

ART. III.—*Account of a Journey from Calcutta viâ Cuttack and Pooree to Sumbulpûr, and from thence to Mednipûr through the Forests of Orissa.* By LIEUT. M. KITTOE.

As the country west-south-west of Mednipûr, for upwards of four hundred miles through which the high road to Nagpûr and Bombay passes, is noted down even in the most improved maps as *terra incognita*, therefore, by most considered as such, a brief account of my recent travels in that direction may not be uninteresting.

I am unable, for many reasons, to give very minute details, first, in consequence of the hurried manner in which I had to travel; next, from the very inclement season during which I did so; and again, owing to the great reluctance which the natives of Orissa have to afford any information, and what is more, to their decided silence; it being (as I have always had occasion to remark) more than the life of an individual is worth were he to be detected by his chief in divulging the scanty resources of his country.

About the middle of April 1838, Captain G. Abbott having fallen an early victim to the deadly climate of the Keunjur and Mohurbhunj jungles, to the distracting knavery of the people he had to deal with, and the annoyance and exposure they caused him to suffer,* I was appointed to succeed him, and directed to proceed immediately to Sumbulpûr to take charge of the survey of the Mednipûr and Raepûr post road.

There then being no possibility of travelling by dawk by the post road with any degree of safety or comparative comfort at such a season, I resolved on proceeding viâ Cuttack and the valley of the Mahanuddi, through the Burmool pass and onwards by Boad and Sohnepûr, i. e. following the course of the river, as the surest means of obtaining the first necessary of life, viz. good water.

I left Calcutta for Cuttack by dawk on the evening of the 17th April, where I arrived on the morning of the fifth day. I travelled at night, and halted during the day at Mednipûr, Jullaisûr, Ballaisûr, and Bareepûr successively.

On reaching Cuttack I found so much difficulty in procuring bearers to take me to Burmool (where I expected a relay from Sumbulpûr) that I resolved on going on to Pooree, and from thence across the country to that place; but a set having at last agreed to go for something more than the usual travelling rates, I struck the bargain

* Captain Abbott commenced his travels early in January, 1838, was taken ill on the 22nd March near Keunjurgurh, and died two days after his arrival at Sumbulpûr on the 3d April following.

and sent them on to Badeswur, half way to Burmool. I went on to Pooree, where I remained three days, being completely overcome with the fatigue of so much dawk travelling, for it was but lately I had returned from my tour in Orissa in search of antiquities, coal, and minerals, &c. an account of which tour has already appeared in this Journal.

While at Pooree, I tried again to procure more coins, but having shewn too much anxiety, and paid too much for those I did get, on former occasions, the suspicions of the Brahmans and shroffs were excited, they would give no more, except a few sovereigns, shillings, six-pences, and some Goah coins, which from their inferior standard were unsaleable in such a market.

I did my utmost to procure facsimiles of the inscriptions in Jugernath temple, also of those in the Gondeechagurh, but was, as usual, unsuccessful.

The tide ebbing very low at that season of the year I was enabled to collect a great variety of marine shells, but few however were sufficiently perfect to be of any value, the violence of the surf destroying all the more delicate species.*

I left Pooree on the evening of the 26th, and reached Koordah early on the following morning. I took up my abode in a shady mango grove near the ruins of the old *Noor* or palace, in the vicinity of which are many modern temples all equally inelegant and unworthy of notice.

When at Koordah in the previous month of March, I was unable to visit the cave of PAUNCH PANDEB, therefore I determined to do my best on this occasion. About noon I proceeded on foot for a distance of a mile and a half, having to crawl in many places through the jungle thicket, and reached the foot of the ascent, which is by a broad path, at a spot where under some stately Bur and Peepul trees† I saw a very elegant image of SU'RYA, in his chariot with many horses, driven by ARUNA (his charioteer); I had no time to spare to enable me to make a drawing of it.

After ascending a steep path for a quarter of a mile, I found myself in a beautiful glen, in its centre is a small and rudely built temple through which flows a beautiful spring of fresh water; I was told that there is an idol of PARBUTTI' within, carved in the rock, from the navel of which the water flows, however I did not think it worth the trouble of examining, being more interested in the *Pandeb Gurha*.

* All that were of any use were presented to the Society, and have been placed in the cabinets.

† *Ficus Indicus* and *Ficus Religiosa*.

