



THE  
DARJEELING HIMALAYAN  
RAILWAY.

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**Illustrated Guide for Tourists.**

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“Hills draw like Heaven,  
And stronger sometimes, holding out their hands  
To pull you from the vile flats up to them.”

ELIZABETH B. BROWNING.

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FIRST EDITION.

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1896.

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## PREFACE.



*IT is hoped that the following pages may help as a guide to the traveller in getting comfortably to Darjeeling, and in noticing the points of interest on its Railway.*

*Much information and guides can always be obtained at any of the Hotels in Darjeeling.*

*For further information, we would refer the enquirer to Murray's Handbook on Bengal, also to Dr. W. W. Hunter's Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. LX., to which works we are indebted.*

DARJEELING,

January, 1896.



## CHAPTER I.

“WHO first behold the Alps,—that mighty chain  
Of mountains stretching on from East to West,  
So massive, yet so shadowy, so ethereal,  
As to belong rather to Heaven than Earth,—  
But instantly receives into his soul  
A sense, a feeling that he loses not—  
A something that informs him 'tis a moment  
Whence he may date henceforward and for ever.”—ROGERS.

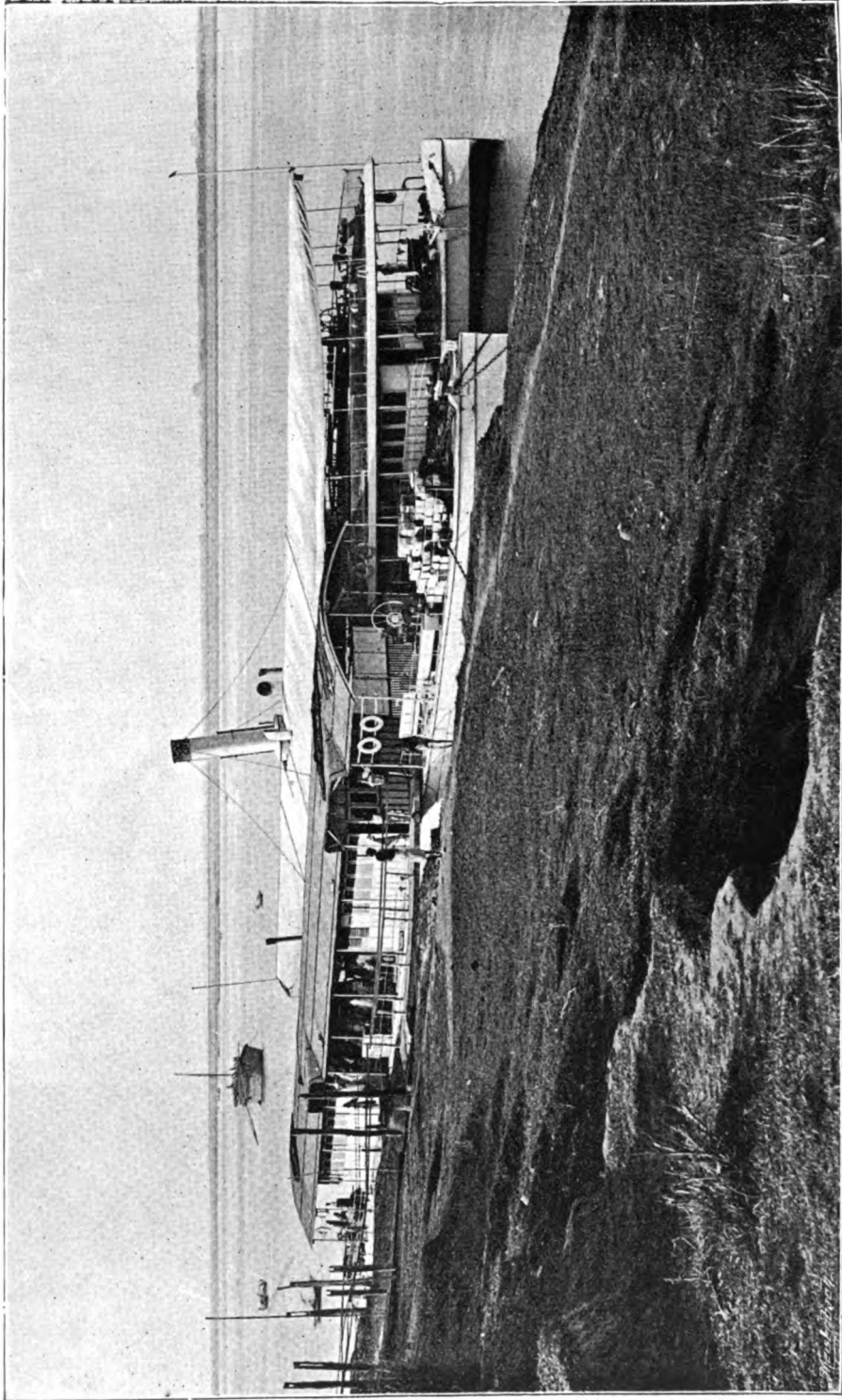


UNTIL the year 1878, when the Northern Bengal State Railway was opened for traffic, the route from Calcutta to Darjeeling, available for those who had the time, money, and energy necessary to undertake so formidable a journey, was by rail from Howrah, the terminus of the East Indian Railway on the west bank of the Hoogly, to Sahebgunge, a distance of 219 miles; then by steam ferry across the Ganges to Carragola, thence by bullock cart to the river opposite Dingra Ghat; after crossing which, again by bullock cart or palkee gharry to Purneah, Kissengunge, Titalya, and Silliguri, whence the ascent commenced *via* the Punkabaree Road, which joins the present cart road at Kurseong.

The whole journey took from five to six days, and was about as exhausting and uncomfortable a journey as can well be imagined. Those who can recall what the journey was in those days, while doing it in comfort now in less than 24 hours, may well look back to it as a horrid nightmare.

The mail train from Calcutta for Darjeeling leaves the Sealdah terminus of the Eastern Bengal State Railway at about 4 p.m., reaching Damookdeah; on the banks of the Ganges, 116 miles from Calcutta, at 9 p.m. At this point the passengers and mails for Darjeeling are transferred to a large ferry steamer, which proceeds to Sara Ghat, on the north bank of the Ganges. The northern section of the railway, which is constructed on the metre gauge system, commences there, and forms the next connecting link of railway

**THE FERRY AT SARA.**— See page 7.



communication with the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. During the ferry transit, dinner (at which the Hilsa fish is a standing dish, and strongly recommended) is served.

