



present feudal nobility, not only of Mewar but of Rajpootana, and it is to be hoped that the rising generation will pay to it what has been withheld by the past; that energy and temperance will supersede opium and the juice of the *mawah*, and riding in the ring, replace the siesta, and the tabor (*tabla*) and lute. I endeavoured to banish some of these incentives to degeneracy; nor is there a young chieftain, from the heir-apparent to the throne to the aspirant to a skin of land (when opportunity was granted), from whom I have not exacted a promise, never to touch that debasing drug, opium. Some may break this pledge, but many will keep it; especially those whose minority I protected against court-faction and avarice: such a one as Urjoon Sing, the young chief of Bussie, of the Sangawut branch of the Chondawut clan. His grandfather (for his father was dead) had maintained the old castle and estate, placed on the elevated Oopermal, against all attempts of the Mahrattas, but had incurred the hatred of Bheem Sing of Saloombra, the head of his clan, who in S. 1846 dispossessed him, and installed a junior branch in the barony of Bussie. But the energetic Tukt Sing regained his lost rights, and maintained them, until civil broils and foreign foes alike disappeared, on their connexion with the British in 1818. Then the veteran chief, with his grandson, repaired to court, to unite in the general homage to their prince with the assembled chiefs of Mewar. But poverty and the remembrance of old feuds combined to dispossess the installation of the interloper, who was supported by all the influence of the chief

of Soolombra. The first noble of Mewar tried to avail himself of my friendship to uphold the cause of his *protegee*, Burrud Sing, whom he often brought to visit me, as did old Tukta his grandson. Both were of the same age, thirteen; the aspirant to Bussie, fair and stout, but heavy in his looks; while the possessor, Urjoon, was spare, dark, and beaming with intelligence. Merit and justice on one side; stupidity and power to the other. But there were duties to be performed; and the old Thakoor's appeal was not heard in vain. "*Swamdherma* and this" (putting his hand to his sword), said the aged chief, "have hitherto preserved our rights; now, the cause of the child is in his sovereign's hands and yours; but here money buys justice, and right yields to favour." The Rana, though he had assented to the views of Saloombra, left the case to my adjudication. I called both parties before me, and in their presence, from their respective statements, sketched the genealogical tree, exhibiting in the remote branches the stripling competitor's, which I shewed to the Rana. Ever prone to do right when not swayed by faction, he confirmed Urjoon's patent, which he had given him three years previously, and girt him with the sword of investiture. This contest for his birthright was of great advantage to the youth; for his grandfather was selected to command the quotas for the defence of the frontier fortress of Jehajpoor, a duty which he well performed; and his grandson accompanied him and was often left in command while he looked after the estate. Both came to visit me at Cheetore. Urjoon was greatly improved during his



two years' absence from the paternal abode, and promises to do honour to the clan he belongs to. Amongst many questions, I asked "if he had yet taken to his *uml*?" to which he energetically replied, "my fortunes will be *cracked* indeed, if ever I forget any injunction of yours."

But a truce to digression : the whole village *punchaet* has been waiting this half hour under the spreading burr tree, to tell

me, in the language of homely truth, *khoosh hyn Compani saheb ca-pertap sa*, that "by the auspices of Sir Company they are happy ; and that they hope I may live a thousand years."

I must, therefore, suspend my narrative, whilst I patiently listen till midnight to dismal tales of sterile fields, exhausted funds, exiles unreturned, and the depredations of the wild mountain Bhil.

CHAPTER II.

The chief of Heentah.—Difficulty of arranging the separation of Heentah from the fisc.—Anomalous character of its present chief, Maun Sing Suktawut.—His history.—Lalji Rowat of Nelharra.—Origin of the Dodeah family.—Adventure of Singram Sing, the Rana of Mewar.—His son, Chandrabhan, and Rana Raj.—Extraordinary manner in which he acquired Lawah.—Decline of the family.—Form of deed of conveyance of lands from the lord paramount.—Address of Maun Sing.—Atrocious murder of a Rahtore boy.—Its singular sequel.

I WAS not deceived ; it is not midnight, but, late as it is, I will introduce to the reader a few of my visitors. The chief of Heentah, who was absent at his patrimonial estate of Koon, on the hills of Chappun, sent his brother and his *homme d'affaires* to make his compliments to me, and express his regret that he could not offer them per-

sonally at Heentah, which he said was "my own township." This was not mere customary civility. Heentah had been taken by the Suktawuts soon after the commencement of the civil wars of S. 1824, which was within the period (A.D. 1766) fixed by the general arrangements of the 4th of May 1818, for restitution ; and it was



impossible, without departing from the principle on which they were based, that the chief should retain it, though he could plead the prescriptive right of half a century.

The discussions regarding Heentah were consequently very warm : the renunciation of ten valuable townships by the Maharaja Zoorawur Sing of Bheendir, the head of the Suktawut clans, did not annoy the Bheendir chief so much as his failure to retain Heentah as one of his minor feuds : nay, the surrender of Arjah, the price of blood, a far more important castle and domain, by his own brother Fatteh Sing (the original acquisition of which sealed the conclusion of a long-standing feud), excited less irritation than the demand that Heentah should revert to the fisc. It is the key of Bheendir," said the head of the clan. "It was a Suktawut allotment from the first," exclaimed his brother. "The Ranawut was an interloper," cried another. "It is my *bapota*' the abode of my fathers," was the more feeling expression of the occupant. It was no light task to deal with such arguments; especially when an appeal to the dictates of reason and justice was thwarted by the stronger impulse of self-interest. But in a matter involving so important a stipulation of the treaty, which required "that all fiscal possessions which, since S. 1822 (A.D. 1766), the commencement of the civil wars, had, by whatever means, passed from the Rana to the chieftains, should be reclaimed," firmness was essential to the success of a measure on which depended the restoration of order. The Suktawuts behaved nobly' and with a purely patriotic spirit throughout the scene, when almost all had to

relinquish important possessions. The issue was, that Heentah, with its domain, after remaining twelve months incorporated with the fisc, was restored to Zoorawur, but curtailed of Doondia and its twelve hundred acres, which though united to Heentah, was a distinct township in the old records. Having paid ten thousand rupees as the fine of relief, the chief was girt with the sword, and re-established in his *bapota*, to the great joy of the whole clan.

Heentah is burthened with the service of fourteen horse and fourteen foot; its *rekh*, or nominal value, in the *putta-bukhye*, or 'record of fiefs,' being seven thousand rupees; but, in consideration of the impoverished condition of his estate, the chief was only called on to furnish five horse and eight foot. The present possessor of Heentah is an adoption from the chieftainship of Koon; but, contrary to established usage, he holds both Heentah and Koon, his parent fief, whereby he has a complex character, and conflicting duties to fulfil. As chief of Koon, he belongs to the third class of nobles, styled *gole*, and is subject to constant personal attendance on the Rana; as lord of Heentah, too, he has to furnish a quota to serve "at home or abroad!" Being compelled to appear at court in person, his quota for Heentah was placed under the charge of Maun Sing (another of the Suktawut sub-vassalage), and was sent to the *thana* of little Sadri, on the Malwa frontier, to guard it from the depredations of the forester Bhil. But I was commissioned by the Rana to reprimand the representative of Heentah, and to threaten him with the re-sequestration of the estate, if he did not better



perform the service for which he held it. In consequence of this remonstrance, I became acquainted with a long tale of woe; and Maun Sing's vindication from a failure of duty will introduce a topic worthy of notice connected with the feudal system of Mewar, namely, the subdivision of fiefs.

Maun Sing Suktawut is a younger branch of the Lawah family, and one of the infants who escaped the massacre of Seogurh, when Lalji Rawut and two generations were cut off to avenge the feud with Korabur. In order, however, to understand the claims of Maun Sing, we must go back to the period when Lalji Rawut was lord of Netharra, which, for some offence, or through some court-intrigue, was resumed, and bestowed on one of the rival clan of Chondawut. Being a younger branch of the Bhansi family (one of the senior subdivisions of Bheendir), Lalji was but slenderly provided for in the family allotment (*bhut*). On losing Netharra, he repaired to Dongerpoor, whose Rawul gave him a grant of Seogurh, an almost inaccessible fort on the borders of the two countries. Thus compelled through faction, to seek subsistence out of his native soil, Lalji renounced his loyalty, and with his sons, now *barwadteas* or 'outlaws,' resolved to pray upon Mewar. They now looked to Bheendir, the head of their clan, as their lord, and joined him in opposing their late sovereign in the field, levying black-mail from the estates of their rivals; or, when the influence of the latter sunk at court, and was supplanted by the clan of Suktawut, Lalji poised his lance in the train of his chief in defence of the throne. Thus passed

his life, a chequered course of alternate loyalty and treason, until its tragical close at Seogurh.*

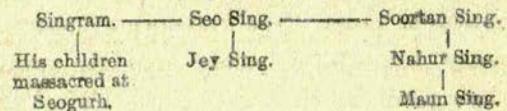
Singram Sing, the eldest son of Lalji,† with his infant nephews, Jey Sing and Nahur (who was absent), escaped the avenger's sword, under which perished his father, mother, both brothers, and all his own children, at one fell swoop! Singram succeeded to the possession of Seogurh, and to the feuds of his family. His nephew, young Nahur, joined in all his enterprises, from the defence of Khyroda to the escalade and capture of the castle of Lawah, in which he maintained himself until the Rana not only pardoned him, but gave him precedence above his enemies in his own councils.

Lawah was wrested by Singram Sing Suktawut from Singram Sing the Dodeah, an ancient tribe, but like many others little known, until the incident we are about to relate gave it a momentary gleam of splendour, and afforded the bard an opportunity to emblazon its fame upon his page. Even in these regions, so full of strange vicissitude, the sudden rise of the Dodeah is a favourite topic of the traditional muse of Mewar.

Chandrabhan was the father of this meteor of the day; his sole wealth consisted of a team of oxen, with which he tilled a few beegas of land at the base of *Nahramugra*, the 'tiger mount,' where the Rana

* See Vol. I. p. 343.

† Lalji's issue :





had a *rumna* or preserve, for the royal sport of tiger-hunting. It was during the autumnal harvest, when the Dodeah had finished his day's work, having put up the last rick of *mukhi* (Indian corn), as he was driving home the companions of his toil, a voice hailed him from the wood. He answered, and advanced to the spot whence it issued, where he found a stranger, evidently of rank, with his horse panting for breath. After inquiring his tribe, and being told "Rajpoot," the stranger begged a little water, which was supplied, along with two coarse cakes of *mukhi*, and a little *chumna-ca-dal*, pulse cooked with *ghee*, or clarified butter, which the honest Dodeah took out of a cloth not over clean. Having performed all the other duties which hospitality requires, the Dodeah made his *salaam*, and was about to depart, when a train of horsemen coming in sight, he paused to look at them. All went up to the stranger; and from the profound respect paid to him, he found that he had entertained no common guest.

It was in fact his sovereign, the Rana Juggut Sing, who delighted in the chase, and having that day been bewildered in the intricacies of Nabra-mugra, had stumbled on the Dodeah carle. The latter expressed neither surprise nor delight when introduced to the Rana, and replied to all his questions with the frankness that grows out of the sentiment of honest pride and independence, which never abandons a Rajpoot, whatever be his condition.* The

* In my days of inexperience, when travelling through countries unknown, and desirous to take the first peasant I found as a guide, I have been amused by his announcing to me, before a question was put "I am a

Rana was so much pleased with his rustic host, that he commanded a led horse to be brought forth, and desired the Dodeah would accompany him to Oodipoor, only ten miles distant. 'The rocket of the moon' (*Chandrabhan*), in his peasant's garb, bestrode the noble charger with as much ease as if it were habitual to him. The next day, the Dodeah was conducted to the Presence, and invested with a dress which had been worn by his sovereign (a distinguished mark of royal favour), accompanied with the more solid reward of the grant of Kowario and its lands in perpetuity.

Chandrabhan and his benefactor died about the same time. Rana Raj had succeeded to the throne of Mewar, and Sirdar Sing, son of Chandrabhan, did personal service for the lands of Kowario. It was a source of daily amusement for the prince and his youthful associates to plunge into the fountain at the *Suhailea-ca-barri*,* a villa about two miles from the capital, on which occasions reserve was banished, and they gave themselves up to unrestrained mirth. The young Dodeah had some peculiarities, which made him a butt for their wit. The following incident will shew the character of these princely pastimes. It was one day remarked, that when refreshing in the *coond*, or reservoir, Sirdar Sing did not lay aside his turban, which provoked a suspicion that he had no hair. The Rana, impatient to get a peep at the bare head of

Rajpoot," as if in anticipation of the demand and a passport to respect; literally, "I am of royal descent;" a reflection which lends an air of dignity to all his actions, and distinguishes him from every other class.

* 'The nymphs' *parterre*; for the *barri* is more a flower-garden than one of indiscriminate cult



the son of Chandrabhan, proposed that they should push each other into the water. The sport began, and the Dodeah's turban falling off, disclosed the sad truth. The jest, however, was not relished by Sirdar; and he tartly replied, in answer to his sovereign's question, "what had become of his hair?" that "he had lost it in *his* service; in a former birth, as *chela*,* by carrying wood upon his head to feed the flame, when his sovereign, as a *jogi*, or ascetic, performed penance (*tapasya*) in the hills of Buddrinath." The prince felt that he had violated decorum; but the reply was pregnant with sarcasm, and his dignity must be maintained. "Sirdar must bring proof of his assertion, or punishment awaits him," was the rejoinder. The young chief, in the same lofty tone, offered the evidence of the *deota* (divinity) of the temple of Kowario. This was a witness whose testimony could not be impugned, and he had leave to bring it forward.

At the village of Gopalpoor, attached to his estate of Kowario, was a temple of the Bagrawuts, a tribe little known, having a shrine of their divinity, who was personified by an image with a tiger's (*bag*) head. "He invoked his support on this occasion, when the *deota* threw him the flower† in his hand, and desired him to carry it to his sovereign." He did so, and the Rana's faith was too great to dispute the miracle. What honours could suffice for the man

* *Chela* is a phrase which includes servitude or domestic slavery: but implies, at the same time, treatment as a child of the family. Here it denotes that of a servant or disciple.