Having therefore refreshed myself with a copious draught from the crystal stream, I continued the steep ascent until I reached the top of the hill, I had then to descend some way on the steep southern face; when I reached the cave I was sadly disappointed, for it was a mere cleft in the rock, with "*asthans*" or seats for ascetics cut within the cavity; I had hoped to find some valuable inscriptions, but there were none, excepting a few short sentences, and the names of ascetics in various characters, from the old *Kutila* of the 13th century to modern *Ooreya* and *Devanagri*, which I did not think worth transcribing; I deemed it better to take rest in the cool cave, and recover if possible from the effects of my long walk under a burning sun, at the hottest season of the year, so that after admiring the beautiful and extensive view which the spot commanded of the sea and the intervening woody plains, I laid myself down to sleep for a couple of hours, which completely restored me; I then returned to my palkee, and resumed my trip towards Badeswur, passing near the hot springs of Atteiree.

As I left early in the evening I had time enough to see much of the country, which undulates considerably, and is thickly studded with trees and underwood. There is a gradual fall towards the Mahanuddí; from Pooree to the vicinity of the Koorda hills the country is exceedingly low and flat, but it then has a gentle rise, caused by that curious ironstone formation occurring every where at the foot of the hills of Orissa.

The hill of Koorda is a rock which has been pronounced to be sandstone, but I am by no means satisfied of this being correct; it contains large proportions of lithomarge and quartz, it does not occur stratified, but chiefly in irregular and disturbed masses, the interstices are occupied with a coarse red loam resembling brick dust; the stone is variegated and speckled, and in some parts of its texture resembles pumice stone, or brick kiln slag; it is with this that most of the temples of Orissa are built, for from its softness it is easily worked, besides which it possesses a quality rendering it very desirable in the estimation of the natives—its predominant color being red.

From the high ground (before reaching Atteiree) the numerous conical and isolated hills rising abruptly from the vast level plains present a very singular and striking appearance. That of Bankee, called *Mahapurbut*, is the most conspicuous; they would all appear to be of volcanic origin. I reached Badeswur at about 2 A. M., and continued my journey with my Cuttack bearers twenty-three miles further to Bailpara, where I put up in a mango grove during the heat of the day.

Had I reached Badeswur at daylight, I should most probably have remained for the day, as there are several pieces of sculpture worth drawing; there is also an ancient temple on a rock in the Mahanuddí, which I was unable to examine on my former visit in 1836-37 in consequence of the river not being then fordable; an account of what I then saw is to be found at page 828, vol. vii, (second part) of the Journal of the Asiatic Society, where there is also a sketch of one of the temples; accompanying is a drawing of an elegantly executed image of PARBUTTI, at the same place, which I made on that occasion; like most of the more elegant and ancient idols, it is of black chlorite, and well polished.

On arriving at Bailpara I found my escort and other persons whom I had sent on to accompany me from Burmool onwards by water, but the river being more than usually shallow, I was compelled to abandon the intention.

I continued my journey early in the evening, that I might be able, if possible, to visit some caves said to be near a small temple on the high conical granite hills called *Mooni Budra*, about six miles beyond Bailpara, but on reaching the hills I found myself too much fatigued to warrant my running (perhaps) a wild goose chase after them, such as I was led to do, when at Balaisúr, to the *Nilgurh* hills; I therefore passed on, reaching Burmool about 9 P. M. and found to my sorrow that the Dangur bearers, who had been kindly sent for me from Sumbulpúr by Mr. C. L. Babington, after waiting three days had that very morning left to return homewards, and to "mend" matters, my Cuttack men refused to proceed. With the pleasant prospect of having to wait two or three days in this wild place, with no other shelter than was afforded by the shady forest trees and my palkee, also a very scanty supply of eatables, I fell asleep, having however previously sent on a couple of village Paiks to try and overtake the bearers and bring them back.

The following morning my guard having arrived and procured me some milk and eggs, I selected a shady spot on the immediate bank of the river, at the entrance of the pass, where I placed my palkee, from which I had a fine view of the river and the valley. Where there is no remedy, there is little use in fretting, so I determined to make the most of a bad job, and covered the palkee with green boughs to render it as cool as possible, it kept the temperature down to 98°. I took a walk along the banks and succeeded in shooting a number of fine mullet, which this river is famous for. I set to work to cook some of them, my chillumchee serving as a frying pan, and a village handee for a boiler. I made a good

meal and fell asleep. On waking, I found myself in better luck than I had expected, the Paiks having returned with fifteen of the twenty Dangurs who had left, as I before stated. I immediately proceeded, and reached the top of the pass about 8 P. M., resting for awhile at Puddum talawo, on the spot where I had encamped when with my regiment in June, 1837, I then continued my journey as far as the Bunjara halting place, near Gussungurh, in the Boad country, which I reached at midnight. At day-break I left the high road and went to the river side at a village called Korasingha; I made my palkee as snug as possible for the day. A very fine Mahaseer was caught and brought to me by a fisherman, so that I had no fear of starving.

