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Notes on Ancient Temples and other remains in the vicinity of Suddyah, Upper Assam.—By Major S. F. HANNAY. Communicated by W. SETON KARR, Esq., Under-Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Being desirous of making some researches in the jungles north of Suddyah for the remains of the former inhabitants of that section of Upper Assam, I took the opportunity of my yearly visit to Laikwah, to make excursions in the different directions pointed out by the villagers as leading to temples, tanks, and other remains of a people different in every respect from the present races inhabiting the country, and who are associated in their ideas with the Demigods and Deotas of ancient Hindooism.

Bishmook Nuggur.—This is a Hill Fort; built according to the traditions of the people of Upper Assam, by a rajah of that name (Bishmook), whom the Hindoostanees appear to identify with Bheekrum, rajah of Koondilpoor, the father of the celebrated Rúkhnáni. It is situated at the foot of the mountains nearly north of Suddyah, between the Dikrung and Depong rivers, and may be distant about 16 miles.

In proceeding to this Fort, we passed over the Suddyah plain in a northerly direction, and at a distance of about six miles came out on the Dikrung river, up the bed of which we continued our course on elephants, till the morning of the 3d day, when we reached the hills. The route was then on foot, through the tree jungle on the right bank of the river, winding along the tracks of wild elephants (but more frequently obliged to cut our path) for about two hours, when we found our-

selves at the foot of a steep ascent of 80 or 100 feet, up which we scrambled to a fine piece of table-land covered with splendid timber, amongst which we observe the Jack, Toon and Tchaum. Here our guide, who by the bye had never seen the Fort, said we had reached it, and mentioned that the tract of table land covered with various fruit trees extended inland to the foot of the Guroee mountain.* No vestiges of architecture were visible however, and we were thus disappointed as in the absence of any knowledge whatever as to localities, it would have been too laborious an undertaking to explore such an extent of country. It was agreed upon therefore to proceed for some distance along the edge of the steep bounding the table-land on the left, in the hopes of finding a road or path which might lead to a gateway, and perceiving in our course one or two paths, well worn by wild animals in their progress to water, we passed down one of these, and were fortunate enough, after turning and winding through the hollow ground formed by the steep we had just left, and an opposite spur of the elevated land, to discover that a high rampart of earth crossed the opening towards the plain; crowning this, we found ourselves amongst bricks scattered about, with a low wall running along the top of the outer edge, which on nearer inspection proved to be an upper parapet overtopping the rampart, the lower portion showing a solid facing of hewn sandstone blocks, of more or less height, according to the nature of the ground.

This rampart ran in a direction about North West, and in the distance of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, which we inspected, the brick wall continued on the left, sometimes to the height of five feet, loop-holed in several places, apparently for arrows and spears, but more frequently in a very dilapidated state from huge trees having taken root in the rampart, and wild animals passing over it. At the distance of $\frac{1}{2}$ of a mile, a spur of the table-land touched upon the rampart and a brick wall crossed it, ascending the spur apparently to the level land above; here also must have been a gateway or passage of some kind through the cross wall, but all had

* Guroee Mountain, and also Geree, so called from a tribe of Mishmees inhabiting the lower spurs. The Thi Gurcee is North of Suddyah, and in a direct line about 20 miles distant. The highest peak must be upwards of 8000 feet, being often covered with snow in the cold season, and behind it are seen several snow-capped mountains of a higher range. The Diggaroo and Dikrung rivers rise from the Southern slopes of this mountain, and the former brings down those beautiful boulders of primitive limestone-marble which supplies Western Assam with lime.

disappeared in the heaps of bricks lying about. The wall and rampart however still continued to the north-west, but having so little local information about the place, and being limited in our researches to that day only, it was considered advisable to return. We therefore confined our further observations to that portion of the works we had passed.

Conjectures as to the nature and extent of the works.—The table-land to the east being naturally strong from the steepness and difficulty of ascent, required no artificial defences, and from the circumstance of the rampart and wall abutting upon the southermost point of the table-land, it appeared to me evident that those works, to their utmost extent westward, probably to the Dibong, about 4 miles distant, were merely intended to enclose the table-land at the foot of the hills, and thus form a place of refuge in time of invasion. The quantity of fruit trees, such as Shaum (*Artocarpus chaplasha*), Jack and Mangoe, would also lead us to suppose that the place had been peopled, or at least that it had been occasionally occupied as a summer residence. No buildings however are said to be on this hill fortification, but the Mishmees, who describe it as of great extent, speak also of a gateway by a hill stream, where there are large earthenware vessels similar to the *Naud*, used for holding water, besides other smaller vessels of various shapes; and the truth of the latter is confirmed by the numerous debris of earthen vessels found in the bed of the Dikrung river, of a description totally different from the manufactures of the present day in Assam, being more (as regards quality of material and shape) of that of the earthenware of Gangetic India.

