

occupied the country, and the Raja's only remaining hope was in the strength of the fortress of Koth Kangra.

The command of the place was intrusted to his son, whilst he stationed himself at Tira to harass the enemy, and facilitate the supply of stores and provisions to the garrison. The fortress had been supplied with grain for twelve years, but great negligence and waste exhausted it in a much shorter period, and, the Gorkhas having prevailed on the Haripur Raja to forego his alliance with Sansar Chand and join them, the chief source whence the latter had derived provisions was cut off. The Raja had previously thrown himself into the fortress, and he and his garrison were without food, subsisting for four months upon little else than the leaves of vegetables. In this state of things, after the struggle had subsisted for more than four years, Sansar Chand was obliged to apply to Ranjit Singh for assistance. The Sikh chief gave him effectual succour, and the Gorkhas were driven out of the country; but the Raja paid dearly for his liberation, being obliged to cede his fort of Koth Kangra to his ally,

and to acknowledge a sort of vassalage to him, as his liege lord. Ranjit has not exacted yet any tribute from him, but he claims military service, and put him foremost in his late attack upon the Kahalur Raja, whose forts were captured by the troops and artillery of Sansar Chand under James and O'Brien. Ranjit sends for Sansar Chand to his court once a year, and the latter expects on one of these occasions to be detained a prisoner; but the Sikh's purposes do not seem yet to be matured, and, satisfied that his prey is within his grasp, he forbears awhile to pounce upon it.

The loss of territory, and falling off of his dependencies, have so much reduced the revenues of Kotoch, that, as the Raja assured me, he has but 70,000 rupees a year for the expenses of himself and his family after paying his troops. His resources are, however, still respectable; his country is strong, his peasantry resolute and warmly attached to him, and he has a large property in jewels, which might be turned to better account. His pride, however, prevents his making the sacrifices necessary to the improvement of

his means, and, whilst he spends large sums upon a numerous zenana and a parcel of hungry retainers, he allows the defences of the country to fall into ruin, and keeps his soldiers short of powder and ball. He is very anxious to be taken under the protection of the British government, and in the event of a rupture with the Sikhs, it would find in him a zealous and useful partisan.\*

On the 20th and 22nd letters arrived from Mr. Trebeck, stating that Mohan Sinh, the Sikh governor of Koth Kangra, had been at Mundi, and, after stationing guards round our encampment, had refused to allow him to proceed as I had instructed him to do. I received also a letter from Mohammed Hafiz Fazil, detailing the particulars of a conversation between him and Mohan Sinh, in which the latter asserted he acted under the express orders of Ranjit Sinh, and that he

\* Sansar Chand died in the end of 1823, and was succeeded by his son, Anirudh Chand, with the concurrence of Ranjit Sinh; but, in 1828, the Raja refusing to give his sister in marriage to the son of the Sikh, Dhyan Sinh, a *protégé* of Ranjit's, was obliged to fly his country, and place himself and family under British protection. The Raj of Kotoch then became part of the territories of Ranjit.—ED.

should not attend to any addressed to other officers: that his instructions were to prevent by all means my going on to Ladakh: that he knew his master's ways, who had treated me with civility to gain my confidence, but who never intended to permit the prosecution of my journey. My only resource was to appeal to Ranjit Singh himself, to whom I also forwarded a report of this conversation.

Whilst I awaited at Shujanpur a reply to my letter, the Raja and his son and brother treated me with the greatest attention, inviting me to spend part of every day with them, and sending me presents of sweetmeats and fruit,—when an occurrence took place which confirmed their regard, and established between us a close and curious connexion. On the night of the 30th of June, Fateh Chand, the Raja's brother, a stout man about fifty-four, was taken seriously ill. He grew worse on the following day, and in the evening was considered to be in a dangerous condition. At the Raja's desire I went to see him. He was tossing and tumbling about on a low bed, on which he was with difficulty retained by several attendants. Upon the

floor on one side of his bed was a row of lamps, by which a naked ascetic, with matted hair and body smeared with ashes, was seated, gesticulating and muttering charms and prayers. Eight or ten Hindu and Mohammedan physicians sat or knelt round the bed, and in an adjoining room was the Raja with his family and attendants.