A curious feature connected with the crossing of the Ganges is that, in consequence of the ever-changing nature of the river, cutting away the bank as it does at one place and increasing it at another, the point of departure on one side and the point of arrival on the other has frequently to be altered many hundred yards (sometimes several miles). The place where at one time a station existed and trains were running, is at another time a waste of waters. So, again, the spot where shortly before the picturesque native boats placidly glided, may present the bustling scene of a railway station.

These frequent changes of the river require careful navigation at night, and small boats are moored, with coloured lights, to guide the steamer.

At Sara Ghat, as soon as it has received its freight, the train starts for Silliguri, at the foot of the "hills" (as the Himalayan and other mountains are termed in India), a distance of some 329 miles from Calcutta, and 196 from Sara Ghat. Silliguri is about 400 feet above the level of the sea, and is reached at 8.23 a.m. Here breakfast is served in the station refreshment room, and after that has been discussed everybody strolls off to have a look at the miniature engine and train of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, which has been puffing on the other side of the platform. Eager to be off, however, there is not much time to give to the engine, as seats must be secured in the Liliputian train which has to take you to the journey's end.

The "track," to borrow the American term, looks as if it had been laid for a toy railway—the gauge being but 2 feet. Notwithstanding this, the line is substantial enough, consisting as it does of steel rails weighing  $41\frac{1}{4}$  lbs. to the yard, and laid on sleepers of timber.

The locomotives are by Messrs. Sharp, Stewart, & Co., of Glasgow, and are of two types. One type weighs about 12 tons, and is capable of hauling a train weighing 39 tons, including engine, up inclines of 1 foot in 25, and round the numerous and sharp curves which the exigencies of the ascent and of a mountain railway render unavoidable. Originally small engines weighing 8 tons were used, and they could only haul up a train of 18 tons, including engine, on the *then* existing steep grades (in places 1 in 19). These steep grades necessitated numerous alterations at great cost, viz., making fresh traces, loops or spirals, and reverses, to get an easier ascent.

The large type of engine is capable of taking a train of 50 tons up an incline of 1 in 25. It weighs 14 tons, and is supplied with very powerful brakes. It is found that these are ample to control the trains at all times, and each carriage is, for extra safety, also fitted with hand brakes.

The 1st class passenger carriages are divided into two compartments, and are 13 feet long by 6 feet wide and  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet high above rails, with  $19\frac{1}{2}$ -inch wheels, and floor very low. They carry 12 passengers, besides small packages under the seats. These carriages are comfortable enough in rainy weather, but do not allow of as much opportunity of viewing the scenery as the more open trollies, several of which are attached to each passenger train.

