India.

I

My native land, I love thee still!
There's beauty yet upon thy lonely shore;
And not a tree, and not a rill,
But can my soul with rapture thrill,
Though glory dwells no more

2.

My fallen country! on thy brow
The ruthless tyrants have engraved thy shame,
And laid thy haughty grandeur low;
Yet even thus, and even so,
I love to lisp thy name.

3

What though those temples now are lone
Where guardian angels long did dwell;
What though from brooks that sadly run
The naids are for ever gone—
Gone with their sounding shell!

4

And haunted shades and laurel bowers
Resound not now the minstrel's heavenly lay,
And, e'en though deck'd with orient flowers,
They ne'er recall those witching hours,
For ever past away:

5.

My heart yet may not cease to burn
For thy sweet woodlands, and thy sunny shore;
Though oft unconscious it will turn
Unconscious sigh, unconscious yearn
For glorious days of yore!

SHOSHEE CHUNDER DUTT.

CHAPTER VI.

BENGAL, 1871 to 1895.

THE whole of my official life has been passed in Bengal, and it is difficult to write of the places which I have visited in this province without putting this chapter into the shape of an autobiography, or at least into the shape of a record of my official career. I have endeavoured however to avoid this, and to write an account of places visited, not of work done.

Early rambles.

Born in Calcutta in 1848, I had occasion in early life to visit various districts in Bengal with my father who was employed as Deputy Collector; and the recollections of those early days are among the pleasantest reminiscences of my life. Those were happy pre-railway days, when a journey from District to District was performed by palki or boat, and it took a longer time to travel from Calcutta to Jessore than it takes now to travel from Calcutta to Lahore or to Bombay! But though one travelled less, one saw more of the country in those days,—more of the villages, bazars ar

towns, the rivers, ghats and temples which he passed.

It was in this fashion that we went to Birbhoom and lived in that delightful district for some time; and I accompanied my mother, who was a pious Hindu, on a visit to the far famed hot springs of Bakreswar.

Later on, we went first to Kumarkhally and then to Berhampur, and I joined the schools at both these places. Sir Frederick Halliday the first Lieutenant Governor of Bengal held a Durbar at Berhampur, and my father was invited with the other officials of the place to attend the Durbar. Durbars and official matters however did not attract my boyish wonder or attention; my pleasantest recollections connect themselves with the green fields and the quiet village scenes in which it was my privilege and my delight to pass my early days. Those were happy days, before malaria had appeared in its terrible form in Bengal, and residence in the outlying Districts conduced to health, as it refreshed and strengthened and educated the mind.

The first Lieutenant Governor of Bengal.

Later on we went with our parents to Pubna, and we remained there for two years. Those

were eventful days, for the mutiny had broken out in the North-west, and every week brought fresh news about the incidents of the war. A company of British soldiers was stationed in Pubna, and occasionally these soldiers committed outrages in the place which gave rise to much complaint. One afternoon I saw two of them attacking shopkeepers and plundering shops, and another evening some of them penetrated into the house of our next door neighbour, and my father rushed to the house to prevent any outrage. It was a relief to the town when the mutiny was over and the soldiers left the place. Before leaving they had a theatrical performance, playing "Macbeth." I had learnt the story from my father, and I shall never forget the interest with which I witnessed this theatrical performance for the first time in my life.

Mutiny.

The East India Company was abolished, and the transfer of the Empire of India to the Crown was proclaimed in Pubna, as elsewhere in India, amidst great cheers and peals of cannon. I was present in that impressive scene; cries of "Long live the Queen" in English and in Bengali rent

Transfer of the Empire to the Crown.

the air; Hindus and Musalmans joined in the wish; and Brahmans held up their sacred thread and blessed the name of their gracious sovereign.

For the rest, I did fairly well in Pubna school and carried away a prize, but can scarcely say that I deserved it. For we were wild boys,—my elder brother and I,—and delighted in play and mischief the whole day long! We rejoiced in open-air exercise, and often walked from our house to the shores of the great Padma river, and watched with wonder its vast sea-like expanse, its rapid current, its waves and whirlpools. It was generally pretty late in the evening before we returned home, tired with the long walk, but refreshed in body and mind.

We returned to Calcutta in 1859. And for nine years after that I remained in that great city, pursuing my studies in school and college, and thinking no more of green fields and villages. I lost my mother on the year of our return from Pubna, and two years after my father lost his life near Khulna. He had gone to make an official enquiry in a boat, a sudden squall overturned the boat, and my father though an excellent swimmer could not get out of the boat. Thus in my early years I lost my parents,—the most virtuous,

the most worthy, the most affectionate of parents that ever lived.

Three years in Europe.

In March 1868, I left for England, and passed the Open Competitive Examination for the Civil Service of India in the following year. In 1871 I came back to India, and joined work as Assistant Magistrate at Alipur

First five years of service.

The first five years of my service were passed in places near Calcutta, in Alipur, Jungypur and Bongong, and there is little worth writing about these years. The famine of 1874 found me employed as a relief officer in the west of Meherpur, in the neighbourhood of the famous field of Plassy. A more terrible calamity than the famine of 1874 visited Bengal in 1876 in the shape of the cyclone and storm-wave of the 31st October, and it is estimated that a hundred thousand people were drowned in that memorable night by the waves which swept over villages, towns and districts.

Cyclone and Storm-wave of 1876.

The Sub-Division of Dakkhin Shahbazpur, which is an island in the mouths of the Ganges, suffered most terribly from this dire visitation, and forty thousand of its population are esti-

mated to have been drowned in that night. The waters, piled up by the tide and the storm, rose above 20 feet in the eastern parts of the island, and the wonder is that any one survived in those parts. But habitations in those places are surrounded by clusters of betelnut trees, and the thatched roofs of houses floated and clung to those trees, and many were thus saved. Death made little distinction of age; strong healthy men were washed away and drowned, and little infants were found in the next morning floating with their mothers on thatches, uninjured and unconscious of the danger they had escaped.

The poor Deputy Magistrate of the Sub-Division and his wife survived by clinging to trees all night, but they lost all their family, four sons and two daughters I believe, and some grandsons. The Deputy Magistrate went on leave immediately after, and I was transferred from Krishnaghar to take charge of the Sub-Division amidst these circumstances of calamity and distress.

The railway line from Calcutta to Khulna had not been laid then, and it took me six days to go in a green boat through the wilds of the Sundarbans to Barisal. I did not regret this delay, for the Sundar-

Sundarbans.

bans have a beauty of their own. Much of that great forest has been cleared in these late years, but twenty years back the route lay through interminable woods and silent creeks which were imposing in their solitude. It is said that the country was higher in some past age, and was the seat of villages, towns and forts, the remains of which are still discovered from time to time in the jungles. By a strange freak of nature the land has subsided, human habitation is now impossible, and the royal tiger has established his unmolested rule in these vast solitudes of nature.

Emerging from these forests I at last came to the District of Backergunj, a very remarkable District in many ways. The people are mostly Mahommedans, a fine and stalwart race, but much *given to fighting and litigation. There are also* in Backergunj large numbers of Chandals, who are timid and retiring and given to boating and fishing. Like the Kubartas of Western Bengal, the Chandals were among the aboriginal races of Bengal, and lived by fishing in these marshy regions of Eastern Bengal. When the Aryan Hindus came to Bengal, they taught the aboriginal races agriculture and the arts of civilized life,

The lower castes of Bengal.

and also give them an Aryan language and an Aryan religion. The aboriginal races accepted the religion, the language and the civilization of their conquerors, and now virtually form the great mass of the Hindu population of Bengal. The descendants of the Aryan conquerors are the higher castes of Bengal, and form a small minority of the population of Bengal.