† That sculptured from the stone is meant.

who had performed the most meritorious service to his prince in former transmigrations! *Mang'ask*, was the sign of grace and favour. Singram's request was governed by moderation; it was for Lawah and its lands, which adjoined his estate at Kowario.

The Rana being yet a minor, and the queen-mother at the head of affairs, he hastened to her to be released from the debt of gratitude. But Lawah, unluckily, was held by herself; and although she was not heretic enough to doubt the miraculous tale, she thought the Dodeah might have selected any other land but her's, and testily replied to her son's request, that "he might give him Mewar if he chose." Displeased at this unaccommodating tone, the prince quickly rejoined, "Mewar shall be his then." The word of a prince is sacred; he sent for Singram, and thus addressed him: "I give you Mewar for the space of three days; make the best use of your time; my arsenals, my armouries, my treasury, my stables, my throne and its ministers, are at your command." The temporary Rana availed himself of this large power, and conveyed to his estate whatever he had a mind to. During the abdication, Sirdar held his court, though he had too much tact actually to press the cushion of his master; but seated himself on one side of the vacant throne, attended by all the nobles, fully impressed with the sanctity of the individual who had attained such distinction. On the third day, the queen-mother sent her son the patent for Lawah; and on the fourth, the Dodeah surrendered the sceptre.



With the wealth thus acquired, he erected a castle in his domain of Lawah, on which he expended nine lakhs of rupees, about £100,000. He formed a lake; and a single *baori* or reservoir, in the fort, cost another lakh. He built a splendid palace, whose china and mirror-halls are still the theme of encomium. These were greatly defaced by an explosion of a powder-magazine, which threw down half the fortress that had taken twenty years to complete; and though it underwent considerable repairs, it lost much of its splendour, which the guns of Holcar aided to diminish: but the castle of Lawah is still one of the finest in Mewar. Sirdar Singh had also a grant of one of the royal *mahls* or palaces of Oodipoor, erected on the margin of the lake, after the model of the Jugmunder. Although it now belongs to the chief of Amait, it is only recognized as the *Dodeah-ca-mahl*; but its halls are the dwelling of the bat and the owl; the *burr* has taken root in its light airy porticos, and its walls have every direction but the perpendicular. Sirdar lived twenty years after the erection of Lawah; he died in S. 1838 (A.D. 1782), leaving one son, the heir of his honours and estates. Throughout his long life, he lost no portion of the respect paid to his early years; but with him the name of Dodeah again sunk into obscurity, or lived but as a memento of the instability of fortune. It was this son who, when driven from Lawah by Singram Sing Suktawut, had no place of shelter, and died in indigence and obscurity. His son (grandson of Sirdar, and great grandson of the 'rocket of the moon') is now patronized

by the heir-apparent, Prince Jowan Sing, and receives a daily allowance, but has not a foot of land.

Singram, the Suktawut, had a regular *sunnud* for the fief of Lawah, which was rated at twenty-three thousand rupees of annual rent, while Kowario has reverted to the fisc. The lake of Lawah, which irrigates some thousand acres of rice-land, alone renders it one of the most desirable of the secondary estates of Mewar. Singram's children being all murdered in the feud of Seogurh, he was succeeded by Jey Sing (son of Seo Sing, his second brother), who was received as *khola*, or son of adoption, by all the retainers of Lawah. While Singram Sing lived, no subdivision of allotments took place; all, to use the words of Maun Sing, "ate out of one dish:" and his own father Nahur, who had aided in the enterprise, having by a similar *coup de main* secured the estate of Bunwull for himself, no necessity for such partition existed. But Bunwull belonging to the fisc, to which it reverted on the restoration of order in A.D. 1818, young Maun had no alternative but to turn round on Jey Sing, the adopted heir of Singram, and demand his *bhut*, or share of the lands of Lawah, in virtue of the right of joint acquisition, and as a younger brother. Jey Sing refused: but custom prevailed, and the village of Jaetpoorah, of fifteen hundred rupees' annual revenue, was bestowed upon the son of Nahur Sing. So long as Maun Sing performed his duties to his chief, his share of Lawah was irresumeable and inalienable: hence the stubborn tenacity of the chiefs of their share in the patrimonial acres, even when



holding largely, but separately, of the crown, since of the latter, caprice or intrigue may deprive them; but their own misconduct alone can forfeit their *bapota*. The simple deed of conveyance will better establish his point :

“Maharao Sri Jey Sing, plighting his faith (*buchunaeto*).

“At this time, Brother Maun Sing, I bestow upon thee, of my own free will, the village and the lands of Jaetpoorah. This donative shall not look to *rankroos*: *su-poot*, *ca-poot*:* your issue shall enjoy them. Of this intention I call the four-armed divinity (*Chatoorbhoj*) as witness. You are my own child (*chooroo*): wherever and whenever I order, you will do my service: if you fail, the fault be on your own head.”

Whether Maun Sing failed in his duty to his superior, or otherwise, Jaetpoorah was resumed; and having in vain endeavoured to obtain justice through the ministers, he came to me to solicit attention to his case. With the resumption of Khyroda, his brother, the chief of Lawah, lost half his nominal income; and it may therefore be conjectured he would not be slow to listen to any charge against Maun, by which he might get back his allotment. On my departure for Marwar, in August 1820, he had written to me to say that Jey Sing had summoned him to evacuate Jaetpoorah. In my reply, I said, it was a matter for the Rana alone to decide. He accordingly went to court, and failing there, followed me; but, as at my desire he had been appointed to head

* *Rankroos* is a phrase embracing mental or physical infirmity; here strengthened by the words which follow. *Su-poot* means ‘worthy,’ or ‘good issue’ (*putra*), as *ca-poot*, the reverse, ‘bad or incompetent issue.’

the quotas on the Sadri frontier, and had performed this duty very negligently, I received him coolly: this, however, only gave additional eagerness to his defence, as he assigned strong personal reasons for the neglect. But the son of ‘the tiger’ (Nabur Sing) shall speak for himself. Let the reader imagine a young man of twenty-five, above six feet high, of an athletic figure and chivalrous demeanour, his expression at once modest and independent, with those indispensable appendages to a Rajpoot warrior’s visage, well-trimmed *favoris* and *moustache*, and armed at all points: such was the lord-marcher (*Seem iswar*), Maun Sing. Having presented his patent for my perusal, he continued: “had I failed in my obligations to my brother, he would have been justified in this step: but since you took Bunwull from me, my retainers, at his beck, equalled his own in numbers; what right therefore had he to resume Jaetpoorah? When Singram Sing died, Lawah was in my hands: who could have prevented my keeping it, had it been my pleasure? The son of Nabur Sing would have been preferred by the vassals of Singram to one they had never even seen; but I respected his rights, though even now he could not forcibly dispossess me. When the Thakoor of Amait, on his way to court, beat his drums on the bounds of Lawah, did I not assemble my retainers and avenge the insult to my chief? My head was Jey Sing’s,—that is, with the *kangras* (battlements) of Lawah: but he never could have dared to take Jaetpoorah, had not respect for the chief of Lawah, respect for the Rana, and for you, made me passive. Only bid me re-



take it, and I am not the son of Nahur Sing if he keeps it a day. Its little castle, erected by these hands, sheltered my wife and children, who, now expelled from my patrimony, are compelled to seek refuge elsewhere. The lands assigned me in lieu of Bunwull are waste. For every rupee I can hope to derive from them, I must expend one; and on Jaetpoorah alone could I rise any funds. Reckoning on this, I paid my fine of two thousand five hundred rupees for my *putta* (grant), and from its produce I looked to maintain my family and followers until the first should be made productive. When I lost this support, my creditors assailed me: to satisfy them, I sold all I had of value, even to my wife's jewels, and the horse you saw me ride when I came to meet you at Gangapoor. I laid my case before *Pirthinath*, and here is his reply, deciding in my favor. I represented it through Jawandas (a natural brother of the Rana), and five hundred rupees were demanded and agreed to by me, provided *buchun* (security) was given me of success. The Bikaneri-ji's* was given; but the purse of the Thakoor of Jaetpoorah is not so long as the chieftain of Lawah's, and one thousand rupees, offered by him, made his the juster cause! It is this that makes me negligent of my duty; this which incited the Pathans to carry off my little harvest from Salairoh; and Bhairawij† is still in the hands of the foresters. Here is my case: if I demand aught that is not just, or that is contrary to usage, deal with me as you please. There is Futteh Sing, who, holds in separate grant from the

Rana an estate of thirty thousand rupees; but as a younger brother of Bheendir, he enjoys five thousand from his brother: and Ajeit Sing of Ahsind, though richer than his immediate head of Korabur, yet as the son of Arjoon Sing, holds his allotment (*bhut*) from him: but you know all this, why should I repeat it?" Here the Thakoor concluded, without any interruption being given to his animated harangue, the interest of which was enhanced by his natural eloquence, and his manly but modest deportment. He is a noble specimen, not of his tribe alone, but of the human character. His appeal was irresistible; and would almost have carried conviction of its justice, even to those who could not have understood his tongue. Still it was requisite to steel myself against impulses; and I recommended, as the best mode of enabling me to advocate his cause, that he should repair to his post, and establish fresh claims to his sovereign's regard, by punishing an atrocious act which in all probability his absence had occasioned. With the gift of a brace of pistols, and the usual leave-taking hint of *utr-pan*, Maun Sing quitted my tent.

And now for the melancholy occurrence which preceded that of the young Sukta-wut. On the borders of Little Sadri, where the quotas are posted, is a mountainous tract covered with deep forest, the abode of the half-savage Meenas and Bhils. Mixed with them are the estates of some vassal chiefs, whose duty it is to repress their excesses; but, in such times as we have described, they more frequently instigated them to plunder, receiving a share of the spoils. Amongst the foremost in this asso-

* One of the queens, a princess of Bikaner.

† The two villages he obtained in lieu of Bunwull.

ciation was the steward of Kalakote. At the foot of a pass leading into the wilds of Chuppun was the hamlet of Beeloe, occupied by a Rahtore Rajpoot, who had snatched from the mountain-side a few beegas of land, and dug some wells to irrigate the arable patches about his cot. With severe toil he raised a subsistence for himself, his wife, and an only son, who was to inherit this patrimony. Returning homewards one day, after his usual labour, we was met by his wailing help-mate ; she said the savage Bhil had rifled his cot, and with the cattle carried off their prop, their only child, and at the same time a young Jogi, his playmate. The afflicted father spake not a word, but loading his matchlock, took the road to Kalakote. What was his horror when at the entrance of the village, he stumbled over the headless bodies of his boy and his young companion ! He learned that the savages belonging to the lordship of Kalakote ; that having conveyed the children from their home upon the cattle they had stolen, they were entering the place, when the young Rahtore, recognizing the steward, called out, " Save me uncle and my father will ransom me at your own price ! " This was the object for which he had been abducted ; but these words proved that the steward was known to be the author of the outrage, and they were the last the child spoke. With this intelligence, the wretched father entered the 'black-castle' (Kalakote), in the quest of the steward. He denied all participation in the abduction or the murder ; and commiserating the Rahtore's misfortune, offered him four times the number of cattle he had lost,

twice the amount of all his other losses, and to pay double the sum of *nirkhea*, or money expended in the search. " Can you give me back my son ? " was the only reply : " I want justice and vengeance, not money. I could have taken it in part," continued he ; " for what is life now ? but let it fall on all."

No attempt at consolation could diminish the father's grief ; but in promising him my aid to realize his vengeance, I gave him hope to cling to ; and on handing him over to Maun Sing, saying his own suit would be best promoted by the imprisonment of all concerned in this outrage, he quitted me with some mitigation of his grief. But before he left my camp, tidings arrived that the chief culprit was beyond the reach of man ; that the Great Avenger had summoned to his own tribunal the iniquitous steward of Kalakote ! Even in these regions of rapine, where the blood of man and of goats is held in almost equal estimation, there was something in the wild grief of the Rahtore that sunk into the hearts of the vassals of Kalakote ; they upbraided the steward, and urged him to confess the share he had in the deed. But he swore ' by his God ' he had none, and offered to ratify the oath of purgation in his temple. Nothing less would satisfy them, and they proceeded to the ordeal. The temple was but a few hundred years distant. The steward mounted his horse, and had just reached the shrine, when he dropped dead at the threshold ! It caused a deep sensation ; and to the vengeance of an offended divinity was ascribed this signal expiation of the triple crime of theft, murder, and sacrilege. There



now only remain the base accomplices of the wretch who thus trafficked with the liberty of his fellow-men; and I should rejoice to see them suspended on the sum-

mit of the Beeleo pass, as a satisfaction to the now childless Rahtore, and a warning to others who yet follow such a course.

CHAPTER III.

Morwun.—The solitude of this fine district.—Caused by the Mahrattas and their mercenaries.—Impolicy of our conduct towards the Mahrattas.—Antiquities of Morwun.—Tradition of the foundation and destruction of the ancient city.—Inscriptions.—Jain temple.—Game.—Attack by a tiger.—Sudden change of the weather.—Destructive frost.—Legend of a temple of Mama deva.—Important inscription.—Distress of the peasantry.—Gratitude of the people to the author.—Nekoomp.—Oppression of the peasants.—Murlah.—Inhabited by Charuns.—Reception of the author.—Curious privilege of the Charunis.—Its origin.—Traditional account of the settlement of this colony in Mewar.—Imprecation of satis.—The tandas, or caravans.—Their immunity from plunder and extortion.—Neembaira.—Ranikhaira.—Indignity committed by a scavenger of Laisrawun.—Sentence upon the culprit.—Tablet to a Silpi.—Reception at Neembaira.