The village was almost entirely deserted, which I was informed is the case for many miles from the Burmool pass (which is the boundary between the estates of Boad and Duspalla) to within a few miles of the town of Boad. The whole country has been almost laid waste since 1836; the Raja's followers lay the blame to the Kunds and their chief Nuncumkonwur, who inhabit the mountains running parallel with the river as far as Sohnpur, at an average distance of four miles, and then recede in a southerly direction towards Gilleirí in Gúmsúr; the ryots, on the other hand, attribute the impoverished state of the country to the tyranny and misrule of the Boad Raja, and further assert that the Kunds were driven to aggression by his treachery and injustice.

I passed the day as well as the heat (at 115° with a fierce hot west wind) would permit of; I had not felt such since my quitting the North-western Provinces; it was an unpleasant contrast to the cool (south) sea-breeze prevailing on the other side of the mountains.

I resumed my travels in the early part of the evening, and reached Rumbagurh about 10 P. M. where I halted for several hours to allow the bearers rest; it is a miserable place, with indifferent mud walls and watch towers, but is deemed a *gurh*, or stronghold.

About 2 A. M. I continued my trip, intending to put up at Boad, but it being very late before I reached a small village two miles nearer, I thought it best to avail myself of the fine shelter afforded by a mango grove on the river side.

I suffered a great deal during the night from feverish symptoms, the effects of exposure, and so sudden a change of climate; I had little or no sleep, so that I had an opportunity of observing the country in the immediate vicinity of the road. There is much waste land, which appears to have been lately under cultivation, yet there is a far greater proportion of jungle and forest, having the same features as that of

other parts of Orissa. The stratum of soil is generally very thin, the gneiss and granite rocks protrude through it in all directions, in some places rising into small hillocks, in others, appearing in continuous and gently undulating pavements (as it were) for considerable extents. I neither saw nor heard bird nor beast, except the shrill and disagreeable note of a large species of *Caprimulgus*, which swarms throughout the forests. I was sadly annoyed during the day time, with the incessant, and distracting noise of an insect called "*jhinkare*," (the *chicādā* ?)

The Mahanuddí at Korasingha was broad, with a sandy bed ; at this place it is divided by numerous small islands, thickly wooded, the bed is rocky throughout ; the navigation during the rains must be very dangerous. The rocks are apparently granite, and present a very curious appearance, for in many places the different kinds of which granite is composed are to be seen in serpentine strata distinct from each other, the talc adhering to the quartz and felspar in large masses—all the rocks are more or less in a decomposed state ; garnet crystals are common, and very beautiful ; garnets of a small size are found in the sand ; of a number I had collected on a former occasion near Cuttack, some were pronounced by a native jeweller to be rubies. I was informed that poor people gain a livelihood by seeking for gems, and that rubies of some weight are occasionally found ; the purchasers prove them by heating them to a red heat, and if when cooled they have retained their color, they are valued accordingly.

The thermometer this day did not rise above 110°, I consequently had some little rest, and continued my journey early in the evening, reaching Boad before sunset. I was detained some time on account of the guides not coming ; this was designed on the part of the Raja, who is very uncourteous to any Europeans from whom he may have no chance of gaining anything ; I had sent to him in the morning to announce my arrival near his capital, but he did not even deign to send an answer or a single Paik to attend upon me ; his conduct was very different when our troops were parading the country the previous year. The impudence and haughtiness of these semi-barbarians is proverbial ; they were treated with much less ceremony by their Marhatta rulers than by the British Government ; forbearance on our part is considered weakness by them, but at the slightest shew of resentment they are ready to cringe at your feet. I had to wait upwards of half an hour, during which period I was pestered with complaints from oppressed ryots and *bunjara* merchants. Among the latter was an old man who had been in camp with us in 1836-37, to beg of the Commissioner to espouse his cause, and make the Raja, and Nuncumkonwur (the Kund

chief) restore his cattle and the value of his merchandize, which had been plundered from him near Gussungurh in 1835.

I made particular inquiries touching the practice of human sacrifice since we had rescued all their *Merriahs* ;* I was assured that there had been no "*Merria pooja*" this year, but I have reason to doubt the truth of the assertion.

On my way out of Boad I remarked several old temples on which, as I have been since informed, are inscriptions ; had I known of this at the time, I should certainly have stopped and transcribed them.

My bearers having informed me that there was a bye-path across country, by which eight or ten miles would be saved, I preferred going by it to following the course of the river viâ Sohnpur to Sumbulpur along the right bank ; therefore upon reaching a large village called Sūgliah, I crossed over, and resting for a couple of hours travelled on till 7 A. M. and encamped in a miserable mango tope by a village called Mirlipullí, the Zemindar of which would neither come to me nor afford supplies, till at last the Dangurs got hold of him and brought him to me, begging I would keep him in durance until his Paiks should have brought what little was required. I had been obliged to leave my escort to follow after me, so that I was nearly helpless, I however followed the advice of the Dangurs and kept the fellow by me till every thing was forthcoming, and subsequently paid for.