The baggage is carried in separate covered trucks. The trollies seat six 1st class or sixteen 2nd class passengers each, and are covered with hoods, curtains being hung at the sides.

It may be noted that the mileage of the railway is marked with *red* figures, and that of the cart road in *black*, on the different mile posts.

It may not be out of place to note, for the traveller's comfort, that it is advisable before leaving Silliguri to put on extra clothing for the upward trip, and to have an overcoat or extra wrap handy, so as to guard against the comparatively great changes of temperature. The traveller will also do well to provide himself with a water-proof coat in the rainy season, *i.e.*, from June to October.

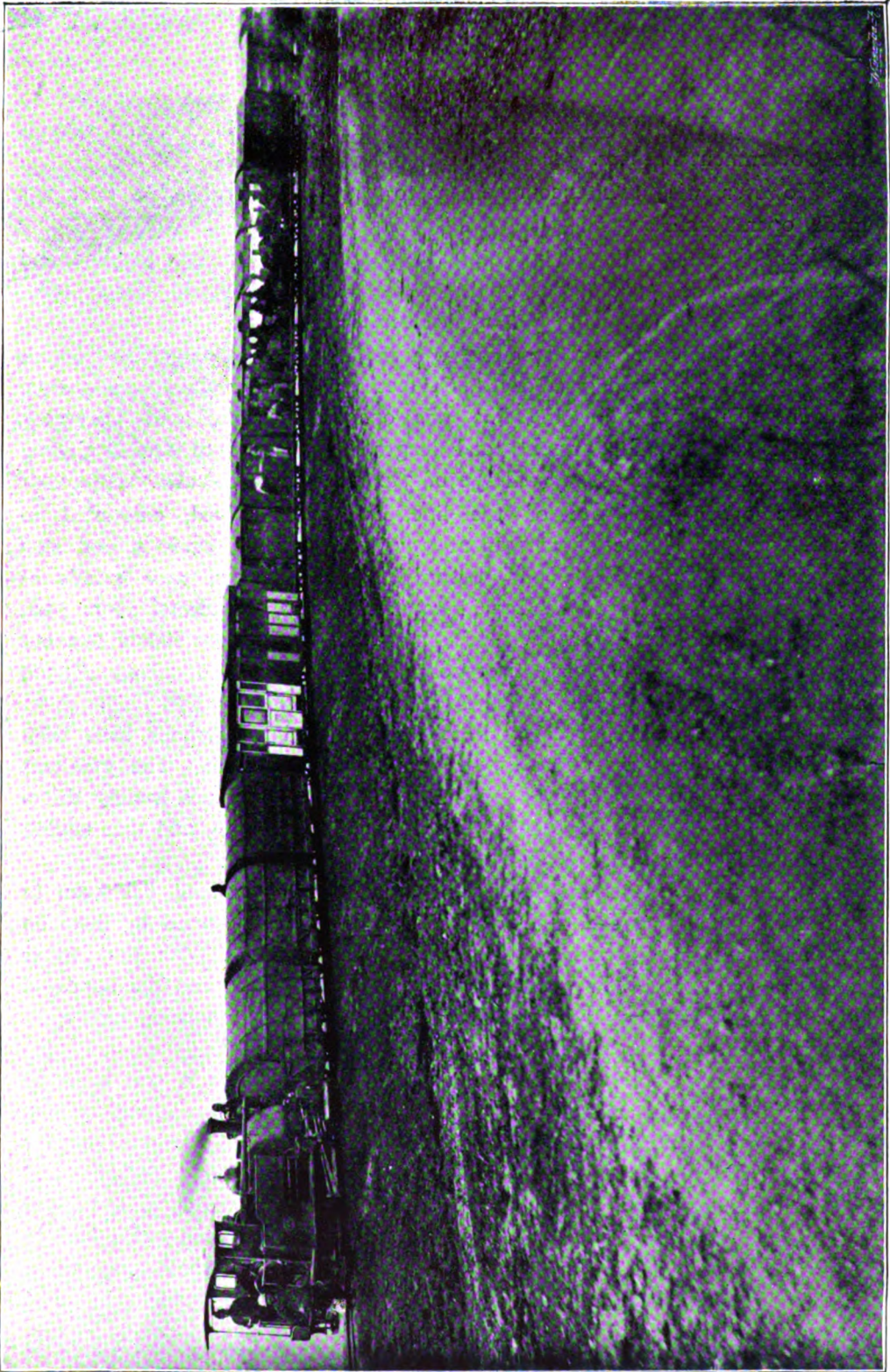
Before proceeding with the description of the journey upward from Silliguri, it is necessary to give a short history of the origin of this little railway.