Morwun, February 1st.—YESTERDAY, Maun Sing took up the whole of my time with the feuds of Lawah and their consequences. It obliged me to halt, in order to make inquires into the alienated lands in its vicinity. Morwun is, or rather was, a township of some consequence, and head of a *tuppa* or subdivision of a district. It is rated, with its contiguous hamlets, at seven thousand rupees annual rent. The situa-

tion is beautiful, upon heights pleasingly diversified, with a fine lake to the westward, whose margin is studded with majestic tamarind trees. The soil is rich, and there is water in great abundance within twenty-five feet of the surface; but man is wanting! The desolation of solitude reigns throughout, for (as Rousseau observes) there is none to whom one can turn and say, *que la solitude est belle!*

I experienced another pang at seeing this fertile district revert to the destroyer, the savage Pathan, who had caused the desolation, and in the brief but expressive words of a Roman author, *solitudinem facit, pacem appellat*. Morwun is included in the lands *mortgaged* for a war-contribution, but which with others has remained in the lands of the Mahratta mortgagees or their mercenary subordinates. But it is melancholy to reflect that, but for a false magnanimity towards our insidious, natural enemies, the Mahrattas, all these lands would have reverted to their legitimate masters, who are equally interested with ourselves in putting down predatory warfare. Justice, good policy, and, humanity, would have been better consulted had the Mahrattas been wholly banished from Central India. When I contrasted this scene with the traces of incipient prosperity I had left behind me, I felt a satisfaction that the alienated acres produced nothing to the possessor, save luxuriant grass, and the leafless *kesoola* or *plas*.

Morwun has some claims to antiquity ; it derives its appellation from the Mori tribe, who ruled here before they obtained Cheetore. The ruins of a fort, still known by the name of Chitrung Mori's castle, are pointed out as his residence ere he founded Cheetore, or more properly Cheetore. The tradition runs thus : Chitrung, a subordinate of the imperial house of Dhar, held Morwun and the adjacent tract, in appanage. One of his subjects, while ploughing, struck the share against some hard substance, and on examination found it was transmuted to gold. This was the

parisputtur,* or 'philosopher's stone,' and he carried it forthwith to his lord, with whose aid he erected the castle, and enlarged the town of Morwun, and ultimately founded Cheetore. The *dhoolkote*, or site of Mori-ca-puttun, is yet pointed out, to the westward of the present Morwun. It was miraculously destroyed through the impieties of its inhabitants by fire, which fate recalls a more celebrated catastrophe ; but the act of impiety in the present case was merely seizing a *rishi*, or 'hermit,' while performing penance in the forest, and compelling him to carry radishes to market ! The tradition, however, is of some value ; it proves, first, that there were radishes in those days ; and secondly, that volcanic eruptions occurred in this region. Oojein-Ahar, in the valley of Odipoor, and the lake of which is said in some place to be *atac*, 'deeper than plummet sounded,' is another proof of some grand commotion of nature. Morwan boats of three *mindras*, or temples, one of which is dedicated to *Shes-nag*, the thousand-headed hydra which supports the globe. Formerly, saffron was the meet offering to this king of reptiles ; but he was now obliged to be content with ointment of sandal, produced from the evergreen, which is indigenous to Mewar.

Having heard of an inscription at the township of Unair, five miles distant, to the south-west, I requested my old *guru* to take a ride and copy it. It was of modern date, merely confirming the land of Unair to the Brahmins. The tablet is in the temple of *Chatoorbhoja* (the four-armed divinity),

* In the Sanscrit *puttur*, 'stone, rock,' we have nearly the *petros* of the Greeks.



built and endowed by Rana Singram Sing in S. 1570 (A. D. 1514); to whose pious testament a codicil is added by Rana Juggut Sing, S. 1791, imprecating an anathema on the violator of it. There was also engraved upon one of the columns a voluntary gift, from the village-council of Unair to the divinity, of the first-fruits of each harvest; viz. two and a-half seers from each *kulla*, or heap, of the spring-crops, and the same of the autumnal. The date, S. 1845 (A. D. 1789), shews that it was intended to propitiate the deity during the wars of Mewar.

Directly opposite, and very near the shrine of the 'four-armed,' is a small Jain temple, erected, in S. 1774, to cover an image of the great pontiff, Parswanath, found in digging near this spot. Here at every step are relics of past ages.

February 2.—An accident has compelled another halt at Morwun. The morning was clear and frosty, not a cloud in the sky, and we rose with the sun; my kinsman, Captain Waugh, to try his Arab at a *nilgae*, and myself to bag a few of the large rock-pigeons which are numerous about Morwun. My friend, after a hard run, had drawn blood from the elk, and was on the point of spearing him effectually just as he attained a thick part of the jungle, which not heeding, horse and rider came in contact with a tree, and were dashed with violence to the ground. There he lay insensible, and was brought home upon a *charpae*, or cot, by the villagers, much bruised, but fortunately with no broken bones. A leech was not to be had in any of the adjacent villages; and the patient complain-

ing chiefly of the hip-bone, we could only apply emollients and recommend repose. I returned with no game except one or two black-partridges and batten-quail. The rock-pigeon, or *bur-teetur*, though unaccustomed to the fowler, were too wild for me to get a shot at them. The bird bears no analogy to the pigeon, but has all the rich game plumage of the *teetur*, or partridge, in which name the ornithologist of the west will see the origin of *tetrao*. There are two species of this bird in India, one much smaller than the common partridge; that of which I speak is much larger, and with the peculiarity of being feathered to the toe. I have since discovered it to be the counterpart of a bird in the museum at Chambery, called '*barteveldt des Alpes*;' the ptarmigan of the highlands of Scotland. The male has exactly those redundant white feathers; while that I saw in Savoy was a richly-plumaged female *bur-teetur*.

Our annual supply of good things having reached us this morning, we were enjoying a bottle of some delicious Burgundy and 'La Rose' after dinner, when we were roused by violent screams in the direction of the village. We were all up in an instant, and several men directed to the spot. Our speculations on the cause were soon set at rest by the appearance of two *hircaras* (messengers), and a lad with a vessel of milk on his head. For this daily supply they had gone several miles, and had nearly reached the camp, when having outwalked the boy, they were alarmed by his vociferations, "oh uncle, let go—let go—I am your child, uncle, let me go!" They thought the boy mad, and it being very dark, cursed



his uncle, and desired him to make haste ; but the same wild exclamations continuing, they ran back, and found a huge tiger hanging to his tattered cold-weather doublet. The *hircarras* attacked the beast most manfully with their javelin-headed sticks, and adding their screams to his, soon brought the whole village men, and children, armed with all sorts of missiles, to the rescue ; and it was their discordant yells that made us exchange our good fare for the jungles of Morwun.

The 'lord of the black rock,' for such is the designation of the tiger, was one of the most ancient *bourgeois* of Morwun ; his freehold is Kala-pahar, between this and Mugurwar, and his reign for a long series of years has been unmolested, notwithstanding his numerous acts of aggression on his bovine subjects : indeed, only two nights before, he was disturbed gorging on a buffalo belonging to a poor oilman of Morwun. Whether this tiger was an incarnation of one of the Morilords of Morwun, tradition does not say ; but neither gun, bow, nor spear, had ever been raised against him. In return of this forbearance, it is said he never preyed upon man, or if he seized one, would, upon being entreated with the endearing epithet of *mamoo* or uncle, let go his hold ; and this accounted for the little ragged urchin using a phrase which almost prevented the *hircarras* returning to his rescue.

February 3d.—Another halt for our patient, who is doing well, and greatly relieved by the application of leeches obtained from Neembaira. What a might ! the clouds which had been alternately collect-

ing and dispersing ever since we left Marwar, in December last, but had almost disappeared as we commenced our present march, again suddenly gathered. The thermometer, which had averaged 41° at daybreak throughout the last month, this morning rose to 60°. On the 1st, the wind changed to the south, with showers, where it continued throughout yesterday ; but during the night it suddenly veered to the north, and the thermometer at baybreak was 28°, or four degrees below the freezing point. Reader, do you envy me my *bon vin de Bourgogne et Murailles de coton*, with not even a wood fire, labouring under a severe pulmonary affection, with work enough for five men ? Only three days ago, the thermometer was 86° at noon, and to-day it is less at noon than yesterday at daybreak : even old England, with all her vicissitudes of weather, can scarcely show so rapid a change as this.

Ill-fated Mewar ! all our hopes are blasted ; this second visitation has frustrated all our labours. The frost of December, which sunk the mercury to 27° as we passed over the plains of Marwar, was felt throughout Rajwarra, and blighted every pod of cotton. All was "burnt up ;" but our poor exiles comforted themselves, amidst the general sorrow, with the recollection that the young *gram* was safe. But even this last hope has now vanished : all is nipped in the bud. Had it occurred a month ago, the young plant would have been headed down with the stickle, and additional blossoms would have appeared. I was too unwell to ride out and see the ravages, caused by this frost.



February 4th.—Our patient is doing so well, that we look to moving to-morrow. Thermometer 28° at daybreak, and 31° at sun rise, with a keen cutting wind from the north. Ice closed the orifice of the *meshek*, or leathern water-bag. Even the shallow stream near the tents had a pellicle of ice on its surface: our people huddling and shivering round their fires of *bajra* sticks, and the cattle of all classes looking very melancholy.

My *Yati* friend returned from Palode, where I had sent him to copy an inscription in a temple dedicated to *Mama-deva*, the mother of the gods; but he was disappointed, and brought back only the following traditional legend. The shrine, erected by a wealthy Jain disciple, was destined to receive the image of one of their pontiffs; but on its completion, *Mama-deva* appeared *in propria persona* to the founder, and expressed so strongly her desire to inhabit it, that, heretic as he was, he could not deny the goddess' suit. He stoutly refused, however, to violate the rules of his order: "by my hands the blood neither of goats or buffaloes can be shed," said the Jain. But, grateful for the permission that a niche should be set apart for her *suroop* (form), she told him to go to the Sonigurra chief of Chectore, who would attend to the rites of sacrifice. The good Jain, with easy faith, did as he was commanded, and erecting another temple, succeeded at length in enshrining Parswanath. My old friend, however, discovered in a temple to *Mataji*, 'the universal mother,' an inscription of great importance, as it fixes the period of one of the most conspicuous kings of the

Solanki dynasty of Nehrvalla, or correctly, Anhulwarra Puttun; and, in conjunction with another of the same prince (which I afterwards discovered in Chectore), also bearing the very same date,* demonstrates that the Solanki had actually made a conquest of the capital of the Gehlotes. The purport is simply that "Komarpal Solanki and his son Sohunpal, in the month of Pos (the precise day illegible), S. 1207 (winter of A.D. 1151), came to worship the Universal Mother in her shrine at Palode."† The Seesodias try to get rid of this difficulty by saying, that during the banishment of Komarpal by Sidraj, he not only enjoyed *sirna* (refuge) at Chectore, but held the post of prime minister to Rawul Samarsi, the friend and brother-in-law of the Chohan emperor of Delhi; but the inscription (given in the first volume), which I found in the temple built by Lakha Rana, is written in the style of a conqueror, "who planted his standard even in Salpoor," the city of the Getes in the Punjab. At all events, it is one more *datum* in the history of Rajpootana.

February 5th, thermometer 30°.—Mounted *Bajraj*, 'the royal steed,' and took a ride over the height of Morwun, a wild yet fairy scene, with the Pathar or table-land bounding the perspective to the east. The downs are covered with the most luxuriant grasses, and the *dhak* or *plas* dried by the wintry blast, as if scorched by the lightning, faintly brought to mind the poet's

* See inscription, Vol. I. p. 636.

† The style of this inscription is perfectly in unison with the inscriptions on the temples and statues of Egypt.



simile, applied to this tree, even in the midst of spring: "the black leafless *kesoola*." We entered a village in ruins, whose neem trees bid defiance to winter; the 'thorny babool, (*mimosa Arabica*) grows luxuriantly out of the inner sides of the walls, and no hands invade the airy nest of the imitative *papya*, fantastically pendant from the slenderest branches. No trace of the presence of man: but evidence that he has been here. The ground was covered with hoar-frost, and the little stream coated with ice. Many a heavy heart has it caused, and plunged joyous industry into utter despondence. Take one example: younder Jat, sitting by the side of his field, which he eyes in despair; three months since, he returned, after many years of exile, to the *bapota*, the land of his sires, without funds, without food, or even the implements for obtaining it. He had been labouring as a serf in other lands, but he heard of peace in his own, and came back to the paternal acres, which had been a stranger to the ploughshare since he was driven from his cot in S. 1844, immediately following the battle of Hurkea-Khal, when the 'Southron' compelled the bondage of Mewar. What could he do? his well was dried up, and if not, he had no cattle to irrigate a field of wheat or barley. But Mewar is a kind mother, and she yields her *chunna* crop without water. To the *bohora* (the *metayer*) he promised one-fifth of the produce for the necessary seed and the use of a pair of oxen and a plough; one-fifth more was the share of the state from land so long sterile; there was three-fifth left for himself of his long neglected but at once

luxuriant fields. He watched the crop with paternal solicitude, from the first appearance of verdure to the approach of *bussunt*, the joyous spring. Each night, as he returned to his yet roofless abode, he related the wonders of his field and its rapid vegetation; and as he calculated the produce, he anticipated its application; "so much shall go for a plough, so much for the *bohora*, so much in part payment of a pair of bullocks, and the rest will keep me in bread till the *mukhi* crop is ready." Thus the days passed, until this killing frost nipped his hopes in the bud, and now see him wringing his hands in the bitterest anguish! This is no ideal picture: it is one to be found in every village of Mewar. In this favoured soil, there is as much of *chunna* in the *rubee* harvest as of wheat and barley conjoined, and in the first crop sown in *bunjur*, or soil long sterile, wheat and *chunna* are sown together. It is a sad blow to the exiles; though happily in the crown-lands their distress will be mitigated, as these are rented on leases of five years, and the renters for their own sakes must be diligent, and moreover they are well watched.