Fateh Chand was insensible, and breathed like a person in a fit of apoplexy. One leg was swathed with cloth from the toe to the hip, and bands of various-coloured cloth and thread were bound round his arms and ancles. As cholera was prevailing in the neighbourhood, I thought, at first, this was his complaint, but the symptoms were more of an apoplectic character, and I recommended bleeding freely, and the actual cautery to the stomach and breast. The Raja, however, could not be prevailed upon to employ these remedies. The Brahmans had pronounced that the prince was possessed by an evil spirit, and the Raja ordered them to drive it away. I wished to withdraw, but, at the Raja's entreaties, remained with him for about two hours, and witnessed the gesticula-

tions and mummeries practised as exorcisms. After about an hour had passed, one Brahman asked another more actively busied in gesticulating with his hands, and muttering incantations, what answer the goddess, Debi, vouchsafed?—to which he honestly replied Debi was silent, and his charms had no power. As the Raja continued averse to suffering me to adopt a more rational course, I at last retired.

At seven on the following morning a message from the Raja summoned me again to his brother. He had been removed from the bangala in the garden to an outer building, was abandoned by Brahmans, Fakirs, and physicians, and was placed on the ground to die. Much of his personal property had been distributed amongst the Brahmans and the poor, but his cows had not yet been given away. An astrologer had ventured to predict that if he recovered, it could only be through my aid, and the possibility of his recovery thus implied preserved his cattle, the grant of which would be injurious to his consequence should he recover. In complying with the Raja's request to attempt his brother's re-

storation, of which there seemed but little hope, I demanded, in the first place, liberty to do what I pleased with the patient, without objection or interference, and, in the second, that he should not suffer it to be said, in the event of that failure which was so probable, that his brother's death was, in any degree, owing to my treatment. He said that he gave his brother entirely up to me, and that, as far as he was able, he would prevent any blame being ascribed to me should I be unable to save his life. With this authority and guarantee I set myself assiduously, though with but little confidence, to adopt such measures as I conceived calculated to save Fateh Chand from apparently inevitable death.

It would be out of place here to detail the plans I pursued : they were, of course, of an active character, and such as, under other circumstances, would scarcely be warrantable : after resolute perseverance, however, they were effectual. The state of torpor was exchanged for vital, though sluggish, action in the course of the night. On the next day consciousness, though imperfect, was re-

stored, and on the 4th he was sensible. He continued to mend, though slowly, during the 5th and 6th, and on the 7th might be pronounced out of immediate danger: by the 10th he was convalescent.

Nothing could exceed the expression, and I believe the sentiment of gratitude on the part of the Rājā and his son. Besides a valuable dress of honour, the former conferred upon me a grant of land, desiring me to appoint some one to manage it on my behalf. The whole country seemed to rejoice in Fateh Chand's recovery, for his courage and frankness made him a general favourite. He himself, when sufficiently restored, insisted on exchanging his turban for my hat, and making me his brother by adoption. He placed his turban on my head, and my hat on his; each waved his hand, holding a handful of rupees, round the other's head, and the rupees were distributed amongst the servants. He also gave me some green *dúb* grass, which I was desired to wear, and thus, notwithstanding the difference of caste and complexion, I became an honorary member of the family of Sansar

Chand. Whatever might be the value of such an association, it was a most unequivocal testimony of the sincerity of their gratitude.