Description and quality of works.—Although bearing the appearance of great age, for in many places the wall has bulged and fallen down, it has evidently been well and substantially built; the sandstone blocks, varying from 10 to 8 inches thick, 1 foot broad and 20 inches long, are rudely, but evenly chiselled with the point, and they are closely and regularly laid. The bricks are first rate, varying in size from 8 to 5, and 6 to 4 inches, and from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, and the parapet wall formed of these, about 4 or $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet in thickness. The sandstone facing of the rampart may be somewhat less, but the whole masonry work is laid without cement or fastening of any kind; immediately over the sandstone, are two rows of bricks, and over these two others projecting, so as to form a rude cornice, which gives an appearance of neatness.

The rows or layers of masonry (sandstone) alternate from 5 to 7 and 9 from the bottom of the wall outside, a difference which may be accounted for either from the natural steepness of the ground in some parts, requiring less wall; or from the earth having accumulated against the wall from natural causes, during a long period of time. Close to where the wall abuts against the table-land, there is a turn at right angles given evidently to form a flank defence. No writing or rude marks on the stones such as I subsequently found at other places, were discovered in this hill fortification.

The Tamasesee Mai, or Copper Temple.—This temple is designated by Buchanan “the Eastern Kamykya,” and its site is stated by him to be on the Dikkori Basini, near the north-eastern boundary of the ancient kingdom of Kamarupa.

The small romantic little stream, on the right bank of which it is built, is not the Dikharoo river however, although in its course to the Burrumpooter it receives several accessories from that river. Dol, or Déwâl panee, is the name by which the temple stream is known to the Assamese.

Formerly, and whilst the remains of the Hindoo races on the north (right bank) of the Burrumpooter were still unmolested by the Ahom or Shan dynasty in Assam, the eastern Kamykhya was accessible from Western India, by that stupendous work the raised road or alley, which is known to have extended from the modern Kooch Behar to the Eastern confines of the Assam valley;—subsequently also, as the Ahoms became proselytes to Hindooism, although their zealous policy excluded people from Western India, the natives of the valley had permission to propitiate, and I believe a road went direct through the present Suddyah to the Temple, or viâ Choonpoora or Sonipore of the maps, a place on the north bank of the Burrumpooter, the residence of the Suddyah Kwa Gohain, an officer of the above government, in charge of the eastern districts of Assam. Choonpoora is about 10 miles east of the present station of Koondil Mookh, and the Temple may be about 8 miles inland from Choonpoora, in a north-east direction.

A generation and more has passed away since the votaries of this Temple were numerous enough to keep the roads open, and the only accessible route now-a-days, is by the course of the Dálpanee, up which the anxious pilgrim frequently wanders for days without being able to find the object of his search, for the country is one mass of dense jungle,

and so many streams fall into that which passes the holy spot, that even those who have visited the place, and ought to have a knowledge of the landmarks, are frequently puzzled, that an idea prevails, that the goddess, or titular deity of the Temple, is to be found and propitiated only when it pleases herself. I believe indeed that in more than one instance, pilgrims have returned ungratified; and Byragees and others from Western India, in attempting to find the Temple alone, have perished from hunger, or become a prey to the tigers, which are numerous.

According to the accounts of my learned Hindoo friends, the worship at the eastern Kamykhya is the Yoni, but more properly the Linga of Siva, in conjunction with the Yoni. Siva has also been propitiated in his character of the destroyer, and it is well known that human sacrifices have been made there within the present century. I have not been able, however, to ascertain the date of the last sacrifice, and whether it existed up to the invasion of the Burmese, but I have been told as a positive fact, that the particular class of people from amongst whom the victims for such sacrifice were taken, are still in existence, and one family is now living in Suddyah. However, I have not made any particular inquiries regarding so barbarous a rite, and will merely observe that orthodox Hindoos do not admit the necessity for human sacrifice at the Eastern Kamykhya,* and account for its introduction, by the barbarity and ignorance of the people. My own opinion is also in favor of this, and the probability that it was so introduced by the Ahoms in their early ignorance of Hindooism, or that some wily and bigotted brahman, may have made it a price for the liberty of proselytism to his creed, the sects of which in Assam, the Ahoms, following their advent into the country, had long persecuted.

That Hindu Buddhism and Brahminical Hindooism both existed from a very remote period in Assam, I think we need not doubt, as well as, that the latter came down to a very late date; of which indeed, there can be no better proof than the fact of its influence having led to the conversion of the Bhuddistical Tai race who had become the rulers of the country.†

* Kamykhya should be more properly written Kam Ichchha, from *Kama* and *Ichchha*.

† According to Hiouan thsang, Buddhism had made no progress in Assam up to the middle of the seventh century. The Tibetan accounts which make Assam the scene of Sákya's death, are now well ascertained to be in this respect erroneous.—Eps.