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## CHAPTER II.

**A** MAGNIFICENT hill cart road seemed to invite the laying of a steam tramway. In March, 1878, a scheme was drawn up for its construction by Mr. Franklin Prestage. Estimates and plans were made, and laid before the late Sir Ashley Eden, K.C.S.I., the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. He at once gave the scheme his warmest support, and it is mainly due to his co-operation and advocacy that immediate arrangements were made to form a company with a capital of Rs. 14,00,000, which was subscribed almost entirely in India, to carry out the proposed undertaking. This line may be said to have been the first attempt at "private enterprise" in railways. Only two concessions of importance were granted by Government to the company—the one a guarantee that the gross receipts should not be less than Rs. 2,00,000 per annum, and the second that the Government would, at all times, uphold and maintain the cart road. The guarantee of gross receipts has proved, as was always expected, to be purely a nominal liability, the receipts having always been largely in excess. As regards the cost of the

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**THE DARJEELING HIMALAYAN RAILWAY MAIL TRAIN.—See Page 9.**



upkeep of the cart road, Government would, in any case, have had to maintain it. The railway contributes considerably towards this, and relieves the Government finances.

However, with this encouragement to "private enterprise," a start was made, operations being commenced in May, 1879.

Lord Lytton, while Viceroy of India, took great interest in the line, and was the first Viceroy who ever visited Darjeeling, proceeding in March, 1880, by the new line, which was then opened to the 18th mile.

The following August the line was available for passenger and goods traffic as far as Kurseong (about 4,864 feet above sea level), 32 miles from Silliguri. In July, 1881, the line was opened throughout to Darjeeling Passenger Station. Its present total length is 51 miles to the Darjeeling Bazaar, giving a total railway mileage of 380 miles from Calcutta.

The original estimate of the line, as already stated, amounted to Rs. 14,00,000, inclusive of permanent way, rolling stock, stations, and staff quarters. The capital account, exclusive of debentures, now stands at Rs. 17,50,000, and the dividend paid to shareholders, for several years past, has been 10 per cent. Including debentures, the expenditure stands at about Rs. 31,96,000. The line has thus cost, say, Rs. 60,400, or about £3,500 a mile.

The capital of the company has been increased; workshops have been established for building, repairing, and increasing the stock. The gradients of the line have been improved, so as to allow of the engines hauling three-and-a-half times the original gross loads of the small engines, and thus adding to the value of the line.

Since the construction of the railway, the hill cart road has been in charge of the railway staff, and the intimate experiences gained by them on this and their line increases the security of the works. With the further lapse of time, all the new works will be more consolidated; and the improved means at command on a railway have ensured communication being kept open even in the worst seasons.

The hill cart road was constructed by Government at a cost of some £6,000 per mile. It is about 40 miles long and has a width of about 25 feet, and is metalled throughout. On this road the traffic was carried on for several years by pack ponies, pack bullocks, bullock carts, palkees, and pony tongas. Although it is one of the finest mountain roads in India, yet the miseries endured by those—especially invalids and children—who had to avail themselves of these various modes of conveyance, with their concomitant expenses, render superfluous all comparison in favour of the present mode of conveyance by railway.

Furthermore, the railway places it within the means of hundreds of the poorer classes to avail themselves of the benefits of a "hill climate," often a matter of life or death to the European who has to work during the hot season in the plains of Bengal.

In addition to the advantages which the railway provides in affording a ready means of reaching Darjeeling, it gives a very necessary expeditious means of transit for taking the produce of the numerous tea gardens of the district and other local products down to the plains, as also for taking up to the rapidly increasing station of Darjeeling the necessary supplies of tea-garden machinery and stores of all descriptions, and troops, &c.; and it tends materially to augment the growing trade with Thibet and Central Asia, which in 1864, according to official reports, was yearly increasing, and had then assumed considerable proportions.

### CHAPTER III.

**B**EFORE resuming our journey, it may be interesting to have a few notes as to the country traversed by the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, and of the history of British Sikhim, and a description of some of the various races inhabiting it.

British Sikhim consists of two distinct tracts of country, namely, that portion of the Lower Himalayas which lies west of Bhootan, south of Independent Sikhim, and east of Nepal, and the Terai, or plains part, which lies to the south of the mountainous tract.