During these proceedings letters from Ranjit Sinh arrived, in which he disclaimed all countenance of Mohan Sinh's conduct, and assured me that orders had been sent to that chief not only to desist from offering any obstruction to the advance of my baggage, but to provide facilities for its conveyance. He also alluded to the robbery, and promised me, if the money was not recovered from the plunderers, he would be responsible for its restitution; and he concluded by good-humouredly desiring me to place more reliance on the word of Khálsa Jí—a title properly belonging to the Sikh confederacy, but which Ranjit had adopted for himself. Advices also came from Mundi that Mohan Sinh had announced that parties were collecting for the transport of the baggage to the frontier. I wrote to Mr. Trebeck to send me word when he had crossed the Byas, as I would then join him from Shujanpur; but the rain had been so incessant, and the river was so much

swollen, that at present it would not be safe to attempt the passage.

One evening late I heard a sound, apparently not far from my tent, that seemed to be the booming of the *batér* or quail, and sallying forth to ascertain the cause, I found some boys snaring those birds. One of them was engaged in blowing into a small earthen pot with a hole at the bottom, which was placed close to the ground, and thus making the sound I had heard. Two others were seated with a light near a pile of dry grass. They told me that the noise, which was kept up for an hour or two, attracted the birds to the spot in considerable numbers, on which the boys by the grass set fire to it. The sudden blaze had the effect of bewildering the quails, so that they did not, for some time, attempt to escape, and, in the interval, the fowlers knocked them down with sticks. In this manner they often killed a great many birds; but it was only practised in the rains, and succeeded with none but quails.

I left Shujanpur on the 22nd of July. The Raja came to my tent in the morning, and took leave of me with much kindness. His

son met me on my way to the river, and bade me a friendly farewell. I quitted the town at nine o'clock, having now before me no further obstacles to my penetrating to Tibet than the natural difficulties of the country and the state of the weather.

The Raj of Kotoch, or Kangra, which is subject to Raja Sansar Chand, is about forty short kos in length from north to south, and varies in breadth from east to west from fifteen to forty kos. The greatest length is from Pathichar Mahal on the north-west, near the frontier of Chamba, to Bilaspur, on the south-east: the greatest breadth is from Baidyanath Maharaj, or Iswar Linga, a shrine of Siva, and place of religious resort on the north-east, adjacent to Kulu and Mundi, to Tulhati Mahal, to the south, on the borders of Jaswal. It is surrounded by Mundi and Sukhet on the east; by Kahalur and the Vale of Jaswa on the south; by part of Jaswa, Siba, and Gula on the west; and Kulu and Chamba on the north. It is separated from the Bist (or Byas and Setlej), Doab of Jalandhar, by the states of Jaswa, Siba, and Gula; and from the great snowy

range of the Himalaya by those of Mundi, Sukhet, Chamba, and Kulu. It is, however, close to the mountains, and is of considerable elevation. In some parts of it there is ice on the ground in July.

The Raj is divided into three provinces, or Kotoch, Changa, and Palam. The latter is the more western and northern, bordering on Chamba. Three considerable rivers flow from the northern mountains, the Bángangá, Kurali, and Nayagul, which unite in Haripur, and, under the name of Trigadh, fall into the Byas at Siba fort. The Byas itself waters the eastern portion of the Raj, flowing through Shujanpur, Tira, and Nadaun.

The natural products of Kotoch are not many, nor, in their present state, of much value, but they might be much improved under an enlightened government, strong enough to protect its territory from foreign aggression. Iron has been found, but the ore has not been wrought. In the neighbouring Raj of Mundi there are valuable mines of this metal. I have not heard of any other mineral productions except salt, of which there is a deposit in Mundi, from which the

consumption of the mountaineers in these districts is principally supplied.