This part of the Sohnpur territory appears tolerably fertile, the country is undulating and rocky, but the water is very near the surface ; there are numerous small wells about the villages, the water of which is drained by the *Dhankuli*, or tilt-pole. The soil has a very curious appearance from the great quantities of snow-white quartz and talcite ; I picked up some fine specimens of talc by the mouth of a well ; the people told me that it is to be found in very large pieces at some depth below the surface.

I experienced another hot day. Having to travel over some bad ground, I resumed my march at an early hour, and reached a large village at 10 P. M. I rested several hours, and then went on to Keuntapullí, a short distance before reaching which, I had to cross a tolerably steep ghat over the chain of low hills, which commencing near Sumbulpur, run for many miles nearly due north and south, parallel to the river, and no great distance from it.

I encamped as usual under some fine tamarind trees by the river side. Having reached my ground at an early hour, I had plenty of time to look about me. The river for upwards of a mile is ex-

* Children intended for sacrifice.

ceedingly still and deep, it being confined between a line of rocks the strata of which incline at an angle of 45° and have a most singular appearance. The village is chiefly inhabited by fishermen, as its name implies, "*Keunta*" or "*Kewat*" meaning "fisherman," and "*pullí*" a "village," anglice, the "fisherman's hamlet." The Keunts of this place appear to be a very idle race, they angle all day and cast nets and spear fish at night. This latter operation is performed by the following means—one or more torches are burnt at the stem of a canoe, where a man stands waiting with spear or grange in hand, the canoe is either pushed or paddled along with the least possible noise by a boy at the stern, the fish are attracted by the glare of the torches, swim about near the surface, and become an easy prey to the expertness with which the grange is handled.

During those months in which the river is navigable, the Keunts have ample employment in transporting merchandize to and from Sumbulpúr, Kontillú, and Cuttack.

There is nothing remarkable in the appearance of the country about Keuntapullí; on the right bank there is much low jungle and a few small hills at some distance; on the left, the range of hills before mentioned are about a mile distant, the land intervening having a gradual slope towards the river; there is much more jungle than cultivation, for there are numerous water-courses and ravines intersecting it.

I resumed my march an hour before sunset, and reached Dhama about 9 P. M. I did not stop, having met a relay of bearers who had been sent out from Sumbulpúr, which place I reached at 3 A. M. the next morning, the 4th May, none the better for such constant fatigue and severe exposure, however I considered myself fortunate in having done so well.

I remained at Sumbulpúr until the 23rd of the month, for I was unable to carry on the survey in consequence of the sickly state of the establishment, every follower of the late Capt. Abbott having suffered more or less from the deadly climate of Keunjur; his Bengallee writer, a sepahee, and another servant, died, shortly after their arrival at Sumbulpúr; there were several others in a dangerous state who subsequently died on their way home. From this I learnt a lesson for my future guidance, not to employ more Up-country servants than could possibly be avoided; it is absolutely necessary to have a few trustworthy men to serve as a check upon the Ooreya portion, who, if not closely looked after, would lend themselves to the roguery and schemes of their kindred.

The town Sumbulpúr is thrice the size of any I have seen in any of the other states; it extends for upwards of two miles along the proper

left bank of the river of this space; the fort occupies about three-quarters of a mile. It is fast falling to ruin; the Raja no longer resides in the old *Noor*, (citadel, palace) which is occupied by some of his officers; there is a miserable garrison of a few ragamuffins dressed as sepahees, and some twenty or thirty suwars whose steeds are like Pharaoh's lean kind. The walls are in a very dilapidated state, having suffered much from the effects of the extraordinary flood in 1836. The bamboo thicket, which was cut down during the time the territory was in our possession, used to act as a breakwater, and protected the walls, which are very ill-constructed of unhewn stones. The ditch and swamp which defended the other three faces are in a great measure filled up and overgrown with weeds, and must render that quarter of the town very unhealthy. There are many good dwelling houses of one and two stories, built of stone; there are also many temples, but few of them have any pretensions to elegance, and the generality are covered with most obscene figures badly executed.

There is no appearance of any great trade being carried on, nor is there so much as the sight of such a large and populous place would lead you to suppose. Merchants concentrate here from Cuttack, Budruc, Nagpúr, Bhopal, Chutteesgurh, and Sirgoojah, and barter their goods; those of the lower provinces bringing salt, cocoanuts, cotton cloths, spices, brass utensils, &c. exchange the same with those of the central for wheat, gram, lac, and cotton; gold in small lumps is also taken in payment, and occasionally diamonds. The only produce of the province exported, consists of oil seeds, cotton, and rice, which are taken by bullocks, and (during the rains) sent by water to the Mogulbundí of Orissa.