Admitting also that the kingdom of Kamroop had attained to an equal degree of civilization with coeval Hindu dynasties of central India,* there is nevertheless but little doubt of its having fallen away into a state of anarchy and barbarism, for centuries perhaps, before the middle of the 15th, and this from the influx of impure tribes, on every side; and their mixing up with the original inhabitants of the plains.—The advent of these having followed upon the dying off of the former dynasties, or their downfall by invasion from Gangetic India, of which last there are two mentioned, that of the Emperor Vicramaditya and of Yitari† a pious Rajput, from Western India, who was the founder of a dynasty in central Assam, which became extinct with Rajah Sukrauk in 1478 A. D.

Indeed from whatever cause, its beauty, extraordinary fertility, and richness,—or perhaps the unwarlike character of its inhabitants,‡—it is certain we hear of Kamaroopa having been the prey of the invader from India, from the time of its being the abode of the primitive Assurs, and Deotás,§ to the last invasion of the Mahomedans of Bengal in the middle of the 17th century; I am inclined however to give its downfall from former greatness, a very early date, at least to a period prior to the first Mahomedan invasion of Kamroop, and would attribute it solely to the peculiar tenets of its people (the worship of Siva) and the prolonged struggles which in former times took place throughout India, between this and the opposite sect of Vaisnava; and here also we shall find the true cause of the unfinished and ruinous state of the extensive remains in central Assam, as also on its Eastern confines, and not ascribe the desecration, either to the rude hand of the Mahomedan, or the Shan invader.|| About the middle of the 15th century, and perhaps

* The extensive ruins of Sonitpoor or Lohitpoor, as described by the late Capt. Westmacott, prove this I think, and in the praises of Chandragupta, as translated from inscription No. 2 of the Allahabad Pillar, and published in J. A. S. for June 1836, we have in stanza 19, "Of him who when his fame penetrated to the friendly forest of Pines, to Kamarupa, to Nepal," &c.

† Generally known as Dhuram-pal.

‡ In latter days at least.

§ In thus alluding to the Assurs and Deotas, I am of opinion that Assam or Kamaroopa was one of the earliest conquests of Indian Khetri kings, and the seat of that primitive Hindooism, (or shall we say Buddhism,) which existed previous to the Brahminical or priestly doctrine which superseded it.

|| The first invasion of the Mahomedans is stated to have been in the parly part of the

before the death of Sukrauk, the last of the Yitari or Dhuram-pal line in A. D. 1478, a revival of Hindooism according to Brahminical tenets, appears (from Prinsep's Chronological Table of the North bank Burumpooter dynasty) to have been carried out, by the introduction of Brahmins from Gour, and from this time, we may date a gradual extension of its influence over all classes, the Tai rulers of the country having become proselytes somewhere between 1611-49. After the death of Sukrauk without issue, the different classes of the people, appear by the same Chronological tables to have been formed into 12 Rajs, known in Assam as the Bárah Bhóóeáh—these however, soon came under the dominant power of the Ahoms, who commencing with the Cassarees and Sooteeahs on the East, slowly but securely extended their supremacy by force and intermarriage, until they eventually assumed the sovereign power to the confines of Bengal.

Structure of Temple and style of architecture.—The Temple is situated close on the right bank of the romantic little stream, called the Dolpanee in the midst of a dense forest, in which there are some splendid specimens of the Nagasur. The dimensions of the interior is a square of 8 feet, the walls being about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, excepting in front, where there are two recesses on each side of the door, which is formed of three entire blocks of stone. The outer line of wall therefore encloses a square of about 17 feet. With the exception of the lintel and sides of the doorway, (Pl. XXX, fig. 1) the four walls are quite plain, both inside outside; from the basement outside however, at the height of 10 feet, there is a projection of stone slightly fluted on the underside, which forms a cornice, and above this there may have been about 2 feet more of wall upon which the roof rested, as not a vestige is remaining of this last, it would be difficult to speak confidently of its particular construction, but as there are several long pieces of stone, levelled at the lower end which have fallen inside, it is possible that these may have formed the groins of support to the roof—eight in number—the intermediate spaces between these, being filled in with thin slabs, of which there are many lying about, and the whole covered over with sheets of beaten copper, laced together through copper loops fastened on the

13th century, but it does not appear that they penetrated beyond Rungpoor, Bengal, which anciently belonged to the kingdom of Kamrupa.

edges of the different sheets ; as the groins however, are not above 5 or 6 feet long, the roof must have been rather flat ; a carved vase-shaped block, now lying in the river, in all probability formed the centre of the dome. The Linga, two in number, are in the middle of a large stone inside, and accessible by a descent of a few steps from the doorway ; in which there was a folding-door of stone or wood, judging from the hole at top and bottom on each side.

The style of architecture is ancient, but I should be inclined to think the present building of comparatively modern date, from the circumstance of finding a thin layer of brick *soorkee* or mortar between the rows of masonry ; if such is the case, we might reasonably suppose it had been rebuilt about the time of the revival of Brahminical Hindooism, as before noticed. The original shape has without doubt been adhered to, and the same material employed as on its first construction. This looks old, and bears marks of iron fastenings now completely decayed.

