

TRAVELS

IN

CEYLON AND CONTINENTAL INDIA;

INCLUDING

NEPAL AND OTHER PARTS OF THE HIMALAYAS,
TO THE BORDERS OF THIBET,

WITH SOME NOTICES OF THE OVERLAND ROUTE.

APPENDICES,

I.

ADDRESSED TO BARON VON HUMBOLDT,

ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF CONIFERÆ ON THE HIMALAYAN MOUNTAINS.

II.

ON THE VEGETATION OF THE HIMALAYAN MOUNTAINS.

III.

THE BIRDS OF THE HIMALAYAN MOUNTAINS.

BY

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TRAVELLING PHYSICIAN TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

PRINCE WALDEMAR OF PRUSSIA.

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stream, until we reached a chain of hills extending from west to east; and crossing its steep ridge by the **CHERIA-GHAUT**, (Pass of the Cheria) entered another and a broader valley, which proved to be only a bend of that of the Cheria, which we had quitted soon after passing **Bechiaco**. The forest consists here almost exclusively of stately *Saul-trees*, (called *Sakua* by the natives) the timber of which is considered, next to that of the *Dalbergia Cissu*, the finest in this country, and is conveyed from this district to many distant parts; even at **Patna**, it is used for making the many thousand opium chests, which are exported for the Chinese market.

Before entering the vale of the **RAPTŸ**, one of the most considerable and most interesting valleys of the outposts of the Himalayan chain, we were obliged to cross the river **KURROO**,* and to proceed, for several hours, along a plain covered with travelled fragments such as we had continually found beneath our feet in the other river-glens. Towards evening the tents of **Major Lawrence** at length appeared in view; they were pitched at some distance before us, in the retirement of a deep valley, beside the village of **HETHAURA**, on the banks of the beautiful **Rapty**. Here the Prince had halted on the preceding day, and in a little while we saw him returning with his suite, all mounted on elephants, from a hunt, in which their booty had been but small; not a single deer, leopard, nor wild boar had rewarded their toils. Uncertain traces only had been met with of the rhinoceros and elephant. Besides this sudden rencontre with our friends, we were surprised by the unexpected and magnificent apparition of a detach-

known, though such valleys are of frequent occurrence. Among the spurs and ridges of the hills there are many narrow valleys or glens, which possess a rich soil, yet are totally neglected.—**TR.**

* Probably the "*Karrara*" of **Hamilton**, which flows into the **Rapty** below **HETHAURA**.—**TR.**

ment of Nepaulese troops, which had welcomed the Prince on the frontier. A Nepaulese of the highest rank, *Dil Bikram*, (*Dil Bigrum Thappa*) nephew of the Minister, was at their head; a fine looking young man, slender and elegant in his figure, with very beautiful and delicate, almost feminine features,—long, curling, black hair, a light, somewhat European complexion, and without beard. The uniform worn by the military is remarkably showy and picturesque; it consists of a red or blue jacket with slashed sleeves, short white linen breeches, a broad sash, and a low sky-blue turban, resembling indeed rather a college cap, though called by the former name, and adorned in front with a silver crescent. They are strong, well-made men, more stalwart, and less Mongolian in their appearance than the mountaineers; their open countenances and bold bearing made a most agreeable impression upon us. They are admirably drilled, and the word of command in use among them is English, though so much corrupted as scarcely to be recognized.

This escort defiled before us on the following morning, (the 7th of February) accompanied by four large elephants, and, advancing in front, guided us through the intricacies of those confused ranges of hills, and of the rocky paths of those border forests, to all which the kingdom of Nepaul is indebted for its unapproachableness. Dil Bickram was still beside us, mounted on his dapple-grey steed of Chinese blood, which was ever fresh and unwearied, notwithstanding the eccentricities of his march, as he crossed and re-crossed the road, dashed forward to the front of our long procession, or again drew up the rear of the whole train. He gave evidence of his passion for the chase by firing at every parrot that flew within reach. Most ludicrous scenes were caused by the officious zeal of his twenty or thirty vassals, all of whom watched his every movement. His greatest

the cool atmosphere, in little more than a broad web of cotton cloth; the GORKHAS, or conquering race, sport jackets and trowsers, and even shoes. Troops of fakeers and of other beggars were slowly advancing before us, and uttering most doleful cries as they passed.

We looked down from our lofty seats at this crowd and bustle far below, through which the elephants were slowly making their way. The singular and picturesque city,—with its gay temples, and elegant brick structures,* its gardens, whose orange trees were loaded with golden fruit, while plum and cherry trees were in the full glory of their blossom,—was extended before our wondering eyes. The bridges threatened to give way under the mass of human beings, which rushed together to see us pass through the last branch of the BISHMUTTY; for our elephants must needs wade through the stream, since the bridges are too feeble to support the weight of these mighty animals.