Sumbulpúr has always been famous for its gold and diamonds; as far back as 1766 a Mr. Motte was sent expressly by Lord Clive to open a trade in them, and to explore the mines, but was unsuccessful on account of the disturbed state of the country, and the inclemency of the season, he having arrived there in the rains; two other Europeans who accompanied him died of fever, and he was himself nigh losing his life. An account of his expedition is to be found in the 1st Vol. of the Asiatic Annual Register, p. 50, published in 1800. The perusal of this narrative would amply repay the reader for his trouble.

The people of the country are too apathetic and indolent to attempt to work the mines, or rather to seek for them; for the diamonds are at present obtained by washing the red earth (their matrix) which is brought down by the Heebe-nuddí, and empties itself into the Mahanuddí, some miles above Sumbulpúr, from the mountains to the north-east,

in which there are most probably inexhaustible mines of gems and precious metals; gold is found in many of the streams flowing from the gneiss rocks throughout these tracts, the Heebe among the rest.

Touching the state of Sumbulpúr, it was (previous to its dismemberment by the Marhatta hordes and its becoming subject to Berar) subdivided into eighteen "gurhs," or chieftainships, held in fief of the Lord Paramount, who resided at Sumbulpúr, and called therefore "*Authareh gurh Sumbulpúr*"; amongst these were, Boad, Sohn-púr, Gangpúr, Oodeypúr, Phooljur, Sarengurh, Sarinda, Banaie, Baumurra, Lehrapal, Rerhakhól, and seven others, including Sumbulpúr proper; most of these however have long since thrown off their allegiance and ceased to pay tribute or to furnish their quota of "Paiks" (militia). Some of the smaller "gurhs" used to be held on very curious tenures, which I shall allude to more particularly in a future page.

Sumbulpúr lapsed to the British Government in 1827 by the death of the late Raja, but for some reason (with which I am not acquainted) they sought for an heir-at-law and conferred it on an obscure and aged Zemindar, and a perfect imbecile, who is now entirely in the hands of his crafty ministers. These people and the Brahmins possess the best lands, and obtain his sanction to all kinds of extortion; as a specimen of which, I am informed that *Zemindari* leases are renewed every year, and on these renewals, or on the occasions of lands being transferred to another, the party favored has to give a "*Salamí*" or fee, and nothing short of gold is accepted; the farmers in their turn grind their ryots; the effects of such an unjust and oppressive system are every where apparent.

It is said that the Raja realizes 7,00,000 Rupees per annum, but 4,00,000 is perhaps nearer the mark, including valuable diamonds which are occasionally found; it is certain that were the province under proper rule, much more could be made of it, therefore it is to be hoped that on the demise of the present Raja, who has no children, the Government will avail itself of the opportunity and resume it; at present it pays us an annual tribute of 8,000 Rupees, 500 of which has for some years past been remitted in consideration of the dawk road being kept in repair, and the jungle in its immediate vicinity cleared.

I was somewhat surprised one morning while taking my ride to see three human heads stuck on a pole at the junction of two roads near the town; they were placed there in January, 1838, their owners having forfeited them for treason, though not without a protracted and severe struggle.

There are no antiquities at this place save a few fragments from the ruins of a Buddhist temple, some thirty or forty miles up the river, which were brought some years ago for building purposes. I was told that there was an inscription on a rock in the middle of the river about a mile above the town; I went one morning to examine it, and found merely a few brief sentences and the name of a *Byragi* who had died there some few years ago. The spot is held sacred on account of the evil deity supposed to preside over the river, which is evidently very deep, being confined in a long narrow basin formed by the gneiss rocks which stretch across it in all directions. Some years back the Marhattas in attempting to carry away a heavy brass gun on a raft, it sank and every soul perished; the credulous inhabitants believe that the demon appeared on this occasion, and dragged them all into a fathomless abyss which is said to exist there.

During my stay at Sumbulpur I endeavoured to collect as much information regarding the country lying between it and Mednipur as I could; this was no easy matter, for the accounts I received were so contradictory that I determined at all hazards to explore the country, following the direction of Mednipur as nearly as possible and keeping south of the old road. Every argument and persuasion were made by the Raja and his ministers to dissuade me; all kinds of dangers and difficulties were pictured to me, which failed in their intent, for I could plainly see that there was some object in view. Amongst the persons who exerted themselves most to deceive and dissuade me was an individual whom Major W—— (the Governor General's Agent for the South-western frontier) had sent with a view to his assisting my unfortunate predecessor, which he was capable of doing from his knowledge of the country; his anxiety was perhaps attributable more to a desire to prevent my hearing of the tricks he had been playing in the Baumurra district when awaiting his arrival, than to any other cause.