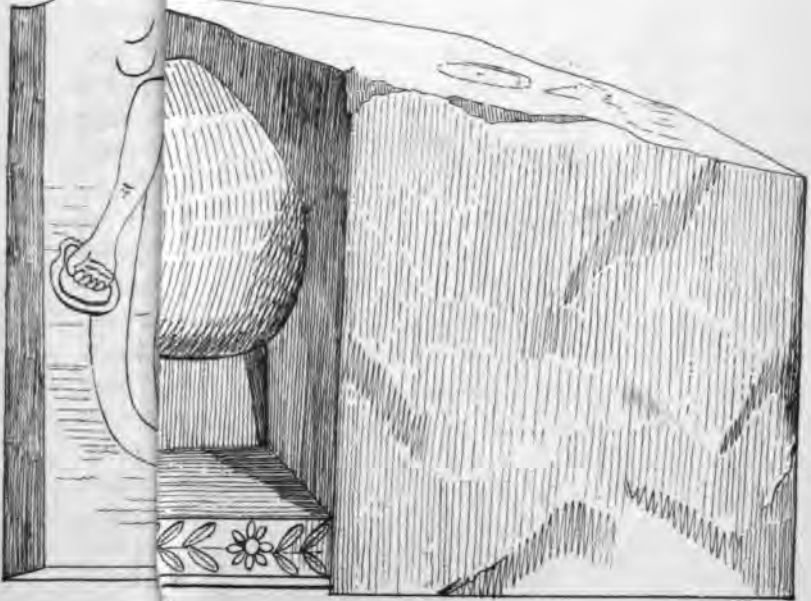
Building material of Temple and enclosure.—The material of the temple, with the exception of the door lintel sides, and projecting wall on each side, is a coarse grit, well adapted for building purposes. The blocks averaging from one foot thick, the same in depth, and 18 inches long, are smoothly chiselled, and the masonry is evenly and closely fitted. The three blocks forming the doorway, each of $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and 2 feet by 18 inches in girth, with the blocks of the projecting wall, are reddish porphyritic granite of an adamantine hardness ; and must have required exceedingly well tempered tools to work, the chiselling being with the point in straight lines, which give a ribbed appearance.

The site of the temple is as near as possible square with the cardinal points, the doorway to the west, the back wall having only a space of 12 paces between it and the wall of the outer enclosure, which on the east, rises directly up from the right bank of the stream. This is a substantial brick wall, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick rising to the height of 8 feet, on a foundation of rudely cut blocks of sandstone. The entrance of this enclosure is on the west face, where there has been a stone gateway and door, of which the lintel carved on the edge in a chain of lotus flowers, is lying close by, as well as some ornamented small pillars upon which in all probability the elephant* (Plate XXX. fig. 2.)

* The tusks of this elephant are said to have been of silver. The block from which it is cut measures 4 feet in length, 2 feet high, 18 inches broad.



Fig 2



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Pl. XXX.

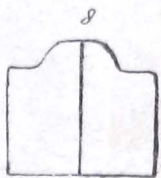
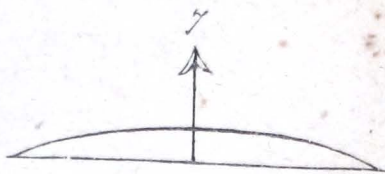
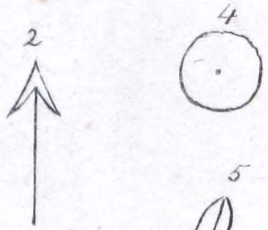
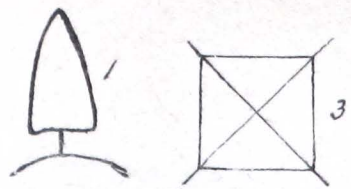