The upper, or northern, part of the Terai, at the base of the hills, is covered with forest and dense jungle, except where clearances have been made for tea or other cultivation.

The level of the plains at Silliguri, as elsewhere stated, is about 400 feet above mean sea level; some seven miles further north the mountains rise abruptly from the plains.

It is noticed that along the southern ridge of the outer Himalayas there extends a belt of 10 miles or so in breadth, usually covered by the Terai forest, and remarkable in many places for its utter want of water. The minor streams as they leave the hills (excepting when swollen by the periodical rains) are rapidly absorbed, and disappear in the sandy and shingly deposits that prevail, and deep wells have to be sunk in this tract before water can be met with. The surface slope of this absorbent belt is very considerable near the hills, but rapidly diminishes as we recede from them,



**BHOOTEA BEGGAR WOMAN.**



and at a distance of from 10 to 20 miles from the foot of the hills the character of the country changes rather suddenly.

The spurs of the hills near the plains are from 6,000 to 10,000 feet high, and were mostly clothed with forest to their summits. The forests have, however, in many places disappeared, owing to the spread of cultivation and the demand for timber.

It is noticeable that the pine forests, found on many other mountains, are quite absent in the hills near Darjeeling, but exist on some of the further mountains towards Thibet. The fir trees about Darjeeling are nearly all imported.

In 1828, Mr. J. W. Grant, C.S., was appointed by the British Government to settle the boundary between Sikhim and Nepal, a dispute with regard to it having been referred to the Government, according to the terms of a treaty entered into in 1816.

The eligibility of the country for the establishment of a sanitarium did not escape Mr. Grant, and his representations on the subject to Lord W. Bentinck, then Governor-General, led to the cession, in 1835, of a tract of country, including the site of the town of Darjeeling, for a sum of, at first, £300 a year, subsequently £600 a year.

In consequence of the imprisonment, by the Rajah's Diwan, of Dr. Campbell, the Superintendent of Darjeeling, and Dr. Hooker, while travelling in Sikhim, with the permission of the Government and the Rajah of Sikhim, a military expedition was undertaken in 1850, the annual allowances were stopped, and a certain portion of the Sikhim Terai and hills were annexed. In 1866, the territory annexed in 1864 from Bhootan was also included in the Darjeeling district.

#### CHAPTER IV.

ONE of the first things that strikes a traveller on his journey, after leaving the plains, is the appearance of the various hill people whom he sees upon the road, differing so entirely from the inhabitants of the plains.

The Lepchas, Bhooteas from Bhootan, Thibetans, and Nepalese all call for some description, as they form the most important portion of the hill tribes met with near Darjeeling.

The Lepcha is the aboriginal inhabitant of Sikhim, and is much employed on all menial and outdoor work in Darjeeling. He is a capital carrier and mountaineer, is full of fun, very peaceable, and has the reputation of being

honest. As household servants they are, however, given to pilfering. His features are distinctly Mongolian, and his complexion sallow; his face is broad and flat; his nose is also flat, his eyes oblique; he wears a "pigtail," and has but little hair, if any, on his upper lip. He is short, broad in the chest, and very muscular, and is by no means bad-looking as a rule. Some of the young Lepcha women are almost pretty, and the little children are frequently so, reminding one somewhat of Italian children.

The dress of the Lepcha men consists of a loose cotton kirtle, gathered in at the waist, leaving the arms and legs loose; and the garment, when not "originally" white, is striped with blue or red—"originally," for the Lepchas, like all other of the hill tribes (who affect clothing), are dreadfully dirty, and wear their clothes till they drop off. In fact, it is said that some of the hill people reckon their age according to the number of suits of clothes they have worn out.

The Lepcha wears at his side a long straight knife, called a "bān," and it is carried in a wooden sheath or guard, the knife being visible.

The Bhootea women, whose dress is very picturesque and gay, wear two "pigtailed." Both they and the men are very fond of decorating themselves with barbaric jewellery, consisting for the most part of necklaces of cornelian, amber, rough turquoise, and glass beads; also curious silver-gilt and, sometimes, gold amulets, and charm-boxes containing scraps of Buddhist sacred writings and, sometimes, small idols.

Nearly all the Nepalese women, and many of the children, wear necklaces of rupees, to which they have recourse in hard times; so that it is not uncommon to find coins circulating with the little silver attachments still fastened to them by which they were hung from some necklace or other.