During my stay here I had searched for a good spot for erecting a bridge over the Mahanuddi, (if such a great work were ever undertaken) which I found very near the present ford and ferry; the river is there 4,500 feet broad in the rains, and there are huge masses of rock at convenient intervals right across, which would afford excellent foundations for either wooden frames or masonry to support a wire or an iron suspension bridge; I found the highest flood water mark to be about 47 feet above the level of the shallow stream flowing during dry seasons in the centre of the bed.

Before taking my final departure from Sumbulpur, I made an outline sketch of the hills, which are distant at their nearest point fourteen miles, extending from Baumunsassun, about north-west, till they

vanish in the horizon to the south-east in the direction of Ungool ; in this range, (the highest peaks of which are perhaps 1000 feet) there are several ghats, which was readily admitted. That of Baumunsassun, near which the present road passes, is the first, next to it is one called Kurorumma, then Oorsing, all north of the proper direction of Mednipúr, lastly the ghat of Burrorumma about eight or ten miles further south ; it was by this latter (which had been visited by one of Mr. Babington's people) that I determined on proceeding.

My first march from Sumbulpúr was to a large village called Bahum, having many fine mango topes and good cultivation, chiefly sugar cane ; the fields are irrigated from a large nulla called Maltaijoor, which rising in the adjacent hills empties itself into the Mahanuddí at Munesswur, a village about three miles below Sumbulpúr ; its course through the plains (from the foot of the Burrorumma range to the Mahanuddí) is very circuitous, it is navigable during the heavy floods, but dry for the greater part of the year, except that a plentiful supply of excellent water is always to be obtained by digging in the sand.

The distance travelled this stage was eleven miles and three-quarters measured by the Perambulator, but it is certainly no more than eight as the crow flies, for on leaving Sumbulpúr, I was led for upwards of a mile in a direction at right angles to that I had ultimately to reach ; I was then led considerably to the southward ere I gained the proper course. Such an account may excite surprise in the minds of those who have not visited these regions of knaves and savages, but so it is in reality.

Several small villages were passed a little to the right and left of the road ; there is a good portion of arable and clear land in the vicinity of each, particularly of those nearer Sumbulpúr. One small village close to which the road passed, particularly attracted my attention, the huts being built on the bare white granite rocks, which have the appearance of so many terraces ; on one of them I observed veins of quartz about an inch wide crossing each other at right angles, resembling a large cross—close to this was another curiosity in the shape of a Goolur tree (*Ficus glomerata*,) growing on the bare rock, on which the roots were spread and interwoven in a most curious manner ; the main root appears to be sunk in a narrow fissure beneath the trunk : it has a most singular appearance. There is not much jungle except on the rocky and unfavourable spots, and the only large trees I saw were on a small hillock about one-third of the way, beside the village of Durriapullí, from whence to an elevated spot where there are rocks of micaceous schist the country has a perceptible rise, and undulates

considerably ; from thence to Bahum it inclines towards the Multaie ;* the soil is firm, being a stiff sandy clay with much decomposed quartz, granite, and talcite, of which very beautiful specimens occur.

Notwithstanding the sky being overcast, the heat was very great ; the thermometer in a tent exposed to the occasional sunshine, rose to 115°, but with tatties and under a shady tope we managed to keep the temperature down to 98°. I say *we*, for Mr. Babington and his assistant, Mr. Martin, having resolved on accompanying me as far as Burorumma, had sent on tents. My camp equipage consisted simply of a palkee and a couple of settringies,† one to spread, and the other to hang over a bough to serve as an awning for the purpose of screening me from the scorching sun. I had a small pony on which I rode occasionally to relieve myself and the bearers, also one Mussulman servant to cook for me, I had an escort of a havildar's party from the Ramgurh L. I. Batⁿ. which I found of much use, I had also a Naik's party from the 19th N. I. which had accompanied me from Cuttack, and it was well I mustered so strong a party, as will be seen hereafter.