Fig 3

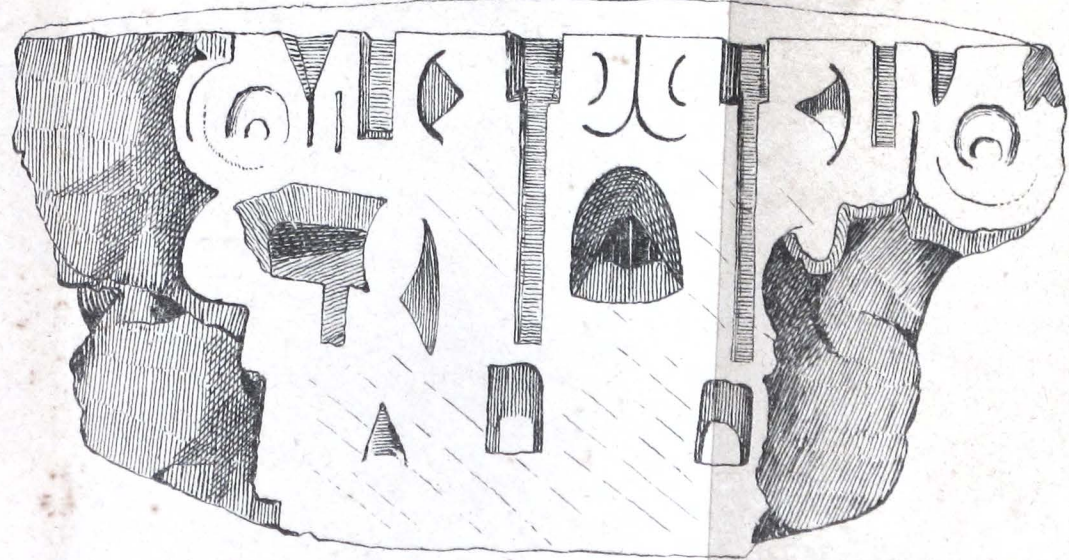


Fig 1

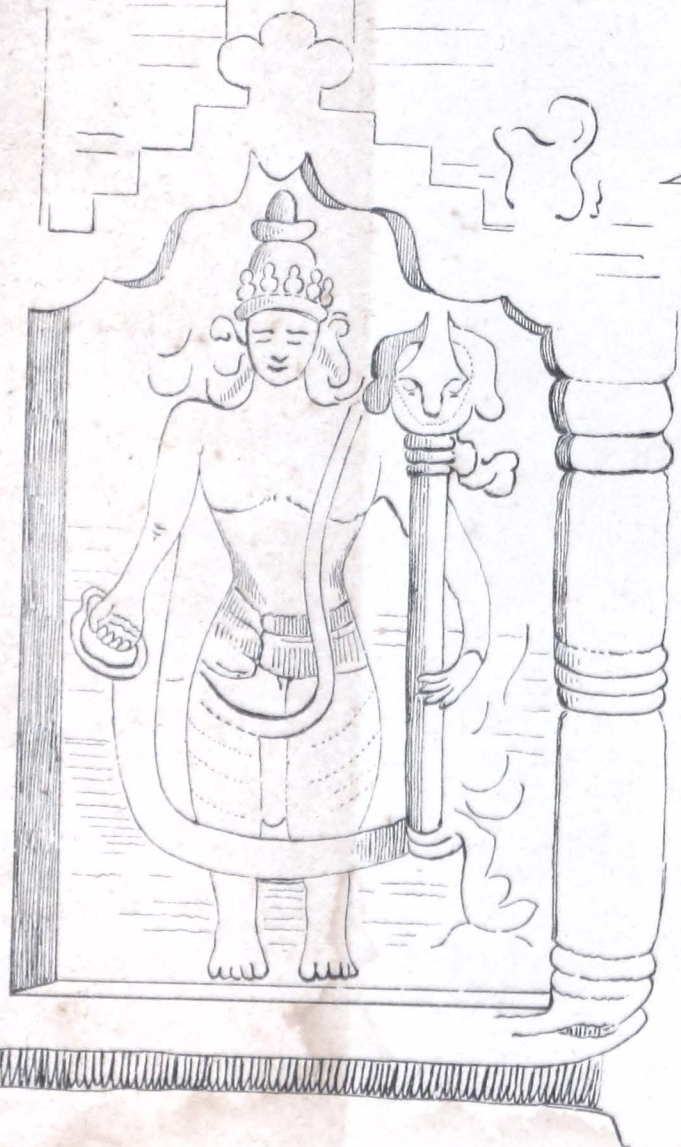
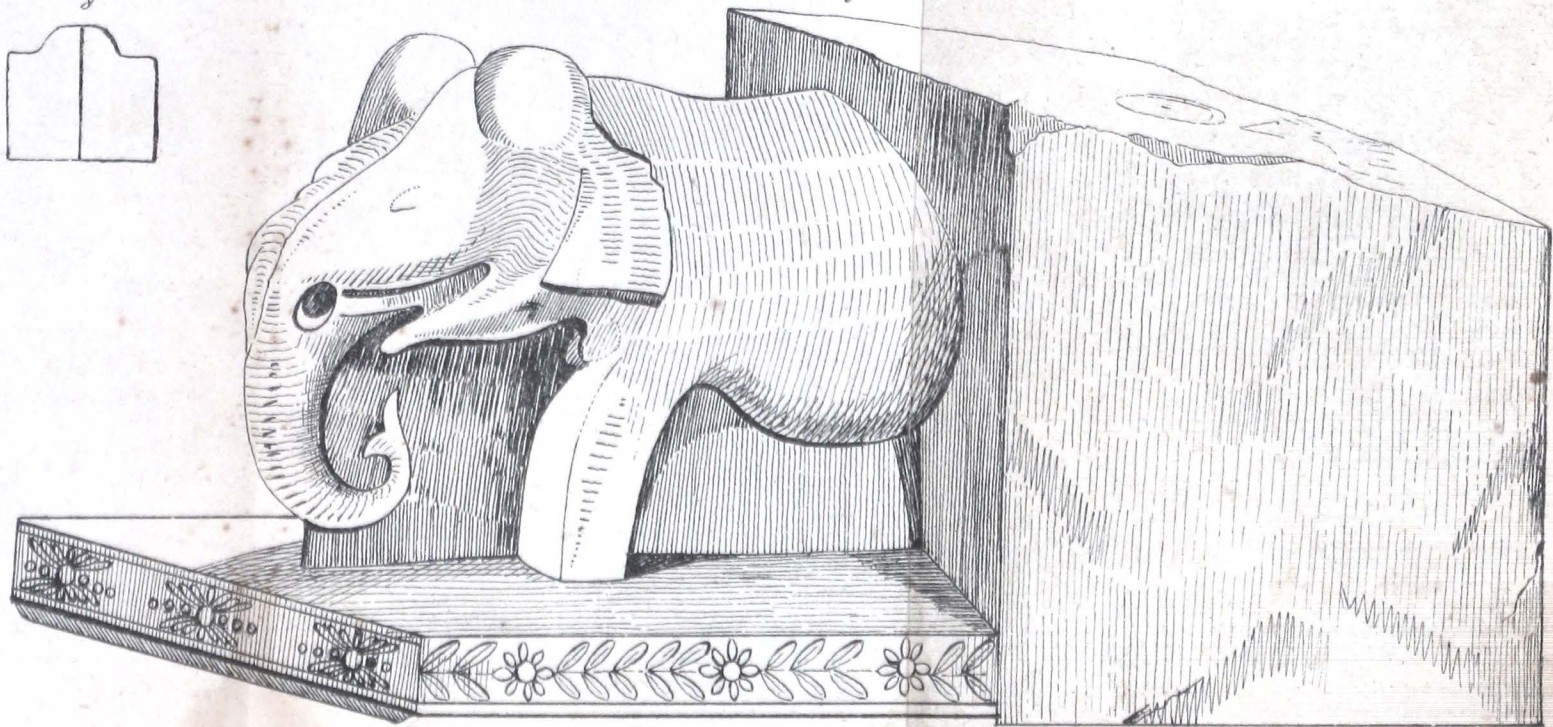