The adhesion of the Hinduized aboriginal castes of East Bengal to Hinduism was never very strong, nor were these castes held in much respect or admitted to equality by the upper castes. And the result was that when the Mahommedans came and founded their rule in India, large numbers of these scarcely recognized Hindus were, under some persuation or pressure, induced to give up their somewhat uncertain position within the Hindu pale, and drifted to the faith of Islam. The Mahommedans treated them with more generosity than the Hindus, and the millions of converts in East Bengal at once attained to an equal rank with the high born conquerors of Bengal, for there is no distinction of castes among the Moslems. It is these converts from dubious Hinduism who from the great mass of the Mahommedan population of East Bengal; the descendants of Arabs

and Moguls, Persians and Afgans form a small minority among the Bengal Mahommedans.

I have been led into these remarks to explain the large preponderance of the Mahommedan population in East Bengal. Only in two provinces of India do the Mahommedans so preponderate. In West Punjab, near Peshawar &c, hordes of sturdy conquerors came and settled down from the west from age to age, until the whole of that region has become practically a Mahommedan land. In East Bengal on the other hand, swarms of the lower classes of Hindus, feebly restrained within the Hindu pale, drifted into Mahommedanism which offered them a higher status and a more generous recognition of equality, and thus the whole of East Bengal also has practically become Mahommedan land. Among the fifty million Mahommedans of India, more than one half are of East Bengal and West Punjab. Everywhere else, even in Delhi and Agra, Patna and Murshidabad Districts, which were the centres of Moslem power in India, the Hindus form the majority.

Backergunj District.

Stirring incidents, the District of Backergunj has witnessed within a century or two previous to the

British conquest of Bengal. It was the debatable land where every rude tribe could settle and extend their sway, and indulge in piratical expeditions and plunder. The innumerable creeks and channels which interlace this District afforded admirable facilities to pirates, and for centuries this district was the home of pirates. The Portuguese were second to none as pirates, and early in the seventeenth century they defeated the Mogul commander and established their rule in the islands of Dakkhin Shahbazpur and Sandip under Sebastian Gonzales. A fierce war then ensued between the Portuguese and the Maghs of Arracan, the latter ultimately prevailed, and became as proficient as plunderers as the Portuguese had been. They repeatedly swept through the lower parts of Bengal and carried away the inhabitants as slaves. Shaesta Khan however at last broke the power of the Arracanese Maghs, and annexed Chittagong to Bengal in 1666.

The inhabitants of Backergunj, schooled in the midst of these turbulent scenes, acquired an early proficiency in river Dacoities and other acts of plunder and violence. The narrow and long Backergunj boats, manned by twenty or thirty sturdy rowers, is about the best and swiftest boat

for river Dacoities, and for centuries they were the dread of the traders between Dacca and Western Bengal. River Dacoities have practically been stamped out in recent years, for they were still not uncommon when I went to Dakkhin Shahbazpur about twenty years ago. But under the strong influence of the British rule, the Backergunj boatman has gradually given up questionable practices, and has settled down as a peaceful and sturdy cultivator. But even now he lives in his isolated homestead and not in crowded villages, as I will describe later on, and is but too eager to use his *lathie* or his *dao* when impelled by anger or revenge. And many a Shikdar family can recount, if they choose to do so, the deeds of their forefathers who owned no rule of chief or king as they swept in their piratical boats through the creeks and channels of this now peaceful District.

Dakkhin Shahbazpur after the Cyclone.

I reached Dakkhin Shahbazpur about the close of November 1876, and the scene which the island presented was one which can never be forgotten. No battlefield could be more dismal and more shocking. The huts of the people had been swept clean away, and the remnants of the

population were living under temporary sheds or under trees. Numerous families had disappeared altogether, and there was scarcely any which did not lose some of its members. Grief itself was silenced, for the calamity had been so awful, so instantaneous and so universal, that the survivors were rather stunned than given to sorrowing, and I heard no sound of wail or lamentation. The land was sprinkled with the dead, and dead putrifying bodies caused no emotion, no disgust. Dead bodies hung on trees, floated on tanks, were strewn in the fields, and came floating up, past my boat, at every tide; and the dogs which had survived the storm-wave fed on the carcasses without molestation. To bury tens of thousands of the dead was impossible; the survivors would not touch them at this stage of putrifaction. People were busy in constructing temporary sheds, in procuring food for the surviving members of their families, in looking for their lost properties. The Sub Divisional building had been swept away, the Police were disorganized, the Chowkidars would not do their work. Everything was out of joint.

No communist could wish for a more general redistribution of property than was caused by this great storm-wave of 1876, in the island of Dakkhin

Shahbazpur. Herds of cows and buffaloes had been floated 20 or 30 miles from their villages, wooden boxes containing utensils and silver ornaments had been carried away miles from the homes of their owners, and every one kept what he found and gave up what was lost. Some search was however made from time to time for lost property, and occasionally a box of silver things or of brass articles was found by its owner in the keeping of a villager living perhaps ten miles off. Complaints were brought before me, but it was impossible to treat as "criminal misappropriation" a practice which had been so universal, under circumstances so unique. It was decided by the people themselves that property so found should be restored to its owner, but the finder would keep one quarter of his booty if he honestly rendered up all the rest. I tacitly acquiesced in this decision which was neither legal nor very just, but which suited the circumstances and the notions of the people. Hundreds of complaints were withdrawn, all disputes over properties found were amicably settled, and the people thought a Daniel had come to the judgment seat of Dakkhin Shahbazpur!

More serious disputes however ensued in another way. As might naturally be expected, many

more women than men had perished in the great catastrophe of the 31st October, and among the survivors, specially in the eastern and southern parts of the island which had been most exposed to the storm-wave, there was a great disproportion among the sexes. Widowers found a difficulty in getting new housewives for themselves either in the island or from outside it, as few parents cared to send their daughters to such an island after such a calamity. And many a fight was fought by eager candidates for the hands of the women who had survived and been widowed by the catastrophe.

Cholera epidemic.

The island was now overtaken by another calamity scarcely less fatal than what had preceded. The numberless carcasses of men and of cattle had polluted the air and contaminated the tanks, and a cholera epidemic broke out, the like of which I have never witnessed, nor would like to see again. It spread in every village and affected almost every homestead, and created a universal alarm. It swept away the survivors of the storm-wave in many homesteads, and the homesteads became deserted. It drove the population from many villages to others which were supposed to be more healthy. Fires were lighted in every

house as it was supposed to kill the infection, and men and women and children sat round the fire in that dismal winter, and refused all work for the time. Men clung to their homes and almost suspended all business, and Chowkidars often resigned their appointments, rather than go on with their ordinary duties under such trying circumstances.

All that it was possible for the authorities to do was done to relieve the sufferers. A great many Native Doctors were sent, and cholera pills, in which the people had great faith, were distributed to the people through all possible agencies. But in spite of every endeavour there was a great mortality, and it is supposed over twenty thousand people were swept away within a few months in this island by this terrible epidemic. Nor did the cholera abate till the rains set in and washed away all impurities from the soil, and replenished the tanks with good drinkable water.