In the evening I sketched a rough outline of the Hills, in which at some distance north of the ghat I was to proceed by ; I perceived a wide gap or break through which I was most positively assured by all the Raja's people that there was no pass. I had taken the bearing of this identical spot on a former occasion when it was pointed out to me as the Burorumma pass, so that I was convinced that further attempts were being made to deceive me ; this made me the more determined to have my own way, which was best to be effected alone, so I took leave of my companions, persuading them to return ; for although I cared but little for the exposure and privations I saw clearly that I should have to undergo, yet I did not wish to subject them to any. The next morning, the 24th May, I marched at an early hour, crossing the Maltai, north, half a mile from camp ; for several miles I travelled through alternate woody and cultivated tracts, by an excellent broad path, in the direction of the gap before mentioned. I began to hope that it was the real ghat, and its appearance warranted the expectation that it was a very trifling one, but I was soon undeceived, the guide stopped short, for there was a tree felled and thrown across the path—the usual hint laid for a guide to lead the traveller from the

* The Multaie-joor "*joor*" is an affix to the proper name *Multaie*, meaning a nulla or torrent ; for instance, Dhoba-joor, Bur-joor, Bramuni-joor, &c. *Khai* and *Naul* are likewise affixes, having the same meaning, such as Khor-khai, Seam-khai, Rama-naul, Kussum-naul, &c. &c.

† Cotton carpets.

direct road. Upon questioning him, I received the usual evasive replies of "that is not a high road, it merely leads into the forest;" and "what do I know; I live at Bahum;" "I have not seen, &c. &c." I took the knave aback by asking him the name of the ghat I was going to, and insisting that that was it, pointing to the gap. Forgetting himself, he replied that that was the Baghloth ghat; he then admitted that the road led direct to it. I was obliged to strike off to the right, and travel for some miles along a narrow and winding path through a heavy Saul forest to the foot of the ghat, which is about a mile from a large village called Kundeswuri, belonging to Chundro Bearer, a Kund chief who holds the adjacent hill lands (more by might than right) from the Baumurra Raja; this man has a few followers, who, united in one interest, set all the neighbouring Zemindars at defiance, and make frequent plundering excursions into the plains; he is much dreaded by all. The Kunds are however industrious, and if treated kindly, peaceable; but such is the dislike the Ooreyas entertain towards them, and the consequent annoyances and tyranny they exercise over them when they perchance fall into their power, that they are obliged to retaliate in self-defence; this is the case throughout the tributary mehauls in which there are Kund villages.

The Kunds of these hills have no turmeric cultivation, nor do they perform the horrid *Merria pooja*, which is in a manner connected with it.

The ascent of the ghat is by a narrow glen between two ridges of hills, those to the right being very lofty quartzose rocks; it is at first very gradual and easy, but higher up becomes very steep, continuing so as far as the summit, the whole distance being a little more than three-quarters of a mile. The road is difficult on account of the loose stones of all sizes which are strewed about; there were remains of fences and other contrivances for defending the pass, which had been constructed the previous year, during some disputes with the Sumbulpúr Raja, who summoned all his vassals to assist him, but the Kunds had the best of it, as is generally the case.

There is a fine view to be had here of the Sumbulpúr plains, but owing to the haziness of the atmosphere I was unable to see any objects distinctly enough to take their bearings, except the high peak at the north-western extremity of the range of hills; following the course of the Mahanuddi, distant six miles south-east of Sumbulpúr, it bears 70° south-west; the soil at the top of the ghat is a hard red loam with much quartz, gneiss, and hornblende. I here remarked two heaps of stones each at the foot of a tree, which reminded me of the tu-

tumuli the ancient Britons in the north of England used to construct over the graves of fallen warriors, on which each traveller used in olden times to throw a stone on passing by; upon inquiry I found that these were of the same nature, the like practice existing. Those which I allude to, are over the remains of two chiefs who fell in battle on the spot. I had often remarked similar tumuli in the Kund districts, also in other parts of India, for it is in some places customary to heap stones or bricks on spots where persons have been killed by wild beasts.

Two miles and a half beyond the ghat I reached my encamping ground, at the village of Burorumma. There is a gradual fall the whole way; the path is through a thin forest of large Saul and other timber trees with no underwood. Much ground has been lately cleared in the vicinity of the village which is situated at the head of a large valley extending for many miles in a south-easterly direction at the back of the range of hills before described; there are many fine mango, tamarind, jaumun, date, and other trees around the village; it is nearly depopulated owing to the misrule of the chief (Chundro Bearer); the sepahees and peada whom I had sent some days previously to prepare for me, had been nearly starved, the chief having forbidden supplies; a little firewood and some milk were however brought to me. I rigged out a shed with my carpets, palkee, &c. under the trees near the village, and hoped to have passed a tolerably pleasant day, but as soon as the sun got high myriads of small insects (?), descended from the trees and rendered it impossible for me to remain, for in addition to the discomfort their presence occasioned, their bite was painful: I was compelled to seek refuge in a ruined hut in which the thermometer stood at $106^{\circ} 2'$.