January 6th.—Still halting; our patient very well, though he feels his bruises: but we shall put him on an elephant to-morrow. The jealousy of the Mahratta had hitherto prevented the inhabitants from fulfilling their desire to come and visit me; but to-day, the elders forming the *punchaet*, heading the procession, they came *en masse*. The authorities need not have feared exposing the nakedness of the land, which is too visible; but they apprehended the contrast of their condition with



our poor subjects, who were at least unmo-
lestated in their poverty. It was a happiness
to learn that this contrast was felt, and
as the Patel presented to me an engaging
little child, his daughter, he said, "let
not our misfortunes be our faults; we all
belong to Mewar, though we are not so
happy as to enjoy your protection and care."
I assured him, that although under the
Toork, should took upon them as my child-
ren, and the subjects of the Rana; and I
have had in my power to redeem this
pledge—for, strange to say, even Ameer
Khan, seeing that the prosperity of the
subject is that of the prince, has commanded
his governor of Neembaira to consult me in
every thing, and has even gone so far as
to beg I would consider the place as under
my authority. Already, following our ex-
ample, he has reduced the transit duties
nearly one-half, and begins to think the
Fringi notions of economy better than his
own, his loss having proved a gain.

Nekoomp January 7: eleven miles.—Mid-
way, passed through Chakoora, a village
belonging to Meer Khan. Nekoomp is a
talook of Jawud, which with Mundipea was
held by the Pindarri freebooter, Fazil, while
Jeswant Row Bhao held them in *ijaedad*.
They are now leased to a Pundit by the
Hakim of Jawud, which latter is assigned by
Sindia to his father-in-law, the Senapati.
Nekoomp is a good village, but more than
two-thirds depopulated, and the renter is
prevented from being lenient, as he experi-
ences no mercy himself. Notwithstanding
they have all been suffering as we have
from this frost, an assessment is now levy-
ing. One poor fellow said to me, "I re-

turned only three months ago from exile,
and I had raised the mud-walls of my hut
two feet, when my wife died, leaving me to
take care of a boy eight years of age, and
to get bread for both. If the walls were
two feet higher I would cover it in; but
though I have not a foot of land, my roof-
less half-finished cot is assessed a rupee and
a half:" a gift of two rupees made him
happier than his Hakim.

The country is beautiful, the soil rich,
and water, as already mentioned, about
twenty-five feet from the surface. We are
now in the region of the flower sacred to
"gloomy Dis," the accursed poppy. The
crop looks miserable from the frost, but
those patches within the influence of the
wells are partly saved by the fields being
inundated, which expedient is always suc-
cessful upon such visitations, if applied
with judgment. The mountains touching
great Sadri lay twelve miles south coming
from Pertabgurh, and ranging to Saloombra
and Oodipoor, where they commingle with
the giant Aravalli.

Murlah, January 8th: seven miles.—
Crossed two ridges running northward to
Bhadaisir. The intervening valleys, as usual,
fertile, with numerous villages, but alienated
to the southern Goths or the partizan Pa-
than. Passed many large townships, for-
merly in the fisc of Mewar, as Baree, Bino-
tah, Bumboree, &c. In the distance, saw
"the umbrella of the earth," the far-famed
Cheetore. Murlah is an excellent township,
inhabited by a community of Charuns, of
the tribe Cucholeah, who are Bunjarris
(carriers) by profession, though poets by
birth. The alliance is a curious one, and

would appear incongruous, were not gain the object generally in both cases. It was the sanctity of their office which converted our *barādis* into *bunjarris*, for their persons being sacred, the immunity extended likewise to their goods, and saved them from all imposts ; so that in process of time they became the free-traders of Rajpootana. I was highly gratified with the reception I received from the community, which collectively advanced to me at some distance from the town. The procession was headed by the village-band, and all the fair Charunis, who, as they approached, gracefully waved their scarfs over me, until I was fairly made captive by the *muses* of Murlah ! It was a novel and interesting scene : the manly persons of the Charuns, clad in the flowing white robe, with the high loose folded turban inclined on one side, from which the *mala*, or chaplet, was gracefully suspended ; the *naiques*, or leaders, with their massive necklaces of gold, with the image of the *pitriswar* (manes) depending therefrom, gave the whole an air of opulence and dignity. The females were uniformly attired in a skirt of dark brown camlet, having a bodice of light-coloured stuff, with gold ornaments worked into their fine black hair ; and all had the favourite *chooris*, or rings of *hati-dant* (elephant's tooth), covering the arm, from the wrist to the elbow, and even above it. Never was there a noble subject for the painter in any age or country ; it was one which Salvator Rosa would have seized, full of picturesque contrasts : the rich dark tints of the female attire harmonizing with the white garments of their husband ; but it

was the *mien*, the expression, the gestures, denoting that though they paid homage they expected a full measure in return. And they had it : for if ever there was a group which bespoke respect for the natural dignity of man and his consort, it was the Charun community of Murlah.

It was not until the afternoon, which the *naiques* again came to see me at my camp, that I learned the full value of my escape from the silken bonds of the fair Charunis. This community had enjoyed for five hundred years the privilege of making prisoner any Rana of Mewar who may pass through Murlah, and keeping him in bondage until he gives them a *gote*, or entertainment : and their chains are neither galling, nor the period of captivity, being thus in the hands of the *captivated*, very long. The patriarch told me that I was in jeopardy, as the Rana's representative ; but not knowing how I might have relished the joke, had it been carried to its conclusion, they let me escape, though they lost a feast by it. But I told them I was too much delighted with old customs not to keep up this ; and immediately sent money to the ladies with my respect, and a request that they would hold their *gote* (feast). The patriarch and his subordinate *naiques* and their sons remained with me to discourse on the olden time.

The founders of this little colony accompanied Rana Hamir from Guzerat in the early part of his reign, and although five centuries have elapsed, they have not parted with one iota of their nationality or their privileges since that period : neither in person, manners, or dress, have they any



thing analogous to those amidst whom they dwell. Indeed, their air is altogether foreign to India, and although they have attained a place, and that a high one, amongst the tribes of Hind, their affinity to the ancient Persian is striking; the loose robe, high turban, and flowing beard, being more akin to the figures on the temples of the Guebres than to any thing appertaining to the *Charburrin*, or four classes of the Hindus. But I must give the tale accounting for their settlement in Mewar. Rana Hamir, so celebrated in the history of Mewar, had a leprous spot on his hand, to remove which he made a pilgrimage to the shrine of Hinglaz, upon the coast of Mekran, the division *Orite* of Arrain's geography. He had reached the frontiers of Cutch Bhooj, when alighting near a *tanda*, or encampment of Charuns, a young damsel abandoned the meal she was preparing, and stepped forward to hold the stranger's steed. Thanking her for her courtesy, he jocosely observed that he wished his people had as good a breakfast as she was preparing, when she immediately made an offering of the contents of the vessel; on which Hamir observed, it would go but a short way to satisfy so many hungry mouths. "Not if it pleased Hinglaz-ji," she promptly replied; and placing the food before the Rana and his train, it sufficed for all their wants. A little well, which she excavated in the sand, was soon filled with a copious supply of water, which served to quench their thirst. It was an evident interposition of the goddess of Hinglaz in favour of this her royal votary. He returned from her shrine cured, and the young Charuni's family were induced to

accompany him to Mewar, where he bestowed upon them the lands of Murlah, with especial immunities in their mercantile capacity: and as a perpetual remembrance of the miraculous feast, permission was granted to the Charuni damsels to make captive of their sovereign as related above.

The colony, which now consists of some thousands of both sexes, presented an enigma to your young Englishmen, who think "all black fellows alike," and equally beneath notice: it was remarked how comfortable they looked in house and person, though there was not a vestige of cultivation around their habitations. The military policy of the troubled period accounts for the first; and a visit to the altars of Murlah will furnish the cause of the neglect of the agrarian laws of Mewar. As the community increased in numbers, the subdivision of the lands continued, according to the customs of Cutch, until a dispute regarding limits produced a civil war. A ferocious combat ensued, when the wives of the combatants who were slain ascended the funeral pile; and to prevent a similar catastrophe, imprecated a curse on whomsoever from that day should cultivate a field in Murlah; since which the land has lain in absolute sterility! Such is the implicit reverence for the injunction of a *sati*, at this moment of awful inspiration, when about to make leave of the world. In Mewar, the most solemn of all oaths is that of the *sati*. *Maha satian-ca-an*, 'by the great *satis*,' is an adjuration frequently used in the royal patents.

The *tanda* or caravan, consisting of four thousand bullocks, has been kept up amidst



all the evils which have beset this land, through Mogul and Mahratta tyranny. The utility of these caravans, as general carriers to conflicting armies, and as regular tax-paying subjects, has proved their safe-guard, and they were too strong to be pillaged by any petty marauder, as any one who has seen a Bunjarri encampment will be convinced. They encamp in a square; their grain-bags piled over each other breast-high, with interstices left for their matchlocks, make no contemptible fortification. Even the ruthless Toork, Jemshid Khan, set up a protecting table in favour of the Charuns of Murlah, recording their exemption from *dind* contributions, and that there should be no increase in duties, with threats to all who should injure the community. As usual, the sun and moon are appealed to as witnesses of good faith, and sculptured on the stone. Even the forester Bhil and mountain Mair have set up their signs of immunity and protection to the chosen of Hinglaz; and the figures of a cow and its *kairie* (calf), carved in rude relief, speak the agreement that they should not be slain or stolen within the limits of Murlah.

Neembaira: seven miles.—The soil, as usual, excellent; but from Ranikhaira to Neembaira the blue schist at intervals penetrates the surface, and there is but little superincumbent soil even to the bed of the stream, which makes an entire disclosure of the rock, over which flows a clear rivulet abounding with small fish, amongst which the speckled trout were visible. Ranikhaira, through which we passed, is the largest township of this district, and was

built by the Rani of Ursi Rana, mother of the present ruler of Mewar, at whose expense the temple, the *bawari* or 'reservoir,' and the paved street, were constructed. Although in the alienated territory, I had a vizit from its elders to complain of an indignity to the community by the *bungi*, or scavenger, of *Laisrawun*, who had killed a hog and thrown it into the reservoir, whose polluted waters being thus rendered unfit for use, the inhabitants were compelled to get a purer element from the adjacent villages. This *bawari* is about half a mile from the town, and being upon the high-way, the council and train very wisely stopped at the spot where the aggression had happened: and although the cavalcade of the Hakim of Neembaira was in sight, advancing to welcome me, it was impossible to proceed until I heard the whole grievance, when adjured by "subjects of Mewar, and children of the Rana, though unhappily under the Toork," to see their wrongs redressed. I might not have recorded this incident, but for its consequence; as the hog thrown into the reservoir of *Baeji-Raj*, 'the royal mother' of Mewar, affords an instance of the extent to which mortgage is carried.

The *Bulingis*, or scavengers, of Ranikhaira, the very refuse of mankind, had mortgaged their rights in the *dead carcasses* of their town to a professional brother of *Laisrawun*; but, on the return of these halcyon days, they swerved from their bond. The chieftain of *Laisrawun* espoused his vassal's cause, and probably pointed out the mode of revenge. One morning, therefore, not having the fear of Jemshid of Neembaira before his eyes, the said motga-



gee slew his pig ; and, albeit but the wreck of a human being, contrived to cast his victim into the pure fountain of 'Queens-town,' and immediately fled for *sirra* to Bheendir. But what could be done to a wretch, who for former misdeeds had already suffered the dismemberment of an arm, a leg, and his nose ? Here is the sentence ! "To be paraded, mounted on an ass, his face blackened, with a chaplet of shoes round his neck, and drummed out of the limits of Ranikhaira !" The fountain is now undergoing purification ; and when the polluted waters are baled out, it is to be lustrated with the holy stream of the Ganges, and the ceremony will conclude with a *gote*, or feast, to one hundred Brahmins. Previous to this, I took a peep at the humble altars of Ranikhaira. All is modern ; but there is one tablet which pleasingly demonstrates that both public feeling and public gratitude exist in these regions. This tablet, set up by the council of the town, recorded that Kistna, the '*silpi*' or stone-cutter, did at his own expense and labour repair all the altars then going to decay ; for which pious act they guaranteed to him and his successors for ever six *thalis* or platters of various viands, saffron, oil, butter, and several pieces of money, at every village *fete*. Doubtless such traits are not confined to Ranikhaira. I accepted with kindness the offerings of the elders and assembled groupes—a pot of curds and sundry blessings—and continued my journey to meet the impatient cavaliers of Neembaira, who, to fill up the interlude, were *karowling*, with matchlock and spear, their well-caparisoned charges. The Khan was in the centre of

the groupe, and we had a friendly, unceremonious *dustabazee*, or shaking of hands, without dismounting. He is a gentlemanly Pathan, of middle age, courteous and affable, and a very different personage from the *two-handed* Jemshid his predecessor, who lately died from a cancer in his back : a judgment, if we are to credit our Mewar friends, for his horrible cruelties and oppressions over all these regions, as lieutenant of Ameer Khan during many years. The Khan welcomed me to Neembaira with true Oriental *politesse* saying, "that the place was mine ;" and that he had received the "positive instructions of the Nawab Sahib (Ameer-Khan, whose son-in-law he is) to look upon me as himself." I replied, that, in accepting such a trust, I could not say more than that I would, whenever occasion presented itself, act for him" as if Neembaira were really my own. The Khan had reason to find that his confidence was not misplaced ; and while enabled to benefit him, I had also the opportunity of protecting the interests of the feudatories, who by this alienation (as is fully related in the Annals of Mewar) were placed beyond the pale of the Rana's power. The Khan, after accompanying me to my tents, took leave ; but paid me a long visit in the evening, when we discussed all that concerned the welfare of his charge and the peace of the borders. As matters stand, it is duty to conciliate and to promote prosperity ; but it is melancholy to see this fertile appanage of Mewar in the hand of so consummate a villain as Meer Khan ; a traitor to his master Holcar, for which he obtained the 'sovereignty in perpetuity' of many rich tracts both in Mewar

and Amber, without rendering the smallest service in return. Let this be borne in mind when another day of reckoning comes. Neembaira is a considerable town, with an excellent stone circumvallation; and, being on

the high road between Malwa and Hindusthan, it enjoys a good share of traffic. Upwards of one hundred villages are attached to it, and it was estimated at three lakhs of rupees, of annual rent.

CHAPTER IV.