It was from scenes like this that I was called away to Barisal, the Head Quarters of the District on the 1st January 1877 to assist in proclaiming in that District that the Queen Gracious Majesty had assumed the title of Empress of India.

Queen proclaimed Empress of India, 1877.

I returned to my Sub Division and worked there throughout the year 1877. I have promised not to inflict on my readers an account of my work, and it is enough to say that the Musalman population of Dakkhin Shahbazpur, a sturdy and self-reliant race, faced the worst season with admirable courage, and helped themselves under the most trying circumstances. Their crops had perished or been seriously damaged by the storm-wave, and the peasantry of the island lived on what they had saved, or sold their things and silver jewellery to import rice from other places. A small and helpless section of the community needed relief and obtained it for a month or two, and when at last the winter paddy of 1877-78 was reaped, all danger was past and all distress was over. And I left the island in April 1878, after passing an eventful year and a half in this island Sub-Division.

Return of health and prosperity.

After a short leave I was appointed to the quiet and interesting district of Tippera. Comilla the Headquarters of the district is a quiet and pretty little town and was long the seat of government of the Hindu Rajas. For the Hindus continued to rul

Tippera.

in Tippera till the eighteenth century, and they lost their independence, as usual, through family dissensions in the ruling house. The Raja banished his nephew, the latter saught the help of the Musalmans, and Mir Habib the Dewan of Dacca raised the latter to the throne on condition of paying a tribute, and Tippera was thus annexed to the Mogul Empire in 1733. The large tanks which are still to be seen in Comilla and other places attest to the greatness and power of the Hindu kings who ruled here till the last century.

Hill Tippera and aboriginal races.

British rule has succeeded to Musalman rule in Tippera, but Hill-Tippera is still independent, and the Raja has his seat of government at Agartolla. The aboriginal tribes in these eastern confines of Bengal,—the Tipras, the Manipuris and others,—belong to the Mongolian race, and have the peculiar features and the oblique eyes of that race. The men have not yet largely resorted to cultivation but practice the *Jum* system, sowing seeds in holes on their hill sides. The women carry fire wood or heavy loads in baskets suspended from their heads, and are hard worked and become prematurely old. Young women specially of the Manipuri race have soft amiable feature-

Besides the hills of Hill Tippera in the extreme east, there is a range of hills in British Tippera, called the Lalmai hills, and it is pleasant to drive up from the town of Comilla through a beautifully constructed road to this range of hills, and to pass a quiet day in the quiet Bungalow there. The scenery of the level green country from the top of the hills is refreshing to the eye, and the solitude of the place brings composure to the mind. Many are the legends connected with these hills and with the *Deos* or spirits who are supposed to have reared it high in the days of old.

Lalmai Hills.

Excepting this one range of hills, the whole of British Tippera is a level country, and much of it is under water in the rains when the Brahmaputra is in flood. The eye wanders then over a wide and sea like expanse of tall rice growing in the water, and the traveller can journey in many parts of the district in his little boat through the bending corn, passing by villages which dot this inland sea like so many islands!

From Tippera in the extreme east, it is a long step to Burdwan and to Bankura in the west. I came from Tippera to Katwa Sub-Division in Burdwan, and

Katwa.

and in 1880 was transferred to Bankurá a very pretty and very interesting District.

Bankura.

It is within the limits of Bankura District that the tableland and undulating hills of Chota Nagpur gradually merge into the level and alluvial plains of Bengal. The eastern half of Bankura therefore is level alluvial country like Burdwan, but the western half is laterite soil, sparsely populated by Hinduised aboriginal tribes, with extensive Sal forests, and with rapid torrents flowing through the undulating rocky ground. The Silye and the Cossye flow through these parts in the south, and further north the peaks of Susunia and of Biharinath rise to an elevation of over a thousand feet.

Aboriginal tribes.

Among the aboriginal tribes who inhabit these wild parts of Bankura, the Bauris are the most numerous. They are a peaceful and industrious people and have now largely taken to cultivation, and are becoming Hinduized in many ways.

Bauris.

Nevertheless there is still a striking difference in manners and life between Hindus even of the lower castes like the Kaibartas and Hinduized aborigines like the Bauris. The Hindu even of the

lower castes is sober and contemplative, a higher civilization has made him thoughtful and frugal, a long training has made him industrious in cultivation and ingenious in arts. The aboriginal Hindu on the contrary is incapable of forethought or sustained industry, consumes his earnings in drink, but is good-natured and simple withal, and merry even in his poverty. The distinction is specially marked in women. Hindu women, even of the lower castes are modest and retiring, and will often stand aside when a stranger is passing by the same road. But custom imposes no such rule of modesty on Bauri women; they do out-door work as field labourors or coolies, they are strong and merry and fond of excitement, and on festive occasions will enjoy a cup of home—brewed *pachwai* in secret while their husbands are half seas over in the village grogshop.

There is a curious division in field labour among the Bauris, a part being done by men and another by woman. Ploughing and sowing are the work of men, but when the seedlings have grown in the nursery, it is the work of women to take them to the fields and transplant them in knee deep water. The fertile valley of the Cossye is a lively scene in the transplanta-

tion season, and hundreds of Bauri women may be seen engaged in this work, standing in the midday sun in the water, and gaily chatting with each other with that joyousness which never deserts them. When a road has to be constructed in these parts or a tank has to be excavated, the Bauri women are the cheapest labourers, and as coolies they carry boxes and heavy loads for twenty or thirty miles without a complaint. In this way they eke out their husband's small earnings, and while the husbands spend a good part of their income on drink, the women are naturally more thoughtful of their homes and their children.

It is curious to note how the religion of the aboriginal races is approaching Hinduism from generation to generation. Muchis have their *Purohits*, and Doms have their *Pandits*, who preside at social and religious ceremonies, and celebrate marriages and funeral ceremonies. Bauris as yet have neither Purohits nor Pandits, and marriages and deaths are solemnized by big feasts at which the home-brewed Pachwai is consumed by the maund! One special Puja performed by the Bauris requires a passing notice. The worship of Bhadu in the month of *Bhadra* has been introduced within recent times among the Bauris

of Bankura and Manbhoom. Bhadu is imagined to be a princess of excessive goodness and beauty who took pity for the poor Bauris, bestowed her blessings on them, but died at an early age. The Bauris have no priests, but the women and children chant songs day after day before this idol and deck it with flowers. Villages and streets resound with the singing of women and the merry shouts of boys, and the worship closes on the last day of Bhadra when the worshippers forget all work in their loud and boisterous worship. There can be little doubt that the worship of Bhadu is connected with the early rice harvest of *Bhadra*, and commemorates the blessings which the Bauris have derived since they learnt cultivation from the Hindus. And as the Bauris become more Hinduized in the course of centuries, the princess Bhadu will no doubt be considered a form of Durga who is worshipped by Hindus on the same auspicious occasion. It is thus that aboriginal goddesses gradually find admission into the Hindu pantheon, as Manasha and Chandi for instance have done.