Fig 2



was placed near the doorway ; at the south-east corner, there was also a stone gateway leading to the small stream, in the bed of which are several carved and plain blocks of granite and sandstone to which it would be difficult now to assign a place ; one of these is the triangular shaped weather-worn block of granite (Fig. 3, Pl. XXX.) on which are symbols, which perhaps may have some meaning, and give a clue to the era of the building ;—one or two of the letter-like figures, assimilate with some of the characters of the ancient Nagree alphabet, but the shaded figures are too deeply cut to suppose they are more than symbolical of a particular era and people. On some of the blocks lying in the river, and in the foundation of the enclosure wall, as also on the elephant, I found the marks, represented at 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, of Pl. XXX, and which I fancy are typical of the sect of the mason, or of the builders. In front of the temple, and lying between a small brick terrace opposite the door, are several round-shaped plates of granite sunk to a level with the ground, upon which offerings are said to have been placed. The brick terrace has a low wall on three sides, now in ruins, but the outer enclosure wall is in a tolerable state of preservation, and along the inside of both eastern and western faces, brick tiles about 14 inches square are let in, having stamped upon them in high relief, figures of some of the Hindoo Avatars ; the principal are the caparisoned horse—the same with warrior, in a high conical cap,—Hunooman,—the fabulous horse and tree,—two peacocks fighting,—one bird preying on another, with a variety of flowers of the Lotus, Champā, and Nagasur, done in different forms ; most of the figures are dressed in the conical shaped cap ; but I am inclined to think, this wall and its embellishments, are coeval with the second building of the temple about 400 years ago.

The present ruinous state can be easily accounted for by the jungle having grown up so thick around it and upon it ; for it is quite impossible that such buildings could stand when once trees and shrubs had taken root on the walls, as one stone displaced, the roof would soon come down. The present state of dilapidation is however ascribed to an earthquake about 5 years ago, no doubt assisted by the numerous wild elephants who tear down the shrubs from the highest points they can reach, and rub themselves against the walls.

Altar of worship called Boora Booree.—Following my visit to the

Copper Temple, I was induced from the reports of Deoree Sooteeahs* of Suddyah to visit a temple or place of worship, situated close on the left bank of the Dikrung river, and to look for other remains which were said to exist in the Doab, or tract of country lying between that river and the Debong, connected, according to the traditions of the people, with the Rajah Bishmook before mentioned, and his capital of Koondilpoor.