The Pathar or Table-land of Central India.—View from thence.—Project of a canal.—Its advantages to Mewar.—Utility of further works to the people.—Traces of superstition in the Pathar.—Temple of Sookhdeo.—The Dyte-ca-har, or ‘Giant’s bone.’—The Vira-jhamp, or ‘Warrior’s Leap.’—Proprietorship of the Pathar.—Its products.—The poppy.—Pernicious effects of its increased cultivation.—Account of the introduction and mode of culture of opium.—Original spot of its cultivation.—The manufacture of opium kept pace with the depopulation of Mewar.—Process of cultivation, and of manufacture.—Its fluctuation of price.—Adulterated opium of Khantul.—Evil consequence of the use of opium.—Duty of the paramount power to restrict the culture.—Practicability of such a measure.—Distribution of crops.—Impolicy of the government in respect to the opium monopoly.

Kunairoh, February 13th, nine miles.—A new feature in the face of Mewar was this day disclosed to us. At the termination of our short march, we ascended the Pathar, or plateau of Central India, the grand natural rampart defending Mewar on the east. As we approached it, the level line of its crest, so distinct from the pinnaled Aravulli, at once proclaimed it to be

a table-land, or rock of the secondary formation. Although its elevation is not above four hundred feet from its western base, the transition is remarkable, and it presents from the summit one of the most diversified scenes, whether in a moral, political, or picturesque point of view, that I ever beheld. From this spot the mind’s eye embraces at once all the grand theatres



of the history of Mewar. Upon our right lays Cheetore, the palladium of Hinduism; on the west, the gigantic Aravulli, enclosing the new capital, and the shelter of her heroes; here, at our feet, or within view, all the alienated lands now under the 'barbarian Toork' or Mahratta, as Jawud, Jeeran, Neemuch, Neembaira, Kheyri, Ruttengurh. What associations, what aspirations, does this scene conjure up to one who feels as a Rajpoot for this fair land! The rich flat we have passed over—a space of nearly seventy English miles from one table-range to the other—appears as a deep basin, fertilized by numerous streams, fed by huge reservoirs in the mountains, and studded with towns, which once were populous, but are for the most part now in ruins, though the germ of incipient prosperity is just appearing. From this height I condensed all my speculative ideas on a very favourite subject—the formation of a canal to unite the ancient and modern capitals of Mewar, by which her soil might be made to return a tenfold harvest, and famine be shut out for ever from her gates. My eye embraced the whole line of the Bairis, from its outlet at the *Oodisagur*, to its passage within a mile of Cheetore, and the benefit likely to accrue from such a work appeared incalculable. What new ideas would be opened to the Rajpoot, on seeing the trains of oxen, which now creep slowly along with merchandize for the capital, exchanged for boats gliding along the canal; and his fields, for many miles on each side, irrigated by lateral cuts, instead of the creaking *Egyptian* wheel, as it is called, but which is indigenous to India! If the

reader will turn to the map, he will perceive the great facilities for such an undertaking. He will there see two grand reservoirs within six miles of each other, the Peshola, or internal lake, having an elevation of eighty feet above the external one, the Oodisagur, whose outlet forms the Bairis river; but for which the valley of the capital would be one wide lake, and which, for want of proper regulation, once actually submerged a third of it. The Peshola may be called the parent of the other, although it is partly fed by the minor lake at the villa of *Suhailea-ca-bari*. Both are from twelve to fourteen miles in circumference, in some places thirty-five feet deep, and being fed by the perennial streams from the Aravulli, they contain a constant supply of water. From the external lake to Cheetore, the fall is so slight that few locks would be required; and the soil being a yielding one throughout, the expense of the undertaking would be moderate. There is plenty of material in the neighbouring hills and forests, and by furnishing occupation for the wild population, the work would tend not a little to reclaim them. But where are the means? With this difficulty, and the severe blow to our incipient prosperity in this untimely frost, our schemes dissipate like the mist of the morning. But I cannot relinquish the conviction that the undertaking, if executed, would not only enable the Rana to pay his tribute, but to be more merciful to his subjects, for whose welfare it is our chief duty to labour.*

* Even now, as I transcribe this from my journal, I would almost (when 'The Annals' are finished) risk



The summit of the Pathar has a fertile soil, well-watered and well wooded, and producing the mango, mhowa, and neem; and were the appearance of the crops a criterion, we should say it was equal in fertility to the best part of Mewar. In ancient inscriptions, the term *Oopermal* is applied, as well as *Pathar*, to this marked feature in the geological structure of Central India: the first being rendered exactly by the German *oberland*; the other signify 'flat' or table-land.

In the indented recesses of this elevated land, which covers an immense portion of Central India, there are numerous spots of romantic beauty which enthusiasm has not failed to identify with religious associations. Wherever there is a deep glen, a natural fountain, or a cascade, the traveller will infallibly discover some traces of the 'Great God' (Mahadeva) of the Hindus, the creator and destroyer of life.

By the stupidity of my guide, and the absence of the indefatigable Baigovind, my Brahmin antiquarian pioneer, I lost the opportunity of seeing the shrine of Sookhdeo, situated in a dark cleft of the rock, not two miles from the pass where I ascended. In excuse, he said he thought, as my camp was near, that it would be easy to descend to the shrine of the 'ease-giving' god, Sookhdeo (from *sookh*, 'ease'); but *revocare gradum* was an evil which, added to the necessity of extracting all the information I could from some of the opium-growers in attendance, deterred me. The

a couple of years' residence in 'the happy valley,' where I scarcely ever enjoyed one day of health, to execute this and another favourite project—the re-opening of the tin-mines of Jawura.

abode of Sookhdeo is in a deep recess, well-wooded, with a cascade bursting from the rock near its summit, under a ledge of which the symbolic representative is enshrined. Around it are several *gophas* or caves of the anchorite devotees: but the most conspicuous object is a projecting ledge, named *Dyte-ca-har*, or 'Giant's-bone,' on which those who are in search of 'ease' jump from above. This is called the *Virajhamp*, or 'warrior's-leap,' and is made in fulfilment of vows either for temporal or future good. Although most of the leapers perish, some instances of escape are recorded. The love of offspring is said to be the principal motive to this pious act of saltation; and I was very gravely told of one poor woman, whose philoprogenitive bump was so great, that she vowed to take the leap herself with her issue; and such, says the legend, was her faith, that both escaped. A *taili*, or oilman, was the last jumper of Shookhdeo, and he was no less fortunate; to him the 'giant's-bone' was a bed of roses. So much for the faith of the oilman of Jawud! There are many such Leucotheas in this region of romance: that at Oonkar, on the Nerbudda, and the sacred mount Girnar, are the most celebrated.

Until the last sixty years, the whole of the plateau, as far as the Chumbul, belonged to Mewar; but all with the exception of Kuneroh, are now in the hands of Sindia. Kuneroh is the chief township of a small district of twenty-two villages, which, by the change of events, has fortunately reverted to the Rana, although it was not extricated from the grasp of the Mahrattas without some difficulty; it was taken first, and the



right of repossession argued afterwards. Would we had tried the same process with all the rest of the plateau; but unhappily they were rented to old Lalaji Bellal, a lover of order, and an ally of old Zalim Sing! But let me repeat, for the tenth time, that all these lands are only held by Sindia on mortgage for war-contributions, paid over and over again: and when an opportunity occurs, let this be a record, and the *Pathar* west of the Chumbul be restored to Mewar.

I was delighted to see that the crops of Kuneroh had only partially suffered from the ravages of the frost of the 3rd, 4th, to 25th, which extended over Malwa, and that although the *gram* was destroyed, the wheat, barley, sugar-cane, and poppy, were abundant and little injured; though we could have wished that the last-named pernicious plant, which is annually increasing all over these regions, had been sacrificed in lieu of the noble crops of vetches (*gram*).

That the culture of the poppy, to the detriment of more useful husbandry, is increasing to an extent which demands the strong hand of legislative restraint, must strike the most superficial observer in these regions. When the sumptuary laws of this patriarchal government were in force, a restraint was at the same time imposed on an improvident system of farming which, of course, affected the prince, whose chief revenues were derived from the soil; and one of the Agrarian laws of Mewar was, that there should be to each *churrus*, or skin of land, only one *beega* of opium, and the same quantity of cane, with the usual complement of corn. But the feverish excite-

ment produced by our monopoly of the drug has extended its culture in every direction, and even in tracts where hitherto it has never entered into their agricultural economy. Whatever, therefore, be the wisdom or policy of our interference in this matter, of the result there can be no doubt, viz. that it converted the agricultural *routinieres* into speculators and gamblers.

A slight sketch of the introduction and mode of culture of this drug, which has tended more to the physical and moral degradation of the inhabitants than the combined influence of pestilence and war, may not be without interest.

We are indebted to the commentaries of the imperial autobiographers, Baber, Akber, and Jehangir, for the most valuable information on the introduction of exotics into the horticultural economy of India; and we are proud to pay our tribute of applause to the illustrious house of Timoor, whose princes, though despots by birth and education, and albeit the bane of Rajpootana, we must allow, present a more remarkable succession of great characters, historians, statesmen, and warriors, than any cotemporaneous dynasty, in any region of the world.*

* In all the branches of knowledge which have reference to the comforts, the elegancies, and the luxuries of life, they necessarily bore away the palm from the Rajpoot, who was cooped up within the barriers of superstition. The court of Samarcand, with which the kings of Ferghana were allied, must have been one of the most brilliant in the world, for talents as well as splendour; and to all the hereditary instruction there imbibed, Baber, the conqueror of India, added that more useful and varied knowledge only to be acquired by travel, and constant intercourse with the world. When, therefore, his genius led him from 'the frosty Caucasus' into the plains of Hindusthan, the habit of observation and



Akber followed up the plans of Baber, and introduced the gardeners of Persia and Tartary, who succeeded with many of their fruits, as peaches, almonds (both indigenous to Rajpootana), pistachios, &c. To Jehangir's Commentaries we owe the knowledge that tobacco was introduced into India in his reign; but of the period when the poppy became an object of culture, for the manufacture of opium, we have not the least information. Whatever may be the antiquity of this drug, for medicinal uses, it may be asserted that its abuse is comparatively recent, or not more than three cen-

noting in a book, as set before him by Huzrut Tymoer, all that appeared novel, never escaped him; and in so marked a transition from the highlands of Central India to the region of the sun, his pen had abundant occupation. No production, whether in the animal or vegetable kingdom, which appeared different from his own, escaped notice in his book, which must be looked upon as one of the most remarkable contributions to literature ever made by royalty; for in no age or country will a work be found at once so comprehensive and so simple as the Commentaries of Baber; and this in a region where every thing is exaggerated. Whether he depicts a personal encounter, on which his life and prospects hinged, or a battle, which gave him the empire of India, all is in keeping: and when he relates the rewards he bestowed on Mir Mahomed Jaliban, his architect, for successfully executing his noble design of throwing a bridge over the Ganges, "before he had been three years sovereign of Hindusthan," and with the same simplicity records his own "introduction of melons and grapes into India," we are tempted to humiliating reflection on the magniloquence with which we paint our own few works of public good, and contrast them unfavourably with those of the Transoxianic monarch, not then twenty-five years of age! Nor let the reader who may be induced to take up the volume, fail to give homage to the translator,† whose own simple, yet varied and vigorous mind has transferred the very soul of Baber into his translation.

† William Erskine, Esq., of Blackburne.—who honours me with his friendship, and has stimulated my exertions to the task in which I am engaged, and another in which I trust to be engaged, some of the Books of the Roet Chund, so often alluded to in this work.

turies back. In none of the ancient heroic poems of Hindusthan is it ever alluded to. The guest is often mentioned in them as welcomed by the *munwar piala*, or 'cup of greeting,' but no where by the *uml-pani*, or 'infused opiate,' which has usurped the place of the *phool-ca-arrae*, or 'essence of flowers.' Before, however, the art of extracting the properties of the poppy, as at present, was practised, they used the opiate in its crudest form, by simply bruising the capsules, which they steeped a certain time in water, afterwards drinking the infusion, to which they give the name of *tejarro*, and not unfrequently *pos*, 'the poppy.' This practice still prevails in the remote parts of Rajpootana, where either ignorance of the more refined process, prejudice, or indolence, operates to maintain old habits.

The culture of opium was at first confined to the *do-abe*, or tract between the Chumbul and Sepra, from their sources to their junction; but although tradition has preserved the fact of this being the original poppy-nursery of Central India, it has long ceased to be the only place of the poppy's growth, it having spread not only throughout Malwa, but into various parts of Rajpootana, especially Mewar and Harouti. But though all classes, Koombis and Jats, Baniahs and Brahmins, try the culture, all yield the palm of superior skill to the Koombi, the original cultivator, who will extract *one-fifth more* from the plant than any of his competitors.

It is a singular fact, that the cultivation of opium increased in the inverse ratio of general prosperity; and that as war, pesti-



lence, and famine, augmented their virulence, and depopulated Rajpootana, so did the culture of this baneful weed appear to thrive. The predatory system, which succeeded Mogul despotism, soon devastated this fair region, and gradually restricted agricultural pursuits to the richer harvests of barley, wheat, and gram; till at length even these were confined to a bare sustenance for the families of the cultivator, who then found a substitute in the poppy. From the small extent of its culture, he was able to watch it, or to pay for its protection from pillage; this he could not do for his corn, which a troop of horse might save him the trouble of cutting. A kind of moral barometer might, indeed, be constructed, to shew that the *maximum* of oppression in Mewar, was the *maximum* of the culture of the poppy in Malwa. Emigration commenced in S. 1840 (A. D. 1784); it was at its height in S. 1856 (A. D. 1800), and went on gradually depopulating that country until S. 1874 (A. D. 1818). Its consumption, of course, kept pace with its production, it having found a vent in foreign markets.

The districts to which the emigrants fled were those of Mundisore, Kachrode, Oneil, and others, situated on the feeders of the Chumbul, in its course through Lower Malwa. There they enjoyed comparative protection and kind treatment, under Appa Saheb and his father, who were long the farmers-general of these fertile lands. It could not be expected, however, that the new settlers should be allowed to participate in the lands irrigated by wells already excavated; but Appa advanced funds, and appointed them lands, all fertile though neg-

lected, in which they excavated wells for themselves. They abandoned altogether wheat and barley, growing only *mukhi* or 'Indian corn,' for food, which requires no irrigation, and to which the poppy succeeds in rotation; to these, and the sugar-cane, all their industry was directed.