I hope I have not tired my readers with this long digression about the Bauris. The process by which the aborigines of Bengal are in the pre-

sent day being Hinduized is the very process by which the whole population of India has been Hinduized within the last four thousand years; and the process therefore is worth noting. In Bengal Proper (*i.e.* excluding Behar, Chota Nagpur and Orissa) there are about five million Hinduized aborigines who may be thus classed.—

Chandals	16	lacs, (mostly in East Bengal)
Rajbansis	7	lacs, (in Rangpur &c.)
Bagdis	7	lacs,
Muchis	4	lacs,
Palis	4	lacs, (in Dinajpur &c.)
Doms	2	lacs,
Haris	2	lacs,
Bauris	2	lacs, (in Bankura &c.)
Others	6	lacs.

Besides these there are nearly half a million of aborigines who are not yet Hinduized, like the Sonthals. But they too are coming slowly under the process of becoming Hinduized, as they are settling down as labourers in the confines of Hindu villages. Mysterious sometimes is the mandate by which they are being drawn closer towards Hinduism, and one instance will suffice. On one occasion, during my stay in Ban-

Sonthals and the mysterious basket.

kura, baskets full of leaves, and each containing a scroll, went round among the Santhals from village to village. No one knew where these baskets came from, but it was believed that they had been issued by a Saint living on a mountain, and the written scroll contained a mandate to refrain from drink and unclean meat and to conform to many Hindu customs. The Santhals of each village took the basket to the next Santhal village, and thus the mysterious basket circulated from village to village and from district to district. So deeply were the Santhals impressed with the holiness of the mandate that they sold their fowls and conformed for a time to many Hindu customs.

Rajas of Vishnupur.

The history of Bankura District is connected with that of the Rajas of Vishnupur who have ruled this wild jungly country as semi-independent chiefs for over a thousand years. The fort of Vishnupur is now in ruins, but the stalwart gateway, the fine temples, and the still existing moat surrounding the extensive fortifications are among the most striking and interesting relics of the olden days that the traveller sees in any part of Bengal.

The ancient Rajas of Vishnupur could count centuries of independent sway in this wes-

tern frontier of Bengal before Bakhtiyar Khilji came and conquered Bengal. The Moslem conquest of Bengal made however no difference to the Vishnupur house. Protected by rapid rivers like the Damodar and the Darkeswar to the north, and the Cossye and the Silye to the south, and also by extensive jungles overgrowing a difficult country, the Rajas of Vishnupur were little known to the Mahommedan kings and Subahdars, and were never interfered with. Rival houses rose in the neighbouring districts of Burdwan and Birbhoom in the seventeenth century; Bahadur Khan founded the Musalman Raj family of Birbhoom in 1600, and Abu Rai the Kotwal of Burdwan founded the Burdwan Raj house in 1657. From the seventeenth century therefore the three rival houses flourished in the western frontier of Bengal, in Birbhoom, Burdwan and Vishnupur; the Subahdar of Bengal levied contributions regularly from the two former houses; but it required a long arm to reach Vishnupur, and Vishnupur never paid tribute regularly.

A new danger however arose in the eighteenth century, and hordes of the Mahratta light horse swept through the wilds of Vishnupur into Bengal and desolated everything in their path. The

power of the ancient house tottered under this new shock, and the aggrandisement of the Burdwan house completed its ruin. Maharaja Kirti Chand of Burdwan added to his territories large slices of his neighbour's territories. After the Permanent Settlement of 1793, Vishnupur could never pay the revenue assessed, the Zemindari was sold bit by bit, and the residue was at last sold at auction and bought up by the Burdwan house early in this century. Thus ended the history of this grand old feudal house in the western frontier of Bengal.

It is only necessary to add that the Vishnupur Raj family belong to the soil, but as usual, they claim a fictitious descent from the Rajputs of Northern India. A Rajput queen, when returning from Puri, is said to have deserted her new born child in the jungle, and a woodsman Kasmetia Bagdi by name saw the new born infant, helpless and alone. He took the infant home and reared him, and he grew to be a fine boy. At last when the king of the place died, there was a great funeral repast, and the royal elephant took up the manly boy on his trunk and placed him on the empty throne. And the boy Raghunath was the first king of Vishnupur.

Such are the legends with which the aborigines of the soil everywhere try to connect themselves with the noble Aryan stock of Northern India.

Balasore.

I was over two years in Bankura District, and during a few months in 1881 I acted as District Officer there. In 1882 I went to act as District Officer in Balasore, and I have elsewhere given an account of what I saw of Orissa on this occasion.

Backergunj.

In 1883 I went to Backergunj again. I was soon appointed District Officer there, and I held that post for two years (with a brief intermission) from April 1883 to March 1885.

Ilbert Bill agitation.

My appointment and administration in Backergunj on this occasion attracted considerable attention. Previous to this I myself and some others of my countrymen had acted as District Officers for short periods *i.e.* for one, two or three months. But this was the first instance that a native of India was kept in charge of a District for a considerable length of time, and the step was spoken of as a doubtful experiment. The District too was one of the heaviest and most turbulent in all Bengal, and the period was one

of excitement, for the Ilbert Bill agitation greatly exercised the public mind and embittered the public feeling during these years. All's well, however, that ends well; there was not a whisper of discontent or agitation in the District, every thing went on smoothly and well, and I peacefully laid down the reins in 1885 after two years of administration. I have rejoiced to see the charge of several important districts since held by my countrymen, during the last ten years.

Creeks and Channels of Backergunj.

During my two years' stay in Backergunj I had further occasion to see the district and its people. Unlike the high and dry districts of Bankura and Burdwan, Backergunj is cut up by innumerable channels, and communication is possible only by boats. Twice during every twenty-four hours the high tide surges through these innumerable arteries of the district, sweeping away all impurities, and no artificial system of flushing could be more effective than that of the tides. Away in the south these channels become broader and take the shape of large and boisterous rivers; but up in the north they are quiet lovely creeks, shaded by luxurient vegetation on both sides. The homes of villagers are con-

cealed and nestled amidst this vegetation, and each villager has some sort of a boat or canoe, by which he glides up or down twenty or thirty miles in a few hours, by these grand high-ways and bye-ways of the District.

Village life.

Of villages, in the sense in which we understand the word in Western Bengal there are few in Backergunj. Every family or group of families have their own homestead, surrounded by betelnut and cocoanut trees, and their rice fields lying all round; and you have often to walk a quarter of a mile in order to go from one homestead to another. A typical village in Backergunj is a succession of such isolated homesteads lying along creeks and channels, each family living to some extent isolated, all communicating with other families or other villages by boats. The Backergunj raiyat thus lives a comparatively isolated life at home, but never misses attending the bi-weekly market which is quite a striking feature of Backergunj life. On a market day you will see thousands of villagers, each come in his little boat from villages within a radius of ten or fifteen miles, and assembled to buy and to sell. The scene is a most lively one,

Markets.

purchases and sales go on the whole day long, and as the shades of the evening begin to descend, the little boats with their owners disperse in all directions, and the surrounding creeks and channels are filled with boats gaily gliding over the smooth waters. An hour or two more, and all the villagers have reached their homes, moored their boats, and laid before their anxious womankind all the purchases of the day,—rice or pulse, oil, tobacco or fish, jars of molasses, Liverpool salt, or *dhutis* and *saris* manufactured in Lancashire.

Crime and litigation.