The Bhooteas, the natives of Bhootan, are well made, some being really tall; they are also of the Mongolian type, but do not bear so good a character as the Lepchas. Their dress usually consists of a loose woollen coat, reaching to the knees.

Their priests, or lamas, of which there are large numbers, may be easily recognised by their red dresses. The lamas and people generally make much use of praying wheels, which they hold in their hands and make rotate from left to right whilst monotonously repeating the sentence, "Om—mani—padmi—hum" ("The Jewel in the Lotus"—Lord Budha).

The Thibetan Bhooteas are distinguished by their boots: the boots, with thick soles and stockings, are made of some woollen material, very similar to what Chinamen wear.

The head-gear is also rather of the Chinese build, and is made of felt, and caps like these were made centuries before Europe knew anything about

BHOOTEA WOMAN.



left. These Bhootas also were "pig-tails," after the Chinese fashion, and are better behaved and more amiable than their Bhootanese brethren. Some few of the Bhootas women, like the Lepcha women, are not bad-looking, and have rose cheeks, but the habit which they have of disfiguring their faces with catechu makes them appear repulsive.

The Nepalese, who are all immigrants from Nepal, are far less Mongolian in feature than the other people mentioned, and are more slender and wiry. They are good labourers, and make the best hands in the numerous tea gardens in the district, as also on the railway. They wear close-fitting coats, various trousers, very full above the knee and very tight below—and small, light-tinted caps. With few exceptions, they carry in their girdle their weapon, "Khat-g," a curved knife, a well-balanced instrument, which they know how to use. It is in general use for all domestic purposes: the heavy one is used in warfare and for slaughtering buffaloes, and they have also knives to sever a buffalo's neck at a single blow with such a blow.

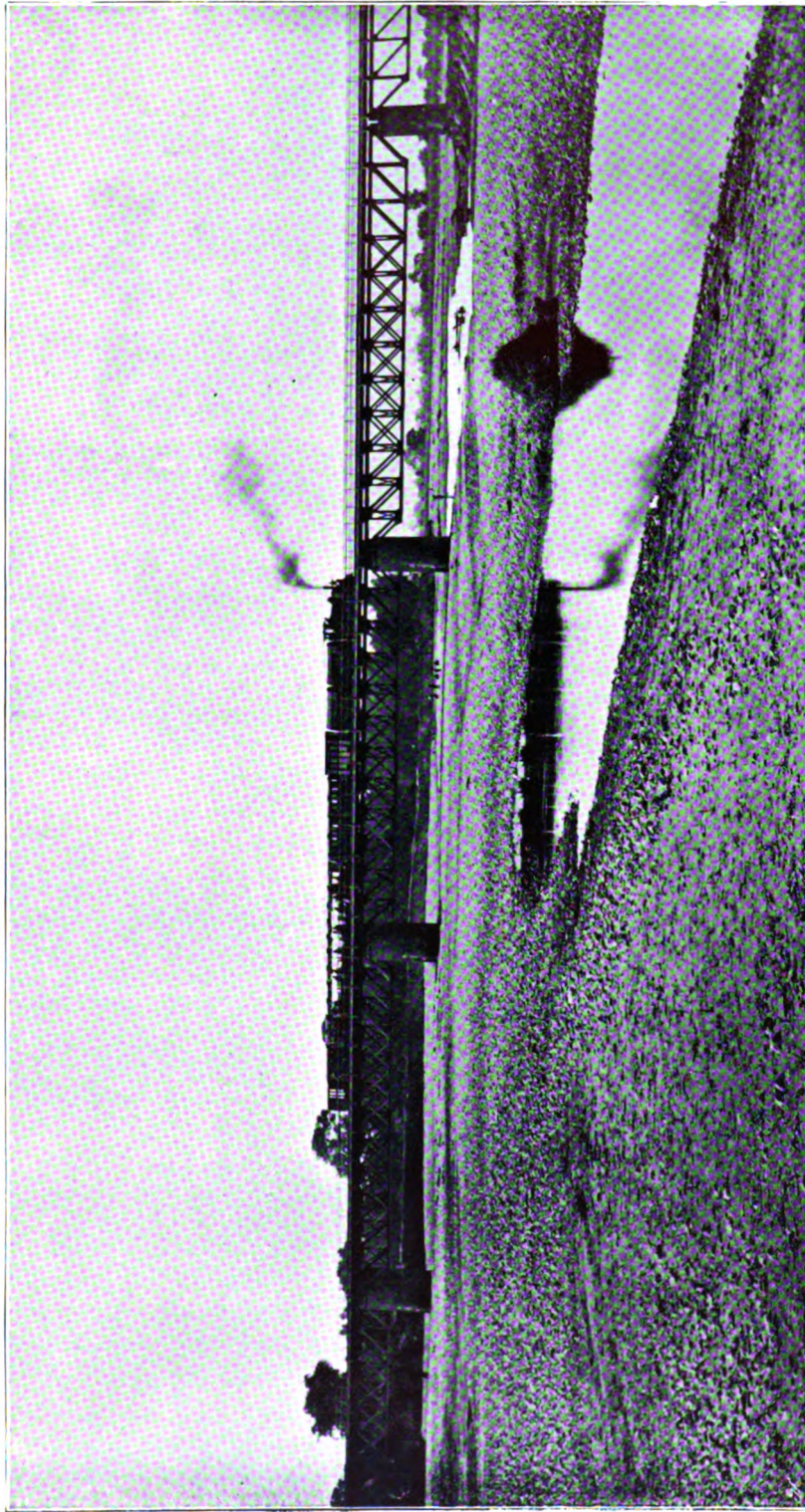
The Nepalese women are to be easily recognised by the smart jackets they wear, and a small square shawl, which, together with a gaily handkerchief, is usually carried. They are very fond of jewellery, and of flowers for ornamenting their hair.