But to proceed with the process of cultivation. When the crops of Indian corn (*mukhi*) or of hemp (*sun*) are gathered in, the stalks are rooted up and burned; the field is then flooded, and, when sufficiently saturated, ploughed up. It is then copiously manured with cow-dung, which is deemed the best for the purpose; but even this has undergone a preparatory operation, or chemical decomposition, being kept in a hollow ground during the rainy season, and often agitated with long poles, to allow the heat to evaporate. In this state it is spread over the fields and ploughed in. Those who do not keep kine, and cannot afford to purchase manure, procure flocks of goats and sheep, and pay so much a night for having them penned in the fields. The land being ploughed and harrowed at least six or seven times, until the soil is almost pulverized, it is divided into beds, and slight embankments are formed to facilitate irrigation. The seed is then thrown in, the fields are again inundated; and the *seventh* day following this is repeated to saturation. On the *seventh* or *ninth*, but occasionally not until the *eleventh* day, the plant springs up; and on the *twenty-fifth*, when 'it has put forth a few leaves, and begins to look withered, they water it once more. As soon as this moisture dries, women and children are turned into the fields to thin the plant



leaving them about eight inches asunder, and loosening the earth around them with iron spuds. The plant is at this stage about three inches high. A month later, it is watered moderately, and when dry, the earth is again turned up and loosened. The fifth water is given in about ten days more; two days after which, a flower appears here and there. This is the signal for another watering, called 'the flower-watering;' after which, in twenty-four or thirty-six hours, all the flowers burst their cells. When about half the petals have fallen, they irrigate the plants sufficiently to moisten the earth, and soon the rest of the flowers drop off, leaving the bare capsule, which rapidly increases in bulk. In a short period, when scarcely a flower remains, a whitish powder collects outside the capsule, which is the signal for immediate application of the lancet.

The field is divided into three parts, in one of which operations commence. The cutting instrument consists of three prongs, with delicate points, around which cotton thread is bound to prevent its making too deep an incision, and thus causing the liquid to flow into the interior of the capsule. The wound is made from the base upwards, and the milky juice which exudes coagulates outside. Each plant is thrice pierced, on three successive days, the operation commencing as soon as the sun begins to warm. In cold mornings, when it congeals rapidly, the coagulation is taken off with a scraper. The fourth morning, each plant is once more pierced, to ascertain that no juice remains. On each morning this extract is immersed in a vessel of linseed oil,

to prevent it from drying up. The juice being all collected, there remains only the seed. The capsules are therefore broken off and carried to the barn, where they are spread out upon the ground; a little water is sprinkled over them, and being covered with a cloth, they remain till the morning, when the cattle tread out the seed, which is sent to the oilmen, and the refuse is burnt, lest the cattle should eat them, as even in this stage they are poisonous. Poppy oil is more used for the *cheragh* (lamp) than any other in Mewar. They calculate a maund (of forty seers, or about seventy-five pounds weight) of seed for every two seers of milk. The price of seed is now twenty rupees per *mani* of one hundred and twelve (*cutcha*) maunds.

One *beega* of Malwa land, of the measure *Shahjehani* (when the *jureeb*, or rod, is one hundred cubits long) will yield from five to fifteen seers of opium-juice, each seer being forty-five *salimshahi* rupees in weight: the medium is reckoned a good produce. The cultivator or farmer sells it, in the state described, to the speculator, at the price current of the day. The purchaser puts it into cotton bags of three folds, and carries it home. Having obtained the leaves of the poppy, he spreads them in a heap of two or three inches in depth, and thereon deposits the opium, in balls of fifteen rupees' weight each, which are allowed to remain five months for the purpose of evaporation. If the milk has been thin, or treated with oil, seven parts in ten will remain; but if good and pure, eight. The *beoparris* (speculators) then sell it, either for home-consumption in Rajpootana, or for exportation.



From the year S. 1840 (A.D. 1784) to S. 1857 (A.D. 1801), the market-price of the crude opium from the cultivator ran from sixteen to twenty-one *salimshahi* rupees per *durri*, a measure of five *pucka seers*, each seer being the weight of ninety *salimshahi* rupees. I give the price of the drug by the grower in the first stage, as a better criterion than that of the manufacturer in its prepared state. In the year S. 1857, it rose to twenty-five rupees; in S. 1860 to twenty-seven, gradually increasing till S. 1865 (A.D. 1809), when it attained its *maximum* of forty-two, or an advance of one hundred and seventy per cent. above the price of the year A. D. 1784. But some natural causes are assigned for this extraordinary advance; after which it gradually fell, until S. 1870 (A.D. 1804), when it was so low as twenty-nine. In S. 1873 it had again risen to thirty-three, and in S. 1784-5, when its transit to the ports of Sind and Guzzerat was unmolested (whence it was exported to China and the Archipelago), it had reached thirty-eight and thirty-nine, where it now (S. 1876, or A.D. 1820) stands.

In Kanthul (which includes Pertabgurh Deola), or the tracts upon the Myhie river, opium is cultivated to a great extent, and adulterated in an extraordinary manner. This being sold in China as Malwa opium, has greatly lessened the value of the drug in that market. The adulteration is managed as follows: a preparation of refined *goor* (molasses) and gum, in equal proportion, is added to half its quantity of opiate coagulum; the mass is then put into cauldrons, and after being well amalgamated by boil-

ing, it is taken out, and when sufficiently dry is well beaten, and put into cotton bags, which are sewn up in green hides, and exported to Muska-Mundi. The Gosens of these parts are the chief contractors for this impure opium, which is reckoned peculiarly unwholesome, and is never consumed in Rajpootana. Rumour says that it is transported to the Spice Islands, where it is used as a manure in the cultivation of the nutmeg. The transit-duties on opium, in the native states, are levied on each bullock-load, so that the adulterated pays as much as the pure. The gosens smuggle great quantities.

Such is the history, and I believe a pretty correct one, of the growth and extension of this execrable and demoralizing plant, for the last forty years. If the now paramount power, instead of making a monopoly of it, and consequently extending its cultivation, would endeavour to restrict it by judicious legislative enactments, or at least reduce its culture to what it was forty years ago, generations yet unborn would have just reason to praise us for this work of mercy. It is no less our interest than our duty to do so, and to call forth genuine industry, for the improvement of cotton, indigo, sugar-cane, and other products, which would enrich instead of demoralizing, and therefore impoverishing, the country. We have saved Rajpootana from political ruin; but the boon of mere existence will be valueless if we fail to restore the moral energies of her population; for of this fine region and noble race we might say, as Byron does of Greece—

“’Tis Greece—but living Greece no more!”

for the mind is decayed, and the body often palsied and worn out, in the very meridian of life. As far as my personal influence went, I practised what I preach; and, as I have already stated, exacted a promise, from the Rana on the throne to the lowest thakoor, that they would never initiate their children in this debasing practice. But as mere declamation can do very little good, I will here insert a portion of the Agrarian customary code of Mewar and Malwa, which may be brought into operation directly or indirectly. The distribution of crops was as follows.

To each *churrus*, *chursa*, or skin of land, there is attached twenty-five beegas of irrigated land for wheat and barley, with from thirty to fifty beegas more, called *mar*, or *mal*, dependent on the heavens for water, and generally sown with *gram*. Of the twenty-five beegas of land irrigated from the well, the legislature sanctioned *one beega of opium*, and ten to fifteen *biswas* (twenty biswas are a beega) of sugar-cane. But in these days of anarchy and confusion, when every one follows his own view of things, they cultivate *two of opium* and three of cane, and perhaps *two of barley*, instead of twenty-five, to feed the family! What an unnatural state of agricultural economy is this, when the cultivator sometimes actually purchase food for his family, in order that he may bestow his time and labour on this enervating exoitic! But should the foreign markets be closed, and famine, as it not unusual, ensue, what must be the consequence, where the finest corn-country in India is converted to poppy-garden! In Harouti,

they manage these things better; and although its old politic ruler makes use of the districts in Malwa, which he rents from the Mahrattas, for the culture of opium, being himself a trader in it, yet I do not believe he permits its demoralizing influence to enter within his proper domain. It is pleasing to see some traces of the legislative wisdom of past days, and old Zalim knows that it is by the more generous productions of the plough that his country must prosper. But our monopoly acted as an encouragement of this vice; for no sooner was it promulgated that the *Compani Sahib* was contractor-general for opium, than prince and peasant, nay, the very scavengers, dabbled in the speculation. All Malwa was thrown into a ferment; like the Dutch tulip-bubble, the most fraudulent purchases and transfers were effected by men who had not a seer of opium in their possession. The extent to which this must have gone may be imagined when, according to the return, the sales, in the first year of our monopoly, exceeded *one million sterling*, in which I rather think we *gained a loss* of some £40,000! It is to be hoped the subject is now better understood, and that the Legislature at home will perceive that a perseverance in this pernicious traffic is consistent neither with our honour, our interest, nor with humanity.

If the facts I have collected are confirmed on enquiry, the late measure of Government,* in whatever motives originating, will only augment the mischief. Even admitting their expediency in protecting our

* It is to be borne in mind, that this was written on the spot, in January, A.D. 1820.



Patna monopoly, and their justice as affecting the native governments (the contractors and cultivators of the drug), still other mea-

asures might have been devised, equally efficacious in themselves, and less pregnant with evil consequences.

CHAPTER V.

Dharieswar.—Ruttungurh Kheyri.—Colony of Charuns.—Little Attoa.—Inscription at Paragurh.—Doongur Sing.—Seo Sing.—Law of adoption.—Kala Megh.—Omedpoora and its chief.—Singolli.—Temple of Bhavani.—Tablet of Rana Mokul.—Traditionary tales of the Haras.—Aloo Hara of Bumaoda.—Dangermow.—Singular effects produced by the sun on the atmosphere of the Pather.

Dharieswar, January 14th, six miles ; therm. 46° at 5 A.M.—FROM Kuneroh to Dharieswar there is a gradual descent, perhaps equal to one-third of the angle of ascent of the table-land. For half the distance the surface is a fine rich soil, but the last half is strewn with fragments of the rock. Dharieswar is beautifully situated at the lowest point of descent, with a clear stream, planted with fine timber to the south. The Bhomia rights are enjoyed by some Cuchwaha Rajpoots, who pay a share of the crops to Kuneroh. Passed a few small hamlets in the grey of the morning, and several herd of elk-deer, who walked away from us with great deliberation ; but the surface was too stony to try our horses' mettle.

15th Ruttungurh Kheyri, distance nine miles.—The road over a bare rock, skirting a stream flowing on its surface. Two miles from Dharieswar is the boundary of Kuneroh, and the *chourasi* (eighty-four townships) of Kheyri ; the descent still graduating to Kheyri, which is probably not above one hundred feet higher than the external plains of Mewar. The road was over loose stones with much jungle, but here and there some fine patches of rich black soil. We kept company with the Dharieswar *nulla* all the way, which is well-wooded in the course and presented a pretty fall at one point of our journey. Passed several hamlets, and a colony of Charuns, whom I found to be some of my friends of Murlah. They had not forgotten their privilege ; but as the



ladies were only the matrons of the colony, there would have been no amusement in captivity so I dropped five Rupees into the brazen *kullas*, and passed on. The cavalcade of the Komasdar of Kheyri was also at hand, consisting of about two hundred horse and foot, having left his castle on the peak to greet and conduct me to my tents. He is a relation of old Lallaji Bellal, and intelligent and polite. Our tents were pitched near the town, to which the Pundit conducted us; after which act of civility, in the character of the *locum tenens* of my friend Lallaji, and his sovereign Sindia (in whose camp I sojourned twelve long years), he took his leave, inviting me to the castle; but as it contained nothing antique, I would not give cause for jealousy to his prince by accepting his invitation, and civilly declined.

The *Chourasi*, or eighty-four [townships] of Ruttungurh Kheyri, was in S. 1828 (A.D. 1772) assigned to Madaji Sindia, to pay off a war-contribution; and until S. 1832, its revenues were regularly accounted for. It was then made over to Berji Tap, the son-in-law of Sindia, and has ever since remained alienated from Mewar. The treason of the chief of Beygoo, one of the sixteen nobles of the Rana, lost this jewel in his crown, for he seized upon the *Chourasi*, which adjoined his own estate, situated on the skirt of this alpine region. To expel him the Rana called on Sindia, who not only took the *Chourasi*, but Beygoo itself, which was heavily fined, and forty of its best villages, or half his fief, were mortgaged to pay the mulct. The landscape from these heights is very fine; the Pundit, from his

aerial abode, can look down on Kheyri, and exclaim with Selkirk.

"I am monarch of all I survey."

but I would dispute his right with all my heart, if I could do so with success.

Little Attoa.—Distance eight miles, thermometer at daybreak 40° , with a cutting wind, straight from the north, which we keenly felt as our party ascended the heights of Ruttungurh. The altitude of this second *steppe* in the plateau is under four hundred feet, although the winding ascent made it by the perambulator five furlongs. The fort is erected on projection of the mountain, and the works are in pretty good order. They had been adding fresh ones on the accessible side, which the general state of security has put a stop to. In fact, it could not hold out twenty-four hours against a couple of mortars, the whole interior being commanded from a height within easy range. I asked my old guide if the castle had ever stood a storm; his reply was in the negative; "she is still a *komari* (a virgin), and all forts are termed *komaris*, until they stand an assault." We had a superb view from the summit, which is greatly above the level of Kuneroh, whose boundary line was distinct. The stream from Dhareswar was traced gliding through its embankments of black rock, covered with luxuriant young crops, and studded with mango and mowah trees. It is a singular fact, that the higher we ascended, the less mischief had been inflicted on the crops, although the sugar-cane looked prematurely ripe. The wheat fields were luxuriant, but the barley shewed in their grizzly beards here and there an evidence of having suf-



ferred. I also noted that invariably all the low branches of the mowah trees were injured, the leaves shrivelled and dried up, while the superior ones were not affected. The field-peas (*butloe*) sown with the barley were more or less injured, but not nearly so much as at Kuneroh.