For the rest, the Backergunj raiyat has an easy time of it. Land is productive in the District, cocoanuts and betelnuts are plentiful and remunerative, the landlords of the District are mostly absentees, and the raiyats who are mostly Musalmans keep a good share of the produce of their soil, and know how to maintain their rights. It would indeed be difficult to point to any other peasantry elsewhere who have so little to do and are so well off. Unfortunately disputes relating to land are frequent, disputes about women are not less frequent, litigation goes on eternally, and crimes are numerous. For deliberate murders

and fabricated cases no district in Bengal is so unfavourably known as Backergunj.

The majority of the population of this district are cultivating Musalmans or Hindus of low castes; there is only a small Hindu population of the upper classes. These mostly live in a few populous Hindu villages in the north like Gonla, Gabha and Banaripara, and these villages are the most advanced in education and culture. The Zemindars too are mostly Hindus, and the trade is also mostly in the hands of Hindu merchants, generally Shas or Sunis by caste. It is a pleasure to watch the immense rice trade of Backergunj;—it is estimated that from a great rice mart like Sahebgunj in this District more than ten lacs of maunds of rice are exported to Calcutta. The winter is indeed a busy time in this District, and the official who does not confine his attention to his desk and his criminal cases, sees much to interest and instruct him in the trades and transactions of this rich District.

Hindu Villages.

Trade.

It was within these two years that I took advantage of a short leave to pay a visit to Assam, a coun-

Assam.

try which is well worth a visit for the beauty of its scenery and the antiquity of its civilization. Over twelve hundred years ago, when Houen Tsang came to India in the seventh century, he found Assam or Kamrup to be one of the most powerful Hindu kingdoms in India, and the king of Kamrup was invited to Kanouj in the great imperial assembly which Siladitya held in 640 A.D. Houen Tsang found the people of Assam simple and honest, of short stature and yellowish complexion, and speaking a language different from that of Bengal,—a description which applies to the people of Assam to the present day. The country is healthy, the people have slightly Mongolian features and a fairer complexion than that of the average Bengali, and the women of Assam have soft amiable faces.

Assam maintained its independence after Bengal was subjugated by the Mahommedans, and attempts made by the rulers of Bengal to conquer Assam in the thirteenth and in the sixteenth centuries utterly failed. In the seventeenth century the Assamese were themselves the invaders, came down the Brahmaputra in five hundred war-boats, and nearly reached Dacca, but were met and beaten back.

Early in this century the Burmese general Bundela conquered Assam, and the Burmese marked their conquest of Assam by acts of cruelty and barbarity. War then broke out between the Burmese and the British, and Assam was annexed to the British Empire in India in 1826.

Tea gardens have multiplied in Assam since the British conquest. There were over a thousand gardens when I visited the province, and over fifty millions of pounds of tea were annually exported. The export has increased since.

Few rivers present a more picturesque appearance than the limpid Brahmaputra where it forces its way through rocks and hills a little way above Gauhati. There is a beautiful island in the river near Gauhati, and a few miles below it is the far famed temple of Kamrup on the top of a hill. I went up the hill, and the mountain scenery which stretches before the eye from the top of the hill is wild and picturesque indeed.

A road leads from Gauhati to the hill station of Shillong, and not far from Shillong is Cherapunji which has the unenviable privilege of being the rainiest spot in the world. The rainfall here exceeds five hundred inches in the year!

Passing further up the river from Gauhati, the country opens out into a broad valley, and the traveller passes by the fertile districts of Nowgong and Sibsagar until his journey ends in Dibrugarh. I went as far Sibsagar District, and went inland as far as Golaghat, to see one who was near and dear to me, and whom I had not seen since her marriage. And I have known no happier days in my life than those brief days during which I stayed with her, and received her kindness and her unaltered love.

Furlough and visit to Europe.

I left Backergunj on furlough in 1885, taking two years leave after fourteen years of hard work. I think I had fairly earned it.

Pubna.

Returning from Europe, I was appointed to Pubna in 1887 and I was glad to revisit the place where I had passed my boyhood thirty years ago. The school where I was educated was still standing, and the head-master whom I had known in my boyhood was an old retired pensioner and recognized me with pleasure. I found out the house where I had lived with my father; it was still standing but considerably altered. And as District Officer I was occupying the very house where I

had seen the play of Macbeth acted by European soldiers nearly thirty years ago.

"I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In my life's morning march when my bosom was young.

The past came back to me as a dream, and the memory of those who had cast a sunshine over my early life often rose and filled my mind in hours of solitude. I remained only six months in Pubna and was then transferred to Mymensing, one of the largest and heaviest districts in Bengal.

Annual inundations in East Bengal.

The volume of the water of the Brahmaputra river has now deserted its old bed through Mymensing, and flows straight down from Assam to Goalundo, forming the eastern boundery of that District. Similarly the volume of the water of the Ganges has now deserted its old bed by Murshidabad, Hoogly and Calcutta, and flows by the Padma river to Goalundo. The two rivers have, as it were, changed their old courses and approached each other to meet at Goalundo, and the view of the united rivers from Goalundo to the sea is truly an imposing one in the rains. The whole of East Bengal is more or less flooded by these rivers, and miles and miles

of the country have the appearance of an inland sea, dotted with villages which appear like islands. The floods sweep away all impurities, and deposit a silt which fertilize the soil, and is raising the level of the country year by year. It is thus that the whole Bengal has been formed.

Formation of land by Silt.

The process of the formation of lands by the silt of rivers can be marked in any one of the islands near the mouths of the Ganges. When I was in Dakkhin Shahbazpur in 1877, I went right round the island in the cold season in a green boat, and to the south of the islands extensive *chars*, miles in extent, were forming in the sea owing to the deposit of the river silt. When I was in Backergunj in 1884 and visited Dakkhin Shahbazpur again, these *chars* had risen higher, and to go round the island one had to take a much wider circuit. Bengal which has been formed by the silt of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra goes on increasing before our eyes; what is merely a sand bank in one year becomes an island and a pasture land in course of twenty years or so, and perhaps the next century will be peopled land.

While land is thus extending near the mouths of the rivers, the changes in their inland courses

affect the health of the people as I will explain further on.

Mymensing.

I thoroughly enjoyed my work in Mymensing during two years and a half, for Mymensing is a District where there is plenty of work for a district officer to do. The area of the district is over six thousand square miles, and the population over three millions. There are four Sub-Divisions besides the Sudder, and every Sub-Division is large and important. But it is not of my work that I wish to speak in this chapter.

Madhupura Jungle.

The Madhupura jungle in Mymensing is a curious study for the geologist. To the east and to the west of this jungle is level alluvial country, but the jungle itself is rocky undulating soil, about 10 or 15 miles wide, running north and south along the whole length of the district. It is really a low range of hills, but the rocks appear to have passed through a process of disintegration, and the range is nowhere over a hundred feet high. I constructed a road right through this jungle to connect the head-quarters with the western Sub-Division Tangail, and I think I was the first man to drive through this newly-constructed road, through the jungle.

I also constructed a road to connect the head-quarters with the eastern Sub-Division Kishoregunj, and in the rains I travelled by boat over a good portion of this Sub-Division which borders on Sylhet. Almost the whole of the eastern portion is then under water, and I sailed in my green boat over miles of the country which was dry land a few months before. Villages looked like little islands with their huts and their trees, cattle were tethered in their sheds and had no pasture, and villagers went about in boats from village to village or to the submerged fields to gather fodder for their cattle. As I was sailing with a strong wind one day, my little cook-boat which was tied to my green boat suddenly got swamped, but luckily all the servants were saved.