The Nepalese men are for the most part of the same race that we find in the Himalayas generally. They have great manly instances of the qualities of courage and endurance, and some excellent talents in the way of mathematics, and of application to agriculture, and finally in the way of the arts.

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**BRIDGE OVER MAHANUDDY RIVER (one mile from Silliguri).—See page 20.**



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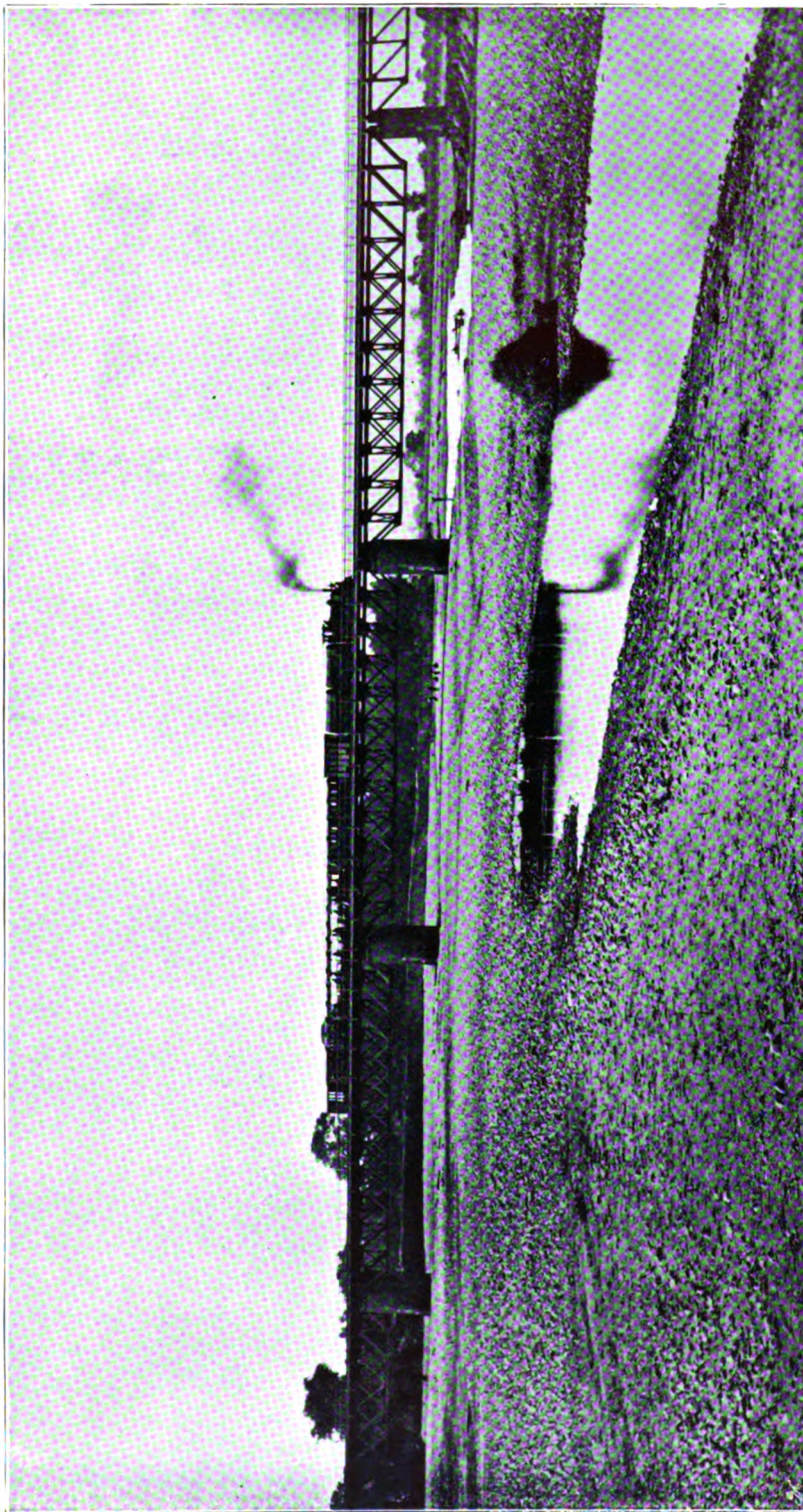
The Nepalese women can be easily recognised by the smart jackets they wear, and a full-pleated petticoat, which, together with a gaudy handkerchief, forms their clothing. They are very fond of jewellery, and of flowers for decorating their hair.