We entered the city itself through several very narrow streets, whose entire width was just sufficient to admit of an elephant passing along. The rich wood carving lavished on the rosettes of the windows, on the pillars, architraves and corners of the roofs, reminded me of many an ancient German commercial city; yet, on the other hand, the Oriental character stamped on the whole scene is very conspicuous. The gilded roofs of the

the distinctions of caste, have rejected the Lamas, and have a priesthood of their own, named Bangras. These people partake freely of every kind of animal food, and are prone to habits of intoxication.

* This epithet, which, applied to edifices of red brick, may appear somewhat inappropriate, is explained by the account of Nepaulese architecture given by Dr Buchanan Hamilton. He says, "The Nepaulese have peculiar moulds for the bricks used in cornices and other decorations, and for the fronts and ornamental parts of their best houses they make smooth glazed bricks, that are very handsome. They have, in the alluvial matter of the plain of Nepaul, large strata of particularly fine brick-clay, and in the lower hills are found masses of a hard red clay, called "*Lungcha*," which they use for painting the walls of their houses."—TR.

temples, hung round with bells and adorned with flags of many colours, and the gigantic images of stone, betray the influence of Chinese taste. The rain, which was falling in torrents, did not prevent our gazing with surprise at many an ancient and splendid edifice, nor admiring the skill in the fine arts displayed in the horses, elephants and battle scenes, carved on the houses, the rich designs of window rosettes through which the rays of light penetrate, the colossal dimensions of the hideous monsters of stone, (toad-headed lions, dragons and rhinoceroses) and the many-armed red-painted images of the gods.

More surprising than all the rest was the coup d'œil presented by the market-place, notwithstanding its moderate size. On either side of it stands a great temple, whose eight stories, with their gilded roofs, are peopled by innumerable minas and sparrows. A flight of broad stone steps guarded by two monsters, leads up to the entrance of the temple; above, gigantic rhinoceroses, monkeys and horses adorn the edifice. The multitude of these strange figures, the stunning noise that resounded from within, the antique gloomy air of the surrounding houses, with their projecting roofs, and the solemn grandeur of the whole scene, awakened in my mind a feeling as though I had been suddenly carried back to some city of a thousand years since: I was involuntarily reminded of the description which Herodotus gives of ancient Babylon. For how long a time may all these things yet continue to appear exactly as they now do! The durable wood, the indestructible stone,* and a people who, like their kindred and instructors, the Chinese, cling to all that is primitive,

* Described by Dr Buchanan Hamilton as being found disposed in vertical strata, in large masses, as containing much lime, being very fine-grained, having a silky lustre, cutting well, and admirably resisting the action of the weather.—Tr.

unite in effectually resisting the destroying influence of Time.

We rode on, meantime, through a high, but narrow gate-way, into a court, where we saw several tame rhinoceroses, kept here on account of the custom of the country, which requires that, on the death of the Rajah, one of these creatures should be slain, and imposes on the highest personages in the state the duty of devouring it!*

Passing through dark and narrow streets, and traversing squares,—in which Buddhist pagodas, with their many-armed images of *Mahadevi*, *Indra*, and *Parvati* alternate with the Brahminical temples† that rise tier above tier,—we at length found ourselves at the other extremity of the town.

The gate is, like all the other gates of the city, a simple, tall, white arch, with a large eye painted on either side; indeed every entrance is, according to Chinese fashion, adorned with these horrid eyes surrounded with red borders. On the flat roof above the gate, stands a slender iron dragon, with a tongue a yard long, exactly of the form usually represented by the Chinese.

The dwelling of the British resident is about a quarter of an hour's ride beyond the town, in the centre of a beautiful park, on a little eminence, and its white Gothic buildings, although somewhat faulty in style, have an extremely picturesque effect, rising among tall fir-trees,

* Menu, the lawgiver of the Hindoos, enumerates the articles of which the offerings to the manes of deceased ancestors should consist, and which, when the ceremony had been duly performed, were to be eaten by the Brahmin and his guests: among these is the flesh of the rhinoceros.—TR.

† The creeds, deities and superstitious rites of the Nepaulese are no less diversified and intermingled than their tribes. While the Brahminism of the majority of the population is looked upon by the natives of Bengal as corrupt in the extreme, the Buddhism of the remainder is not unmixed with divinities, rites and customs borrowed from the Pantheon and the sacred books of the Hindoos.—TR.