Floods in the Sylhet frontier.

The most interesting trip however that I made in Mymensing, or rather from Mymensing, was a trip to the Garo Hills which form the northern limit of the District. Through the courtesy of the Maharaja of Susong, a descendant of a long line of Rajas, I was provided with a couple of small boats or canoes which were lashed together and covered with a temporary thatch. On this bark I went up

Garo Hills.

a rapid hill stream through the jungles and hills of the Garo country, and saw their primitive villages and settlements on the slopes of hills. Along with their neighbours the Khasis and the Nagas they people the wooded and hilly tracts to the south of the Assam valley, and live to the present day the same primitive life that their forefathers lived of old. Like all eastern and northern hill-tribes they have Mongolian blood and Mongolian features, and like all aboriginal tribes they are simple, and impulsive. The women are strong and hard working; they gather fuel from the jungles, carry heavy loads, build houses, and perform all the domestic work. Girls marry after they have attained their womanhood, and scenes described by the poet in Hayawatha's wooing are not unfrequent in these secluded woods.

Zemindars.

Backergunj is a district of absentee Zemindars, and the raiyats assert themselves. Mymensing is a district of rich resident Zemindars, and the Zemindars have great influence. Female Zemindars display much tact and aptitude for business, and often distinguish themselves by acts of public charity and liberality.

Mymensing is growing in population and

Jute cultivation.

agriculture, and much of the land which was waste in the earlier part of the century has now been brought under cultivation. The demand for jute which has grown up within the last forty years has been a great impetus to the reclamation of fresh lands. Before the Crimean War of 1855, Russian flax supplied the European markets, and there was little demand for jute. But that war stopped the importation of Russian flax into England, a new fibre was wanted, and Bengal supplied it. Since then the cultivation of jute has gone on increasing, and nearly half the lands of this extensive District is under jute cultivation. Fortunes have been made and lost by jute trade, new trade centres of the first rank like Naraingunj and Serajgunj have sprung into existence, large firms and steamer companies find occupation namely in this trade, and factories with thousands of looms have been started in the country. In fact, the demand for jute in Europe has affected peasant life throughout East Bengal in a manner which is highly gratifying. And if the people of Bengal can learn to spin and weave for themselves the jute and the cotton which so plentifully grow in their country, they will have recovered in some

degree the ground they have lost in the world's manufacturing trade.

Dacca.

During my stay in Mymensing District I often came to Dacca which is now connected with Mymensing by rail, and the town of Dacca, the capital of East Bengal, is a place of interest. It rose into importance early in the seventeenth century when the seat of government was removed from Rajmahal to Dacca, and it still boasts of a fort built by the Muhammadan Subahdars. The older Mahommedan capital of the district however was Sonargaon, which is now an insignificant village situated near the Brahmaputra Creek, and hidden from sight by a forest of betelnut, mango and other trees.

Vikrampur.

More ancient and more interesting than Dacca and Sonargaon is the old Hindu capital of Ballal Sena and other kings of the Sena dynasty in Vikrampur. The place where the Hindu kings resided is still pointed out at Rampal, and mounds of brick and well foundations at a great depth below the surface are met with for many miles around. Hindu rule in East Bengal is now a thing of the past, but the people of Vikrampur are still the most advanced and pushing among the people of East Bengal,

and are generally called the Scotchmen of Bengal. They are intelligent, keen, and persevering, they have a clannish feeling among them which unites and strengthens their little groups and colonies all over Bengal, and they have deservedly distinguished themselves in all professions of life, as well as in social and religious movements. They have failed however, as yet, to produce men of genius among them,—men like Kasiram and Krittibas, Chaitanya and Mukundaram in the past centuries, and like Ram Mohan and Vidyasagar, Madhusudan and Bankim Chandra in the present century. The want,—if there be any radical want which makes this difference,—must be made good, we must learn to march together without difference or distinction, and our children in the next century should find their leaders in thought and action in East as well as in West Bengal.

Decaying manufactures.

For centuries the Dacca District was noted for its muslin. The wonderful fabrics known as the "running water" or the "evening-dew" used to be the delight of the Begams and princesses of old ; but there is little demand for them now, and the trade of the weaver is gone all

over Bengal. In parts of Dacca and Mymensing one constantly comes across villages of weavers now in decay, temples and striking edifices erected by them and now in disrepair, colonies of them now employed in agriculture or in trade. Bengal supplied cotton fabrics to Europe for centuries past, and up to a recent date in this century ; but now even the raiyat and his wife wear clothes made in Lancashire.

Gold and silver work used to be another speciality of East Bengal, and we read in Mukunda Ram's poetry that a king of West Bengal had to send to the East for the manufacture of a golden cage. But even this manufacture is not as thriving as in the olden time.

Darjeeling.

It was from Mymensing that I took advantage of a short leave to pay my first visit to Darjeeling. Most of my readers have seen Darjeeling, and it is unnecessary for me to describe the journey up the hills from Siliguri through scenes which never tire the eye. Deep wooded gorges disclose themselves at every turn, the green plains of Bengal with its rivers and fields, woods and villages, appear like a vast map spread out far below, and above, the varied and precipitous heights tower on the view. Tea

gardens beautify the hill sides, tree-ferns and other curious plants greet the eye at Kurseong, and as the train goes higher and higher, the traveller is glad to wrap himself with some warm clothing over the summer suit with which he left the plains of Bengal. The train at last reaches the crowded bazar of Ghoom, the highest point on this line, and then gently descends for a few miles into Darjeeling. The first view of Darjeeling with its groups of pretty cottages clustering on the sunny hill sides is picturesque.

I came to Darjeeling in April 1889, and for some days after my arrival the snows were not visible. One early morning, however, the atmostphere became clear, and the stately form of Kanchanjingha and the line of peaks on either side appeared in their majesty against the blue vault of a cloudless sky. I looked with delight on the magnificent scene—on the glorious Himalayas, unsurpassed in grandeur and height among the mountains of the world. The long range of white snowy peaks dazzling under a bright Indian sun, which one views on a clear morning from the Observatory Hill, is a sight which once seen can never be forgotten. Many are the pleasant excursions which one can make

from Darjeeling; the one which pleased me most was to Peshauk, and thence by the Teesta and the Rungeet to Badamtam and to Darjeeling. Nothing can be lovelier than the blue Teesta rolling between wooded hills in silent beauty, and mingling its waters with those of the Rungeet.

Burdwan.

Early in 1890 I was transferred from Mymensing to Burdwan. In the days of my boyhood I had always heard of Burdwan as a healthy and flourishing and prosperous district, where one went for a change in order to recoup his health. How changed the

Malareal fever.

District is now with its malareal fever! The fever has spread north and south, east and west, over both banks of the Hooghly river, and over the whole of West Bengal. It is a national calamity which affects and enfeebles twenty millions of the people, which stops the increase of population, and which bids fair to last, one does not know, for how many years to come.

The change in the course of the main current of the Ganges, of which I have spoken before, appears to me to be the main cause why Western Bengal has now become unhealthy, while East

Bengal is healthy. The hundreds of small channels and water courses which brought Ganges water to the doors of villagers, and also affectually drained the country, are now stagnant pools or have been converted into rice fields !