We found this temple of worship about 10 miles distant from Suddyah, the last four miles of the road lying along the bed of the Dikrung to the mouth of a small stream on the left bank, called the Deopanee, in the immediate vicinity of which it is situated. This extraordinary looking place, represented in sketch No. 3, and rough ground plan annexed, is considered by the natives of the district, the most ancient and holy spot in Upper Assam; and the source from which all other objects of worship have sprung, not even excepting that of the Copper Temple. By the orthodox Hindoos, it would be considered an altar to Mahadeo, or Siva and Parvatti, with their attendant Gunas. From its shape and the number of the Linga however, I

* The Deoree Sooteeahs are the hereditary officiating priests of the copper temple, and Boora Booree. They belong to a class of the Assamese population deserving of notice, as the Sooteeahs or Chootyahs, who at one time previous to Ahom supremacy held power on the North and South bank of Burrumpooter, in the modern district of Suddyah and Saikwah, and according to their own account, are descendants of the original Hindoo Khetree races of ancient Kamarupa. (The family of the late Muttack Senaputtee are Chootyahs). This tradition might derive some corroboration from the fact, that the language of this race, now only known to the families of the priests, contains a great proportion of Sanscrit and Hindee as well as Burmese words, which last are probably derived from Pali, and the whole language may therefore have been originally one of the Pracrit dialects of the day; according to the Tai races also, the "Khwan Chootyah (or Chootyah,) language appears to have been the only written language in existence at the period of their advent in Assam;—and it is notorious, that both Burmese and Shans substitute the Y for the R, and we would then have it written more like Xshattrya or Chuttryah. In the present time the Sooteeahs are called Hindoo Sooteeahs, and Ahom Sooteeahs, the last named being those with whom the Ahoms or Saums intermarried at an early date. The class of the Assam population known as Beheeahs in upper Assam, also consider themselves belonging to the Hindoo Sooteeah family. With reference indeed, to the characteristic features of the different people in Upper Assam, it may be generally remarked I believe that amongst the Chootyahs—Beheeahs and Kilitás who have not intermarried with the Saums, the high and regular features of the Hindoo predominate. Many of the latter indeed are very well featured, with the grey eye which we frequently find amongst the Rajputs of Western India.

should be inclined to think that no better explanation of its original and peculiar worship could be given, than what is written of the attributes of *Adi Buddha*, and *Adi Prajna*, in the quotations from original Sanscrit authorities on Buddhism, published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* for the month of Feb. 1836.

The altar is a hexagon, each face measuring about 8 feet inside. The architecture quite plain, the wall two feet thick, showing on the outside from the foundation 5 rows of sandstone blocks, varying from 10 to 8 inches thick, the masonry bound together with iron clamps. The inner side of the wall is brick, and on the top is a coping of brick soorkee without lime, which last looks like a comparatively modern addition. The whole space inside has been paved with rough flags of sandstone; and in the centre, placed north and south, is a large slab shaped like a gravestone, containing the *Linga*, as represented in the rough ground plan.

In front of the altar on the West side, is a terrace or *choubootra*, upon which offerings are placed.* In later days, since the proselytism of the *Ahoms*, and the re-establishment of the worship at these temples, the *Boora Booree* had a light roof supported on posts, covering the whole space; this however is long since decayed and gone.

At a distance of 180 feet from the North-East corner of the altar is an outer rampart and deep ditch, corresponding exactly with the inner hexagon; and at a somewhat less distance is another, but lower rampart of the same shape. There is no gateway, or the remains of one, visible in these outer works; but a raised road leads out from the Western face of the altar; within the first enclosure, also in the North-West corner, is the remains of a small tank, and about 20 paces in front of the terrace is an upright stone (sandstone) with a moulding on the edge, placed there I was told for sharpening the *dhas* of sacrifice. The whole space is a dense jungle, and the site of the altar had to be cleared, before it could be examined; within the enclosed ground, as well as on the inner rampart, are some of the most magnificent *Nahor trees* I have ever seen. The surrounding jungle (underwood) is mostly the wild *Betelnut* (as it is called,) and the vicinity of the spot

* The most esteemed offering made at this temple is a white buffalo, but pigeons, kids, and ducks are also sacrificed along with offerings made of money, cloth, opium, flowers, rice, and in fact every article of food.

is notorious for the number of the Sewah Palm (*Caryota Ureus*). Toon of a large description, and other timber trees, common to upper Assam, are also in abundance.

During a sojourn of a week on the banks of the Dikrung river, daily excursions were made into the jungle, in the hopes of finding the remains of another temple and tank, said to exist in, or near the site of an ancient place called Pritthimee, and by some Phoontook Nuggur ; situated between the Dibong and Dikrung rivers there, about five miles apart.

The result of our searches (although not fortunate enough to find the temple and tank we looked for) were three very fine pukka tanks, all of which were, in form, a parellelogram, three times the breadth in length, with two opposite bathing ghauts, exactly in the middle of the embankments, which last were built of first rate bricks, laid in three steps or ledges to the water's edge and without lime or soorkee, the upper surface of the embankment being also paved with bricks.

One of these tanks, situated several miles inland, was by rough measurement, 280 yards long, by 96 broad, and the site lengthways, north and south, as near as possible. The bathing ghauts, although ruinous, were built of hewn blocks of sandstone, flags of the same stone shield shaped, as at No. 8 of typical marks (Pl. XXX,) forming the side-ways. Here also, on detached blocks from these ghauts, I found inscribed the Fursah or Battle-axe, and other marks similar to those of the Copper Temple.