Amongst the vegetable products may be enumerated rhubarb, which is procured in abundance on the farther hills of Kangra. All the pieces of the root which I have seen are, however, injured by decay of the central part, which makes it comparatively of little use. Opium is raised largely on the Kulu frontier, but the cultivation of the poppy and extraction of the juice are ill understood. There is a considerable demand both for opium and the poppy in the Panjab, as the Sikhs, whose religious creed forbids the use of tobacco, supply its place by opium and an infusion of poppy heads, to both of which they are much addicted, the former being used by the more wealthy, the latter by the poorer people. Cotton is reared on the skirts of the mountains at the head of the Doab, and furnishes the material from which the finer cloths of Hoshyarpur are manufactured, for the supply of the north-western parts of Asia to a very great extent. Agents from very remote places attend at Hoshyarpur, make advances to the weavers, and,

taking the cloth in the rough from the loom, bleach, wash, and pack it each in his own fashion to suit the market of his country. The cloths of Hoshiarpur, however, are generally light and flimsy. The district of Palam and the country east of Shujanpur produce plentiful crops of wheat and rice of a superior description. No timber trees of any bulk occurred upon the road, but firs of large size are said to grow in some of the tracts along the Byas. At no great distance from that river, also, on a mountain range called Nag ki Dhar, is an extensive bambu forest, from which the whole country is supplied. One of the most abundant trees met with is the mulberry, and it might be possible, therefore, to introduce the silk-worm with advantage into the country. Bees, both large and small, are numerous, and are domesticated for their honey, which is of an excellent quality.

Since the loss of Kangra, the Raja has resided principally at Shujanpur, or rather Alem-pur, on the right bank of the Byas, in gardens in which some small buildings accommodate himself and his court, and a larger one is

erected for his zenana. His earlier residence, and that of his predecessor, was at Tíra, where an extensive pile of buildings stands upon an eminence on the left bank of the river; the apartments are more spacious and commodious than is usual in Indian palaces, but they are now made no use of, except for the Raja's personal armoury, in which are some splendid swords, and for a small manufactory of carpets for his own use. Sansar Chand quitted this residence it is said in consequence of its being distant from water; but another reason is assigned by popular rumour. On one of the Raja's visits to Lahore, Ranjit Singh remarked that he had heard much of the beauty of the palace at Tíra, and should like to see it. Sansar Chand replied he should have felt honoured by the visit, but that he had quitted Tíra, and the place had fallen into so much decay, that it was unfit to receive the Sikh chief, as he might satisfy himself by sending a person to inspect it. Ranjit accordingly dispatched an envoy for this purpose; but a messenger, sent off immediately by Sansar Chand, with orders to travel night and day, anticipated the Sikh

envoy in sufficient time to give Tira a dismantled and desolate appearance. The report made by the Sikh deterred Ranjit from his proposed visit, but the circumstance excluded Sansar Chand from his patrimonial mansion.

Raja Sansar Chand spends the early part of the day in the ceremonies of his religion ; and from ten till noon in communication with his officers and courtiers. For several days prior to my departure he passed this period at a small bangala, which he had given up for my accommodation, on the outside of the garden. At noon the Raja retires for two or three hours ; after which he ordinarily plays at chess for some time, and the evening is devoted to singing and naching, in which the performers recite most commonly Brij bhákha songs relating to Krishna. Sansar Chand is fond of drawing, and has many artists in his employ : he has a large collection of pictures, but the greater part represent the feats of Krishna and Balaram, the adventures of Arjuna, and subjects from the Mahabharat : it also includes portraits of many of the neighbouring Rajas, and of their prede-

cessors. Amongst these latter were two profiles of Alexander the Great, of which Rai Anirudha gave me one. It represents him with prominent features, and auburn hair flowing over his shoulders; he wears a helmet on his head begirt with a string of pearls, but the rest of his costume is Asiatic. The Raja could not tell me whence the portrait came: he had become possessed of it by inheritance.

Sansar Chand deduces his descent from Mahadeo, and has a pedigree in which his ancestors are traced to their celestial progenitor, through many thousand years. I requested to have a copy of this document, and some Kashmir Pundits were ordered to transcribe it against my return. The pedigree is written in verse, and contains in general little more than the birth and death of each male individual of the family.

The practice of the horrible rite of Sati is frequent in these mountains: two widows were burnt during my stay, the elder of whom was not more than fourteen. The wives of Fateh Chand were in readiness to

accompany his body to the pile, when the success of my endeavours rescued them, for a while at least, from so fearful a consummation.