Shortly after my arrival I was visited by Chundro Bearer's eldest son, who came with a number of retainers armed with swords, matchlocks, and bows. He is rather a fine young man; he made many apologies for the supplies not being ready, and shortly sent us what was required. The retainers did not seem inclined to be over civil, several of them were intoxicated, one fellow in particular, who came just after the remainder had left, threw himself down close to my carpet and began raving, and from what he said, it was evident that they would have been glad to have found out what persons had recommended me to come by this route, and most likely have taken some means of revenge. To add to the discomfort of my camp followers, the people most effectually concealed the well or spring which supplied the village with excellent water; they were compelled to help themselves from a small well which did not afford more than a lotah full of bad water every four or five minutes.

Being anxious to push on, and get out of this inhospitable track, I packed up and resumed my march at 6 P. M.; as long as it was day-light we got on tolerably well, although the road had been obstructed for miles together with trees felled and thrown across, but as soon as the evening closed, our troubles commenced; the heat was oppressive beyond measure, and not a drop of water was to be found to quench the tormenting thirst my followers were suffering from; we had been led to expect some from the bed of a large torrent two coss distant from our camp, but upon reaching it, the guide and coolies all denied there being any. A poor coolie was taken to task by one of the Kunds for offering to point out where it was. I would have resented this in the most summary manner, but I knew that we were completely at their mercy, for they had taken us off the road, and were leading us over a most rugged path, and whenever chance led us on to the high road, (which was a very excellent one), they halted, and pretended they had lost their way; then after hunting for some time, led us again into the villainous track by which, after five and a half hours' toil we reached Jaumunkeera. This is a large village in the centre of the valley, which is here open and well cultivated; the distance was nine miles and three quarters, and by the better one which the Moonshee followed, only eight and a half. We rested in a paddy field near the village till 4 o'clock the next morning (25th May) at which hour I attempted to move onwards, but the Kunds tried to detain me, refusing to allow the Burorumma coolies to go on with us, or to get others that day in their room. I would not be trifled with, and commenced my march. Their next step was to deny any knowledge of the road; it then became high time to put a stop to this insolence; I brought the ring-leaders to their senses with the help of the "argumentum bacculinum," a road was pointed out, and a relief of coolies arrived forthwith. I had proceeded about two miles, when I discovered that the guides were playing me the same game that those had done on the previous night; I met a Paun* who was just returning from the very place I was proceeding to, so I promised him a reward, and took him with me. He soon led me on to a good, and much frequented road to Burghat, the spot where supplies had been collected for me by the Baumurra people, and which I reached at 11 A. M. much fatigued, having travelled eleven miles. I took shelter in a hut that had been prepared for me by the sepahees, of green boughs, on the edge of the Burghat nulla; in this I passed the day with comparative comfort; some of my people, however, suffered very severely from thirst and exposure to the sun.

* A person of low caste; they make the best guides, for being given to make plundering excursions, they are acquainted with every nook and corner.

The country through which I travelled this day is open, with evident traces of having been in a much more prosperous condition at no distant period. There are extensive pasture lands, and large herds are brought from long distances to graze, the herdsmen living in temporary huts, and having enclosures annexed to protect the cattle from wild beasts. I observed many traces of recent cultivation, and occasionally fields freshly ploughed, although I could not discover a single village the whole way, I was also assured that there were none; I am, however, convinced that there are many at no very great distance, hidden by the intervening jungle, beyond which I could see clumps of mangoes, tamarind, date, and tarri trees, which latter seldom occur except in the vicinity of habitations. I felt moreover convinced that there must be other roads up this fine table land than that by which I came. On inquiring of the Baumurra people, and of some bunjarahs I had met on my way, I found that my surmises were correct, not only in this particular, but as to the Baghloth ghat, which, as I have before stated, had been kept a secret from me. I determined to satisfy myself of these points by directing the guard of regular sepahees to return by the other path and by the ghat; I sent them the next day from Deogurh, and I subsequently received a report from the Naick of the guard who stated that he had passed through many villages with abundance of water, and that the ghat was perfectly easy, with an excellent path; the very reverse of what the knaves of guides had told me. There is no habitation any where near Burghat, which is merely a pass (as the name implies*) leading from the high land before described, down to the less elevated tracts of Baumurra, all inclining towards the Brahmení river, into which all the torrents (that of Burghat among the rest) empty themselves.

My people were too much fatigued to allow of my resuming my march that evening, so we lighted numerous bonfires round the camp to keep off wild beasts, and passed the night where we were.

(To be continued.)

* “*Ghat*” or “*Ghatti*” means a pass, they are affixed to proper names, such as “Kend-ghatti” the Kend (or ebony tree) pass; “Sher-ghatti” the Tiger pass; “Kussum-ghat” the Kussum (tree) pass; “Burghat” the Bur (tree) pass, &c. &c.



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