The Bhairab, the Kabadak the Ichamati and other rivers and channels which drained and flushed the Districts of Jessore, Nadiya and 24 Parganahs are dried up, because the source of the supply is drying up. Malarea is supposed to have first appeared in Jessore, seventy years ago, and gradually extended itself westward and northward through Nadiya and 24 Parganahs. In 1861 it crossed the Hooghly river, and by the end of 1867 it had spread over the whole of Burdwan and Hooghly Districts. The Census of 1872 showed that one third of the population of Burdwan town had been swept away by this fell disease. Villages all over the District were desolated, and even the birth-rate was affected ; and old villagers will tell you that there were few child-births for years after the disease first appeared in its virulence.

The gradual silting up of the Hooghly is the main cause of malaria in West Bengal, but for Burdwan and Hooghly Districts, the Damodar

embankment is an additional cause. The Damodar innundations used to flush the country in the olden days and kept all the little drainage channels in working order, but they have now been stopped by the lofty line of embankments maintained by the Public Works Department. And while the bed of the Damodar and the southern bank are rising annually by the deposit of sand and silt, the northern and more populous bank remains low. Thus obstructions to the drainage of the country, natural and artificial, are the cause of malaria in Bengal ; I believe the canal systems and irrigation works are greatly responsible for the same disease in Behar and up-country.

Interesting sites.

Many are the places of interest in this District for the Hindu traveller. Burdwan itself with its Raj-buildings and gardens and menagerie has attractions for many. Singi near Katwa was the birthplace of our ancient poet Kasiram Das. Katwa and Kalna are associated with the doings and teachings of Chaitanya and the early Vaishnavas. And Navadvipa, which is in the Burdwan side of the Hooghly river, was the last capital of the Hindu kings of Bengal, and was long renowned for its schools of philosophy and law. In the west, new places are spring-

ing into importance, and coal, iron and pottery industries have added to the importance of Raniganj Sub-Division.

Coal-mining.

Coal-mining is rapidly extending in Burdwan and Chota Nagpur at the present day. In the last century, Mr. Heatly, Collector of Chota Nagpur, first applied to Government in 1774 to work the mines, and some coal was raised. Forty years after, Mr. Rupart Jones rediscovered Mr. Heatly's workings, and began work which was subsequently taken up by Messrs Alexander & Co., who became the proprietors. In 1835, Alexander & Co. failed, and the Raniganj mine was bought up by the enterprising Dwarka Nath Tagore who formed a company to work it. Eight years later, this and some other companies were amalgamated into the Bengal Coal Company which is now the proprietor of the most extensive collieries in the Raniganj field. But other companies have since started into existence, private proprietors are rushing in to work small mines, and large profits have of late years produced quite a "coal fever" among enterprising middle class men in Bengal.

Raniganj Sub-Division is also rich in iron fields

Iron manufacture.

abounding in clay iron ores, and the blast furnace set up near Burrakar is probably the only one in India for the manufacture of iron. When I first visited these works, they were carried on by Government; but they have since passed into the hands of a private company and very extensive additions have been made. Iron is made in large quantities from the ores picked up in the surrounding country, and water pipes and various other articles are manufactured to order.

Burdwan Raj family.

It has already been stated that the Burdwan Raj family was founded in 1657 by Abu Rai who was Kotwal of Burdwan. But the greatness of the house is more due to the enterprise of Kirti Chandra, a successor of Abu Rai. He was of a bold and enterprising spirit, and ruled from 1702 to 1740. He fought with the Rajas of Chandrakona and Barda, near Ghatal, and dispossessed them of their petty kingdoms; and he seized on the estates of the Raja of Balghara, near Tarakeswar. And lastly, he attacked and defeate Badyajama the Raja of Vishnupur, and wrested from him large slices of his territories. These enterprises are worth narrating because they shew

the state of semi-independence of the old Hindu Zemindars who were practically reigning princes within their own dominions, and were seldom interfered with by the Subahdar so long as they paid their tribute. Kirti Chandra's conquests were sanctioned by the Subahdar of Murshidabad, and his successor Tilak Chandra was honored by the Emperor of Delhi with a farman recognizing his right to the Raj, and was also invested with titles.

In times of trouble, the princely Zemindars of Bengal helped the Subahdar with their troops and resources, and the Rajas of Burdwan and Vishnupur helped the Subahdar in making a stand against the Maharatta invaders in the 17th and 18th centuries. After the commencement of the British rule the house of Vishnupur was ruined by the Permanent Settlement. Burdwan too found it difficult to make punctual payments, and early in this century, Tej Chandra saved the Raj from ruin by giving away all his Zemindari in *Patni* leases, which secured a steady income,—it prevented future increase.

The Burdwan and Vishnupur houses are among the great historic houses of Bengal. Across the Hooghly the Nuddea house is no less famous.

Historic Houses in Bengal.

Founded by Bhabananda Mazumdar through the favour of the great Mansinha in the sixteenth century, the family reached its highest glory under Maharaja Krishna Chandra Rai in the eighteenth century. He was the patron of the celebrated poets Bharat Chandra and Ram Prasad, he took a part in the establishment of British power in Bengal, and he was honoured by Lord Clive with the title of Rajendra Bahadur and with a present of twelve guns used in the battle of Plassy.

Further to the east flourished the house of Jessore or Chanchra, also founded in the sixteenth century out of the possessions of the great Pratapaditya after he had been vanquished by Mansinha. Manohar Rai who ruled from 1649 to 1705 was the most distinguished Raja of this house, and largely added to the possessions of the Raj. But the Permanent Settlement which affected all the old zemindaris injuriously, specially affected the Jessore Raj, which is no longer what it was before.

To the north of the Ganges were the extensive possessions of the Natore house of which I will speak further on. Bengal proper was thus parcelled off and ruled by great Hindu Zemindars whose influence and power within their own territories

knew no limits. The Subahdar of Murshidabad retained the military power in his hands, and carefully collected the revenues of the province; and Kazis and Kotwals kept towns in order. But in agricultural Bengal, the Zemindars were the actual rulers who administered justice, repressed crime, punished offenders, and kept the peace. And so long as they paid their revenues regularly, their internal administration was never interfered with. And within the limits of peaceful villages, Panchayets and village elders settled disputes and kept the peace, and seldom went to the higher authorities except on grave and serious occasions.

If a real history of the people of Bengal were ever recorded, we should know more of the internal administration of the country by Zemindars and the officers employed by them, and we would hear less of wars and invasions. When British rule replaced that of the Mahommedans, the administrative functions and powers of the Bengal Zemindars were taken away somewhat prematurely, and the result was an increase in crime and dacoities all over the province in the early years of this century, such as was never witnessed in the country either before or

ever since. A strong and excellent system of administration was then organized by Lord William Bentinck, who first admitted the people to an important share in the work. And the administration has steadily improved since, and will steadily improve in the future, with the more extended employment of the people, who possess local knowledge of their own country.

Dinajpur.