On the embankments near the ghauts, were several very large Bani-an trees ; and besides numbers of fine Nahor, we found the Neribi, (*Canarium strictum*), Tapor (*Xanthochymus pictorius*), and other fruit trees ;—the surrounding small jungle where the ground was high and dry, was invariably the wild Betelnut, with an occasional Sewah.

Another of these tanks is situated close on the right bank of the Dikrung, and from its immediate vicinity a high rampart of earth with a ditch, proceeds south-west and west, circling round for several miles north-west to north, at which point we found the remains of a brick gateway, with rampart, and the tank I measured, close to it ; a road also proceeds from this point to the westward (afterwards traced as far as the Dibong). In front of the gateway, is a small water-course, or continuation of the outer ditch, on each side of which were the remains of buttresses of hewn sandstone, and some large slabs were lying



about ; it is evident therefore that a bridge crossed the ditch at that point.

None of the natives who accompanied us had seen these remains, and of course had no knowledge as to the extent of country enclosed by this rampart ; but as it is some 18 feet high, with fine timber growing upon it, it is quite possible to trace it to the point where it again perhaps touches on the Dikrung. The tanks we found are all inside this rampart, and as others are reported to be in existence, we may conclude that it enclosed the site of a large town or inhabited tract of country. In fact, from the accounts of different people who prowl about these jungles elephant-shooting, and who describe various works of brick and stone,—high earthen mounds, with tracts of cultivatable land intermixed, I am inclined to think that the country from the Dibong to the Koondil river, a distance of 10 or 12 miles, with the hill fortification known as Bishmook Nugger, and Sisoopal Nugger,* belonged to one people and dynasty. It is indeed quite obvious that the masonry either of brick or stone, which we examined, is the work of the same people, and that the sandstone is the produce of one quarry, apparently of the old red sandstone formation, which we might expect to be in existence on the southern edge of the neighbouring mountains.

Our researches on the Dikrung ended with the discovery of the carved block of sandstone, represented in Pl. XXXI. This stone, $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet long by 18 inches broad, and 10 inches thick, was found inside a substantial brick enclosure 96 by 84 feet, built without lime or mortar, but of the finest bricks I have ever seen ; some of them in the doorway (situated in a buttress in the west face) 18 inches by 1 foot, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick, the wall $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet in thickness, and upwards of 6 feet high, the coping of entire bricks included.

In one corner of the enclosure was a well, made with the tile rings used in Bengal, and close to the eastern wall was a brick terrace, upon which the stone was placed parallel to this face. The inner side (which was uppermost), was divided by a ledge $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches high, into 3

* I am at a loss to know why this place, which was visited by Lieut. Rowlatt, is so called. Sispal, or Sisupal, who was Rajah of Chanderi in Bundelkund, may have accompanied his cousin Krishna in his wanderings ; but he could have had no connection with the country of Bishmook beyond this, if we may except the story of his having been betrothed to Rûkhmîni, the daughter of Bishmook, and if we can believe that the Bedhurb of the Hindoos is the modern Suddyah, and the Koondilpoor of the Prem Sagur.

compartments, the centre containing 3, the others 2, in all 7 cavities, which led the natives of the present day to suppose the stone had been used as a *Dhenkiri*, for pounding rice.

There can be little doubt however of the object of the people who placed it in the position we found it ; as well as, that its dimensions, and clearly sculptured face,* shows that at one time it formed the left hand side of the door of a temple, and taking into consideration that this building was at a considerable distance from the works enclosing the tanks, &c. we may reasonably imagine that the stone with the whole of the brick work was taken from the site of the temple, we were in search of, and to a certain extent corroborates the reports of the natives as to its existence within the site of Pritthimee Nugger, the discovery of which however, must depend upon further researches in that quarter.

In the present time it would appear difficult to account for the existence of such extensive remains of population so far inland from the Burrumpooter. The traditions of the people however go to say, that the course of this river eastward of Suddyah even ran in former times much nearer to the northern mountains, but at what particular point the Burrumpooter subsequently receded from the hills, cannot now be well determined ; as the land is high at Choonpoorah, and continues so, as far inland at least as the Copper Temple. It is evident notwithstanding, and it is the current belief of the people, that the extensive plain of Suddyah is an alluvial deposit of no very ancient date. I have seen indeed, when the Burrumpooter was encroaching upon the station of Koondil Mookh, drift timber of immense size exposed by the abrasions of the river, and at the mouth of the Koondil, it appeared as if a forest had once existed, under the Suddyah alluvial deposit ; which I believe, at the highest, is not more than 16 feet above the dry season level of the water in the river.

As the Suddyah land falls again inland at about 4 or 5 miles distance towards the Goormoorah Nuddee, it is possible that this last may in former times have been the bed of the Burrumpooter, which would thus have joined the Debong, where the Dikrung and the united waters of the Goormoorah now fall into that river. This would bring the remains of Pritthimee and Bishmook within a reasonable distance of the great river of the valley.

* The figure on this stone is supposed to be that of Krishna ; lying alongside of this was a smaller block, the edge carved in a chain frieze, apparently part of a cornice.