The road was execrable, if road it could be termed, which for many miles was formed for me by the kindness of the Pundit, who cut a path through the otherwise impenetrable jungle, the abode of elks and tigers, sufficient to pass my baggage. This route is never passed by troops; but I had curiosity to indulge, not comfort. About four miles from the castle, we ascended another moderate elevation to the village of Oomur, whence we saw Paragurh on the left, and learning that it contained an inscription, I despatched one of my Pundits to copy it. A mile further brought us to the extremity of the ridge serving as a landmark to the *Chourasi* of Kheyri. From it we viewed another *steppe*, that we shall ascend the day after to-morrow, from which I am told the Pathar gradually shelves to the banks of the Chumbul, the termination of our journey. As we passed the village of Omedpoora (*Hopetown*), a sub-iefudation of Beygoo, held by the uncle of its chief, we were greeted by the Thakoor, accompanied by two of his kinsmen. They were all well-mounted, lance in hand, and attired in their quilted tunics and deer-skin doublet, of itself no contemptible armour. They conveyed their chief's compliments, and having accompanied me to my tents, took leave.

Choota, or little Attoa, is also held by a sub-vassal of the same clan, the Meghawuts

of Beygoo; his name Doongur Sing, 'the mountain lion,' now with me, and who long enjoyed the pre-eminent distinction of being chief riever of the Pathar. With our party he has the familiar appellation of Roderic Dhu, and without boasting of his past exploits, he never dreams of their being coupled with dishonour. Although he scoured the country far and near to bring black-mail to his mountain-retreat, it was from the Mahrattas chiefly that his wants were supplied; and he required but the power, to have attained the same measure of celebrity as his ancestor the 'Black-cloud' (*Kala-megh*) of Beygoo. Still, his name was long the bugbear of this region, and the words *Doongur Sing aya!* 'the mountain lion is at hand!' were sufficient to scare the peaceful occupants of the surrounding country from their property, or to arm them for its defence. With the 'Southron' he had just cause of quarrel, since, but for him, he would have been lord of Nud-dowae and its twenty-four villages, of which his grandfather was despoiled at the same time that this alpine region was wrested by Sindia from his sovereign. This *tuppa*, however, fell to Holcar; but the father of Doongur, lance in hand, gave the conqueror no rest, until he granted him a lease in perpetuity of four of the villages of his patrimony, two of which were under Holcar's own seal, and two under that of the renter. About twenty years ago, the latter having been resumed, Seo Sing took up his lance again, and initiated the mountain-lion, his son, in the *lex talionis*. He flung away the scabbard, sent his family for security to the Raja of Sahpoora, and gave his mind



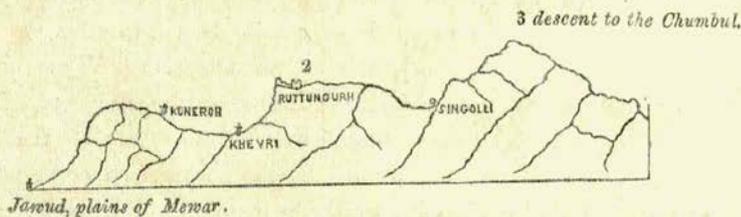
up to vengeance. The father and son, and many other brave spirits with the same cause of revenge, carried their incursions into the very heart of Malwa, bringing back the spoils to his den at little Attoa. But though his hand was now raised against every man, he forgot not his peculiar feud (*ber*), and his patrimony of Nuddowæ yielded little to the Mahratta. But Seo Sing was surrounded by foes, who leagued to circumvent him, and one day, while driving many a goodly buffalo to his shelter, he was suddenly beset by a body of horse placed in ambush by the Bhow. But both were superbly mounted, and they led them a chase through Mandelgurb, and were within the very verge of security, when, as Seo Sing put his mare to the *nulla*, she played him false and fell, and ere she recovered herself the long lance of the Mahratta was through the rider. Young Doongur was more fortunate, and defying his pursuers to clear the rivulet, bound up the body of his father in his scarf, ascended the familiar path, and burnt it at midnight, amongst the family altars of Nuddowæ. But far from destroying, this only increased the appetite for vengeance, which has lasted till these days of peace; and, had every chieftain of Mewar acted like Doongur, the Mahratta would have had fewer of their fields to batten on to-day. His frank, but energetic answer, when the envoy mentioned the deep complaints urged against him by the present manager of Nuddowæ, was "I must have bread!" and this they had snatched from him. But Holcar's government, which looks not to the misery inflicted, carries loud complaints to the resident authorities, who can

only decide on the principle of possession, and the abstract view of Doongur's course of life. For myself, I do not hesitate to avow, that my regard for the chiefs of Mewar is in the ratio of their retaliation on their 'Southron' foe; and entering deeply into all their great and powerful grounds for resentment, I warmly espoused the cause of the 'mountain-lion;' and as the case (through Mr. Gerald Wellesley) was left by Holcar's government to my arbitration, I secured to the chief a party of his patrimony under their joint seal, and left him to turn his lance into a ploughshare, until fresh causes for just aggression may arise. This settlement gave me another proof of the inalienable right in land granted by the *ryot* cultivator, and its superiority over that granted by the sovereign. There were certain rights in the soil (*bhom*) which Doongur's ancestors had thus obtained, in the township of Nuddowæ, to which he attached a higher value than to the place itself. Doongur's story affords a curious instance of the laws of adoption superseding, if not the rank, the fortune resulting from birth-right. Seo Sing and Doulut Sing, both sub-vassals of Beygoo, were brothers; the former had Nuddowæ, the latter Rawurdo. But Doulut Sing, having no issue, adopted Salim Sing, the younger brother of Doongur, who has thus become lord of Rawurdo, of nearly four thousand rupees' annual rent, while Doongur's chief place is little Attoa, and the *bhom* of Nuddowæ. Salim Sing is now in high favour with his chief of Beygoo, to whom he is *foujdar*, or leader of the vassals. In personal appearance he has greatly the advantage of Doongur; Salim

is tall and very handsome, bold in speech and of gentlemanly deportment; Doongur is compact in form, of dark complexion, rugged in feature, and bluntness itself in phrase, but perfectly good-humoured, frank, and unreserved; and as he rode by my side, he amused me with many anecdotes connected with the scenery around.

Singolli, February 17th, eight and a half miles, thermometer 40°.—This town is chief of a *tuppa* or subdivision, containing fifty-two villages, of the district of Antri, a term applied to a defile, or tract surrounded

by mountains. The Antri of Mewar is fertilized by the Bhamuni, which finds its way through a singular diversity of country, after two considerable falls, to the Chumbul, and is about thirty miles in length, reckoning from Beechore to the summit of the steppe of the plateau, by about ten miles in breadth, producing the most luxuriant crops of wheat, barley, gram, sugar-cane, and poppy; and having, spread over its surface, one hundred villages and hamlets; but a section of the country will make it better understood.



From Beechore, the pass opening from the plains of Mewar, to the highest peak of this alpine Pathar, the *Kala Megh*, or 'black cloud,' of Beygoo, bore sway. From him sprung another of the numerous clans of Mewar, who assumed the patronymic Meghawut. These clans and tribes multiply, for Kala Megh and his ancestors were recognized as a branch of the Sangawut, one of the early subdivisions of the Chondawut, the chief clan of Mewar. The descendant of the 'black cloud,' whose castle of Beygoo is near the entrance to Antri, could not now muster above a hundred and fifty men at arms throughout the Pathar; to which he might add as many more of foreign Rajpoots, as the Hara and Gor, holding lands for service. The head of the Megh-

awuts has not above twenty villages in his fief of Beygoo, though these might yield twenty-five thousand rupees annually, if cultivated; the rest is still in the hands of the Mahrattas, as a mortgage contracted nearly forty years ago, and which has been liquidated ten times over: they include, in this, even a third of the produce of his own place of residence, and the town itself is never free from these intruders, who are continually causing disturbances. Unhappily for Mewar, the grand principle of the campaign and its political results "that of excluding the Mahrattas from the west bank of the Chumbul," was forgotten in our successes, or all the alienated lands of Mewar as far as the Malwa frontier would have reverted to the Rana. The ham-

lets on the Pathar consists of huts with low mud walls, and tiled roofs: even Omedpoora, though inhabited by the uncle of the chief, is no better than the rest, and his house is one which the poorest peasant in England would not occupy. Yet steeped in poverty, its chieftain, accompanied by his son, nephew, and fifteen more of his kin and clan, came "for the purpose of doing himself his lord paramount of Beygoo, and the British Agent, honour." The mountain-chief of Omedpoora affords a fine example, that noble bearing may be independent of the trappings of rank: high descent and proper self-respect appeared in every feature and action. Dressed in a homely suit of *amowah*, or russet green, with a turban of the same (the favourite hunting costume of the Rajpoot); over all the corselet of the skin of the elk, slain by himself; with his bright lance in hand, and mounted on a good strong horse, whose accoutrements like his master's were plain but neat, behold the vassal of Omedpoora equipped for the chase or foray. The rest of his party followed him on foot, gay and unconcerned as the wild-deer of the Pathar; ignorant of luxury, except a little *uml-pani* when they go to Beygoo; and whose entire wants, including food, raiment, gunpowder, and tobacco, can be amply supplied by about £8 a year each! The party accompanied me to my tents, and having presented brilliant scarlet turbans and scarfs, with some English gunpowder, to the chief, his son, and nephew, we parted mutually pleased at the rencontre.

The descent to Singolli is very gentle, nor are we above eighty feet below the level of Oemur, the highest point of the Pathar,

which I rejoice to have visited, but lament the want of my barometers. Singolli, in such a tract as this, may be entitled a town, having fifteen hundred inhabited dwellings encompassed by a strong wall. The Pundit is indebted to his own good management, and the insecurity around him, for this numerous population. In the centre of the town, the dingy walls of a castle built by Aloo Hara strike the eye, from the contrast with the new works added by the Pundit; it has a deep ditch, with a *fausse-braye*, and parapet. The circumvallation measures a mile and three-quarters. About a mile to the north-west are the remains of a temple to Vijyaseni Bhavani, the Pallas of the Rajpoots. I found a tablet recording the piety of the lord paramount of the Pathar, in a perpetual gift of lights for the altar. It runs thus: "Samvat 1477 (A.D. 1421), the 2d of Asoj, being Friday (*Brigwar**), Maharaja Sri Mokul-ji, in order

* A name of *Sukracharya*, the Regent of the planet Venus. The 'star of eve' is always called *Sukra*, but presents a most unpoetic idea to the mind, when we learn that this star, the most beautiful of the heavenly host, is named after an immoral one-eyed male divinity, who lost his other orb in an undignified personal collision, from an assault upon *Tara* (the star) the wife of a brother-god. *Sukra-acharya*, notwithstanding, holds the office of *guru*, or spiritual adviser, to the whole celestial body—we may add *ea uno disce omnes*: and assuredly the Hindu who takes mythological biography of his gods *au pied de la lettre*, cannot much strengthen his morality thereby. The classical Hindu of these days values it as he ought, looking upon it as a pretty astronomical fable, akin to the voyage of the Argonauts; but the bulk enter the temple of the "thirty-three millions of gods" with the same firmness of belief as did the old Roman his Pantheon. The first step, and a grand one, has been made to destroy this fabric of Polytheism, and to turn the mind of the Hindu to the perception of his own purer creed, adoration of 'the one, omniscient, omnipotent, and eternal God.' Rammohan Roy has made this step, who "has become a law unto himself," and a precursor, it is to be hoped, of benefit to his race. In



to furnish lights (*jote wasta*) for *Vijyaseni Bhavani-ji*, has granted one *beega* and a half of land. Whosoever shall set aside this offering, the goddess will overtake him." This is a memorial of the celebrated Rana Mokul of Mewar, whose tragical death by assassination has been recorded in the annals of that state.* Mokul was one of the most celebrated of this race; and he defeated, in a pitched battle at Raepoor, a grandson of the emperor of Dehli. He was the father of *Lal-Bae*, called 'the Ruby of Mewar,' regarding whom we have related a little scandal from the chronicle of the Bhattis: but the bard of the Kheechies, who says that prince Dheeraj espoused her in spite of the insult of the desert chief, had no cause to doubt the lustre of this gem.

The Pathar resounds with the traditional tales of the Haras, who, at a very early period, established themselves in this alpine region, on which they erected twelve castles for its protection, all of them still to be traced existing or in ruins; and although they assumed the title of "lords of the Pa-

the practical effects of Christianity, he is a Christian, though still a devout Brahmin, adoring the Creator alone, and exercising an extended charity, with a spirit of meekness, toleration, and benevolence, added to manly resistance of all that savours of oppression, which stamps him as a man chosen for great purposes. To these moral, he added mental qualifications of the highest order: clear and rapid perception, vigorous comprehension, immense industry of research, and perfect self-possession; having moreover, a classical knowledge, not of our language only, but of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Persian, Arabic, and the 'mother-tongue,' or *langus-merc* of all, the Sanscrit.

* By means of this simple tablet, we detect an anachronism in the chronicle. It is stated in the first volume, that Koombho succeeded his father Rana Mokul in S. 1454, or two years anterior to the date of the grant of lights for the goddess. Such checks upon Rajpoot chronology are always falling in the way of those who will read as they run.

thar," they acknowledged the supremacy of the Ranas of Mewar, whom they obeyed as liege-lords at this very time. Of these twelve castles, Ruttungurh is the only one not entirely dismantled; though even the ruins of another, Dilwargurh, have been the cause of a bloody feud between the Meghawut of Beygoo and the Suktawut of Gwalior, also in the Pathar. That of Parannuggur, or Parolli, lays a short distance from thence, but the most famous of all is Bumaoda, placed upon the western crest of the plateau, and overlooking the whole plain of Mewar. Although some centuries have elapsed since the Haras were expelled from this table-land, the name of Aloo of Bumaoda still lives, and is familiar even to the savage Bhil, who, like the beasts, subsists upon the wild-fruits of the jungles. It is my intention to return by another route across Pathar, and to visit the site of Aloo's dwelling; meanwhile I will give one of the many tales related of him by my guide, as I traversed the scenes of his glory.