Late in the year 1890, I went from Burdwan to Dinajpur, said to have been the head-quarters of the ancient Pala kings of Bengal. The large tanks in the District, some of them a mile long, are said to have been excavated by these kings, then the masters of Northern India. But Dinajpur and the whole of Northern Bengal were a great and civilized kingdom many centuries before the time of the Pala kings; for when Houen Tsang came to Bengal in the seventh century, he found this *Pundra* land thickly populated, beautified with large tanks, flowering woods and fruit trees, and rich in all kinds of grain. There were many Hindu temples and Buddhist monasteries, and the Jaina ascetics were numerous. It is remarkable that the name *Pundra* by which Houen Tsang designates North Bengal occurs in Manu also, and he recognizes by that

name one of his "mixed castes," *i. e.* one of the Hinduized aboriginal races.

Aboriginal races.

Where are now these Pundras, the ancient aboriginal inhabitants of North Bengal? The modern Hindu will have no difficulty in discovering them. The Rajbansis are the most numerous caste in Rungpur and number 4 lacs in that District, the Palis are the most numerous caste in Dinajpur and also number 4 lacs, and the Koch are numerous in Koch Behar. These are the descendants of the primitive dwellers of North Bengal, who were civilized by the Aryan Hindus, and are now forming separate Hindu castes. Thus after the lapse of thousands of years we still have traces of those great tribes which lived and hunted and fished in swampy Bengal before the Aryan Hindus came here, and introduced their religion, their language, and their civilization. The Kaibarta clans dwelt in the south, the Chandal clans lived in the east, the Koch, the Rajbansis and the Palis, known as Pundras, lived in the north, and the Bauris and Bagdis lived in the west. Other smaller aboriginal clans, too numerous to mention, lived in all parts of Bengal. The Aryan Hindus came but did not exterminate the aborigines,

as the Saxons exterminated the Britons in England. On the contrary the aborigines received the civilization and religion and language of the conquering Hindus, and now form new Hindu castes at the lower end of the ladder. Such is the ethnological history of Bengal, and out of the 40 millions of people in Bengal proper, only the upper castes, scarcely 5 millions, are sons of the Aryan Hindu colonists.

Turning from ancient times to modern times, the student finds much that is interesting in the history of North Bengal. For among the great landed houses of Bengal there was none which owned such extensive possessions and was so well known to fame as the house of Natore in the last century. The name of the illustrious Rani Bhavani is a household word in Bengal, and her extensive zemindari comprised the whole of North Bengal from the borders of Mymensing to those of Birbhoom. She was a conspicuous figure in the last days of Moslem rule in Bengal; and when British rule succeeded, her zemindari was still the most extensive. Writing in 1786 Mr. J. Grant describes Rajshahi as "the most extensive zemindari in Bengal or perhaps in

Rani Bhavani and the Natore House.

India; intersected in its whole length by the great Ganges or its lesser branches with many other navigable rivers and fertilizing waters; producing within the limits of its jurisdiction at least four-fifths of all the silk, raw or manufactured, used in, or exported from the Empire of Hindustan, with a superabundance of all the other richest productions of nature and art to be found in the warmer climates of Asia, fit for commercial purposes." This great house has now declined, and new zemindaris have now been carved out of the extensive possessions of the Natore house.

Dinajpore House.

The Dinajpur Raj is also an old territorial house in Bengal, and like all the old houses it suffered in the early years of British administration in Bengal. The maladministration of this District furnished the great Burke with materials for some of the most eloquent passages in his impeachment of Warren Hastings.

Midnapur.

Early in 1891 I came from Dinajpur to Midnapur, which was another of the ancient districts visited by Houen Tsang in the seventh century of the Christian Era. The Chinese traveller describes five great Hindu kingdoms in Bengal, *viz.* :—

(1) *Karna Suvarna, i. e.* Bhagalpur &c.
(2) *Pundra, i. e.* Dinajpur &c.
(3) *Kamarupa, i. e.* Assam &c.
(4) *Samatata, i. e.* Dacca &c.
(5) *Tamralipti, i. e.* Tumlook &c.

Ancient Tamralipti or Tumlook.

Tumlook was a flourishing sea port in those days. Two centuries before Houen Tsang, another traveller, Fa Hian, sailed from this port to Ceylon. At present Tumlook is an inland place in Midnapur, for the river silt has formed some seventy miles of land beyond Tumlook in these fourteen centuries from the time of Fa Hian.

In its physical features Midnapur is very like Bankura. The eastern half is alluvial and cultivated and thickly populated; the western half is undulating and rocky, covered with Sal wood and scrub jungle, and sparsely populated by aboriginal tribes. The sea washes the southern shores of Midnapur, and the tired official is glad to pass a few days in a sea-side bungalow, and to have sea-bath. The Subarnarekha divides Midnapur from Orissa, and many were the battles fought in the olden days in this frontier land, first between the Uriyas and the Pathan conquerors,

and then between the Pathans and the Mogul conquerors. The Uriyas maintained their independence till about 1560 when the Pathans conquered their land; but before the end of the century the Pathans themselves yielded to the Moguls and to the genius of Todar Malla and Man Sinha.

Canals.

The natural drainage of the country has been disturbed by two canals constructed in this District. The canal from Uluberia to Midnapur is the high road to the latter down, and there is a daily steamer service from Calcutta. The water of this canal is good for irrigation purposes, and the income derived from irrigation more than covers the cost of maintenance. Not so useful is the coast canal starting from Geonkhally, and passing through the south of the District to Orissa. The canal is useless for irrigation and not much used for navigation, except by the steamers which convey pilgrims to Puri.

Furlough and visit to Europe

I was now pretty well tired with official work, and took a long furlough in 1892. I returned from Europe at the close of the following year, and in April 1894 I was honoured by Government with the appointment of a Divisional

Appointment as Commissioner of Burdwan.

Commissioner, an appointment which had not yet been held by my countrymen before. The appointment naturally attracted some attention, and was regarded as a doubtful experiment. But all's well that ends well, and after a year's peaceful administration I made over charge in April 1895. That my countrymen may gradually obtain an increasing share in the administration of our own country is my hope and aspiration. That the British Rule may in course of time be based on the solid foundation of popular co-operation and popular representation,—the only foundation on which foreign rule is possible in civilized countries in these days,—is the hope and aspiration of every loyal British subject.

I cannot conclude this little work better than by quoting a few stanzas from an excellent poem on India, written by my friend to whom I have dedicated this work. Those who know him only as a high and able official, and a grave and reverend judge, will scarcely believe that he courted the Muses not unsuccessfully in his younger days, and that the passion of his youth occasionally breaks forth, even now, with fervid and true eloquence, in the midst of all his overwhelming office work and

his serious legal duties. Speaking of India, reviving under the British Rule, my friend sings :—

Dost thou not see the fervid glow
Returning to her pallid brow,
And mark the breathings deep and slow
The heaving bosom's rise and fall ?
The form, yet fair, with tremour shakes
As slowly she responsive wakes
At Bentinck's, Canning's, Ripon's call !

Then come, each near and distant brother !
Come, watch and tend your waking mother !
We have but her, and have no other,—
Be she our shame, be she our glory !
Come, plunge into the noble strife
The long, unselfish, arduous life,
Which conquers, where fal bayonets gory.

And England ! hold thy sister dear ;
Nor give nor take the taunt or sneer ;
Forget the past, forgive, forbear,
Remember still they godly mission !
With glowing pride shall History
Record thy bloodless victory,—
A reign of love ! a poet's vision !