Aloo Hara, one day, returning homeward from the chace, was accosted by a Charun, who, having bestowed his blessing upon him, would accept of nothing in exchange but the turban from his head. Strange as was the desire, he preferred compliance to incurring the *viseruca*, or 'vituperation of the bard;' who, placing Aloo's turban on his own head, bade him 'live a thousand years,' and departed. The Charun immediately bent his steps to Mundore, the capital of Maroo; and as he was ushered into the presence of its prince and pronounced the *byrd* of the Rhatores, he took off his turban with the left hand, and performed his saluta-



tion with the right. The unusual act made the prince demand the cause when in reply he was told "that the turban of Aloo Hara should bend to none on earth." Such reverence to an obscure chief of the mountains of Mewar enraged the King of the Desert, who unceremoniously kicked the turban out of doors. Aloo, who had forgotten the strange request, was tranquilly occupied in his pastime, when his *quondam* friend again accosted him, his head bare, the insulted turban under his arm, and loudly demanding vengeance on the Rahtore, whose conduct he related. Aloo was vexed, and upbrealed the Charun for having wantonly provoked this indignity towards him. "Did I not tell you to ask land, or cattle, or money, yet nothing would please you but this rag; and my head must answer for the insult to a vile piece of cloth: for nothing appertaining to Aloo Hara shall be insulted with impunity even by the *Thakoor* of Marwar." Aloo forthwith convened his clan, and soon five hundred "sons of one father" were assembled within the walls of Bumaoda, ready to follow wheresoever he led. He explained to them the desperate nature of the enterprize, from which none could expect to return; and he prepared the fatal *johur* for all those who determined to die with him. This first step to vengeance being over, the day of departure was fixed; but previous to this he was anxious to ensure the safety of his nephew, who, on failure of direct issue, was the adopted heir of Bumaoda. He accordingly locked him up in the inner keep of the castle, within seven gates, each of which had a lock, and furnishing him with provisions, departed.

The Prince of Mundore was aware he had entailed a feud; but so little did he regard what this mountain-chief might do, that he proclaimed "all the lands over which the Hara should march to be in *dan* (gift) to the Brahmins." But Aloo, who despised not the aid of stratagem, disguised his little troop as horse-merchants, and placing their arms and caparisons in covered carriages, and their steeds in long strings, the hostile caravan reached the capital unsuspected. The party took rest for the night; but with the dawn they saddled, and the *nakarras* of the Hara awoke the Rahtore prince from his slumber; starting up, he demanded who was the audacious mortal that dared to strike his drum at the gates of Mundore? The answer was,— "Aloo Hara of Bumaoda!"

The mother (probably a Chohani) of the King of Maroo now asked her son, "how he meant to fulfil his vaunt of giving to the Brahmins all the lands that the Hara passed over?" but he had the resolution to abide by his pledge, and the magnanimity not to take advantage of his antagonist's position; and to his formal challenge, conveyed by beat of *nakarra*, he proposed that single combats should take place, man for man. Aloo accepted it, and thanked him for his courtesy, remarking to his kinsmen, "At least we shall have five hundred lives to appease our revenge!" The lists were prepared; five hundred of the "chosen sons of Secji" were marshalled before their prince to try the manhood of the Haras; and now, on either side, a champion had stepped forth to commence this mortal strife, when a stripling



rushed in, his horse panting for breath, and demanded to engage a gigantic Rahtore. The champions depressed their lances, and the pause of astonishment was first broken by the exclamation of the Hara chieftain, as he thus addressed the youth: "Oh! headstrong and disobedient, art thou come hither to extinguish the race of Aloo Hara?"—"Let it perish, uncle (*kaka*), if, when you are in peril, I am not with you!" replied the adopted heir of Bumaoda. The veteran Rahtore smiled at the impetuous valour of the youthful Hara, who advanced with his sword ready for the encounter. His example was followed by his gallant antagonist, and courtesy was exhausted on either side to yield the first blow; till, at length, Aloo's nephew accepted it; and it required no second, for he clove the Rahtore in twain. Another took his place—he shared the same fate; a third, a fourth, and in like manner twenty-five, fell under the young hero's sword. But he bore "a charmed life;" the queen of armies (*Vijyaseni*), whose statue guards the entrance of Bumaoda, had herself enfranchised the youth from the seven-fold gates in which his uncle had incarcerated him, and having made him invulnerable except in one spot (the neck), sent him forth to aid his uncle, and gain fresh glory for the race of which she was the guardian. But the vulnerable point was at length touched, and Aloo saw the child of his love and his adoption stretched upon the earth. The queen-mother of the Rahtores, who witnessed the conflict, dreaded a repetition of such valour, from men in whom desire of life was extinct; and she commanded that the contest should cease,

and reparation be made to the lord of the Pathar, by giving him in marriage a daughter of Mundore. Aloo's honour was redeemed; he accepted the offer, and with his bride repaired to the desolate Bumaoda. The fruit of this marriage was a daughter; but destiny had decreed that the race of Aloo Hara should perish. When she had attained the age of marriage, she was betrothed. Bumaoda was once more the scene of joy, and Aloo went to the temple and invited the goddess to the wedding. All was merriment; and amongst the crowd of mendicants who besieged the door of hospitality was a decrepit old woman, who came to the threshold of the palace, and desired the guard to "tell Aloo Hara she had come to the feast, and demanded to see him;" but the guard, mocking her, desired her to be gone, and "not to stand between the wind and him:" she repeated her request, saying that "she had come by special invitation." But all was in vain; she was driven forth with scorn. Uttering a deep curse, she departed, and the race of Aloo Hara was extinct. It was Vijyaseni herself, who was thus repulsed from the house of which she was protectress!

A good moral is here inculcated upon the Rajpoot, who, in the fatal example of Aloo Hara, sees the danger of violating the laws of wide-extended hospitality: besides, there was no hour too sacred, no person too mean, for such claims upon the ruler. For the present, we shall take leave of Aloo Hara, and the "Mother of Victory" of the Pathar, whose shrine I hope to visit on my return from Haravati; when we shall learn what



part of her panoply she parted with to protect the gallant heir of Bumaoda.

January 18th *Dangermow*, eight miles ; thermometer 48° .—A choice of three routes presented itself to us this morning. To the left lay the celebrated *Mynal*, once the capital of *Oopermal* ; on the right, but out of the direct line, was the castle of *Bhynsrer*, scarcely less celebrated ; and straight before us the pole-star and *Kotah*, the point to which I was journeying. I cut the knot of perplexity by deviating from the direct line, to descend the table-land to *Bhynsrer*, and without crossing the *Chumbul*, nearly retraced my steps, along the left bank, to *Kotah*, leaving *Mynal* for my return to *Oodipoor*. Our route lay through the *antri*, or valley, whose northern boundary we had reached, and between it and the *Bhamuni*. The tract was barren but covered with jungle, with a few patches of soil lodged amidst the hollows or otherwise bare rock, over whose black surface several rills had cut a low bed, all falling into the *Bhamuni*. One of these had a name which we need not translate, *Rani borca-Khal*, and which serves as a boundary between the lands of the *Meghawuts* of *Antri* and the *Suktawuts* of *Bhynsrer*.

Dangermow-Borao, is a small *putta* of twelve villages, yielding fifteen thousand rupees of annual rent ; but it is now partitioned,—six villages to each of the towns above-mentioned. They are *Suktawut* allotments, and the elder, *Sukt Sing*, has just returned from court, where he had been to have the sword of investiture (*tulwar bazdai*) girt on him as the lord of *Borao*. *Bishen Sing* of *Dangermow* is at *Kotah*,

where he enjoys the confidence of *Zalim Sing* and is commandant of cavalry. He has erected a castle on the very summit of the third *steppe* of the *Pathar*, whose dazzling white walls contrast powerfully with the black and bleak rock on which it stands, and render it a conspicuous object. The *Suktawuts* of the *Pathar* are of the *Bansi* family, itself of the second grade of nobles of *Mewar* ; and the rank of both the chiefs of *Dangermow* and *Borao* was the third, or that termed *gole* ; but now, having each a *putta* (at least nominally) of above five thousand rupees yearly rent, they are lifted into the *bateesa*, or amongst the 'thirty-two' of the second class.

The *Bhamuni*, whose course will carry us to its close at *Bhynsrer*, flows under the walls of both *Dangermow* and *Borao*, and is the cause not only of great fertility but of diversity, in this singular alpine region. The weather has again undergone a very sensible change, and is extremely trying to those, who, like myself, are affected by a pulmonary complaint, and who are obliged to brave the mists of the mountain-top long before the sun is risen. On the second, at daybreak, the thermometer stood at 60° , and only three days after, at 27° ; again, it rose to 40° and for several days stood at this point, and 75° at mid-day. The day before we ascended the *Pathar* it rose to 54° , and 94° at noon ; and on reaching the summit, 60° and 90° ; again it falls to 40° , and we now shiver with cold. The density of the atmosphere has been particularly annoying both yesterday and to-day. Clouds of mist rolled along the surface of the mountain, which, when the sun cleared the



horizon, and shot about 'spear-high' in the heavens, produced the most fantastic effects. The orb was clear and the sky brilliant; but the masses of mist, though merely a thin vapour and close to the spectator, exhibited singular and almost kaleidoscopic changes. There was scarcely a figure that the sun did not assume; the upper half appearing orbicular, the lower elliptical: in a second, this was reversed. Sometimes it was wholly elliptical, with a perfect

change of the axis, the transverse and conjugate changing places—a loaf, a bowl, and at one instant a scollop-shell, then 'round as my shield,' and again a segment of a circle, and thus alternating until its ascension dissipated the medium of this beautiful illusion, the more perfect from the sky being cloudless. The mists disappeared from the mountain long before this phantasmagoria finished.

CHAPTER VI.

Bhynsrorgurh.—Cairn of a Rajpoot.—Ragonath Sing of Bhynsror.—Castle of Bhynsror.—Passage forced by the Chumbul through the Plateau.—Origin and etymology of Bhynsror.—Charuns, the carriers of Rajwarra. The young chief of Mehuo becomes the champion of Mewar.—Avenge the Rana's feud with Jessulmer, and obtains Bhynsror.—Tragical death of his Thakoorani, niece of the Rana.—He is banished.—The Pramari chiefs of Bhynsror.—Cause of their expulsion.—Lall Sing Chondawut obtains Bhynsror.—Assassinates his friend the Rana's uncle.—Maun Sing, his son, succeeds.—Is taken prisoner.—Singular escape.—Reflection on the policy of the British government towards these people.—Antiquities and inscriptions at Bhynsror.—Dabi.—View from the pass at Nasairah.—Rajpoot cairns. Tomb of a bard.—Sentiments of the people on the effects of our interference.—Their gratitude.—Cairn of a Batti chief.—Kurripoor.—Depopulated state of the country.—Inscription at Santra.—Bhil temple.—Ruins.—The Holi festival.—Kotah, its appearance.

February 19th, *Bhynsrorgurh*, ten miles, | execrable, through a deep forest; but for the
four furlongs; thermometer 51°; atmos- | hatchets of my friends, my baggage never
phere dense and oppressive, and roads | could have been got on. We passed

several hamlets, consisting of a dozen or more huts, the first of which I find belongs to my young friend Morji Goorah, himself a vassal of the Pramars of Bijolli (one of the sixteen Omras of Mewar), and holding a few *beegas* of *bhom*, as his *vat* or share of the *bapata* (patrimony) of Borao. We have elsewhere given a copy of the tenure on which Morji holds a village in the fief of Bijolli. At seven miles from Dangermow, we came to a small shrine of an Islamite saint, who buried himself alive. It is an elevated point, from whence is a wild but lovely prospect. There is a *coond*, or 'fountain,' planted with trees, close to the shrine, which attracts a weekly *mela* or 'fair,' attended by all classes, who cannot help attributing some virtue to a spot where a saint, though a Mooslem, thus expiated his sins. In descending, we heard the roaring of mighty waters, and soon came upon the Bhamuni, forming a fine cascade of about fifty feet in height; its furious course during the monsoon is apparent from the weeds it has left on the trees, at least twenty feet above its present level. The fall of the country is rapid, even from this lower spot, to the bed of the Chumbul. Oopermal must have a considerable elevation above the table-land of Janapa, where the Chumbul and other streams have their fountains; but of all this we shall by and bye form a more correct opinion. We passed the cairn of a Rajpoot who fell defending his post against the Meenas of the Kairar, a tract on the banks of the Bunas, filled with this banditti, in one of their last irruptions which disturbed the peace of this region. Each traveller adds a

stone, and I gave my mite to swell the heap.

The *putta* of Bhynsrer held by Ragonath Sing, one of the sixteen great lords of Mewar, having the very ancient title of Rawut, peculiar to Rajpootana, and the diminutive of Rao. Bhynsrer is one of the best fiefs of Mewar, and the lands attached to it are said to be capable of yielding one lakh of annual revenue, equal to £50,000 in the dearest countries of Europe; and when I add that a cavalier can support himself, his steed, &c. on £50, its relative value will at once be understood. He has also a toll upon the ferries of the Chumbul, though not content therewith, he levied until lately a per-centage on all merchandize, besides impositions on travellers of whatever description, under the name of *kote murimut*, or 'repairs of the castle:' were we, however, to judge by its dilapidated condition, we should say his exactions were very light, or the funds were misapplied. This is the sole passage of the Chumbul for a great extent, and all the commerce of higher Malwa, Harouti, and Mewar, passes through this domain. The class of *bunjarris* (traders) termed Vishnue, long established at the city of Poorh in Mewar, frequent no other route in their journey from the salt-lakes of the desert to Malwa or Bundelkhund. Their *tanda* or caravan consists of six thousand bullocks, and they never make less than two, and often three, trips in the year. The duty of the *raj* is five rupees for each hundred head thus laden; but the feudatory, not content with his imposition of "castle repairs" and "bhom" as lord of the manor, has added a hundred