The Nepalese make very fine soldiers, and are part of the same race that form the British Ghoorka regiments. They have given noteworthy instances of their pluck and general hardiness in several expeditions, notably in the march to Kandahar and the last expedition to Afghanistan, and lately in Chitral.

They are, as a rule, passionately fond of sport. We remember one of these men approaching, on foot, a herd of wild buffalo in dense cover, armed only with a muzzle-loading gun, and he shot two animals out of the herd. These men are the great enemies of all birds; they are usually armed with a pellet bow, and will shoot the smallest birds simply for sport. It is believed some attempt has been made to stop their reckless extermination of the feathered tribe, the absence of which is noticeable in many places on the hills.

We may here mention, before passing away from the subject of these hill people, that the time and place to see these, and the other races of natives that inhabit the district, is on Sunday, about mid-day, in the market place at Darjeeling. It is at this weekly market that the greatest variety of people is to be seen, and in their smartest attire, the women being loaded with jewellery. They flock in from all the tea gardens and the district round, and certainly afford one of the most interesting and curious sights which a visitor to Darjeeling can see there.

**BRIDGE OVER MAHANUDDY RIVER (one mile from Silliguri).—See page 20.**





## CHAPTER V.

WE now revert to the route. Starting from Silliguri, the train has a comparatively level run for the first seven miles, and travels at the rate of 12 miles an hour.

After passing the usual collection of thatched huts which constitute the town of Silliguri, the first object of interest is the iron bridge, 700 feet in length (seven spans of 100), which crosses the Mahanuddy River. This river takes its source in the line of mountains straight ahead of the traveller known as the Mahaldiram range, about 7,000 feet above the level of the sea. The river here forms in its course a natural boundary between the "Terai" (or jungle tract which lies at the foot of the Himalayan range) and the district of Julpaiguri. It makes its way through the districts of Purneah and Maldah, and falls into the Ganges at Godagari, just within the borders of the Rajshaye district.

The next objects which draw attention on the east side of the road will be the buildings and residence of the manager of the "Punchanai" Tea Garden. These are roofed with corrugated iron, and the traveller will here note the tea cultivation, and see, possibly for the first time, a tea garden. There are several of these in the first seven miles; and, though tea grows well in this Terai tract, it is most unhealthy for Europeans for some time after the first clearing of the jungle has been made, and many a tomb in this part of the country testifies to the deadly fever that reigns in this tract all along the Himalayas.

A few more streams and "gardens" are passed, and the first stoppage takes place at Sookna Station, which is  $7\frac{1}{4}$  miles distant from Silliguri, and 533 feet above sea level. The place is of no interest to the traveller, except, perhaps, as being the starting point whence the trains have to begin their actual ascent of the mountains.

The jungle, after passing Sookna, grows denser and denser, and the ear-piercing chirrup of the cicada is, at times, heard on all sides. The Forest Department Depôt is passed, and some elephants may probably be seen standing about after their labours in the forest.

The thick and magnificent foliage of the sāl, toon, and other numerous timber trees here attract notice. The graceful creepers and orchids pendant from the trees, the impenetrable jungle grass and varied undergrowth, produce a splendid picture of tropical vegetation, and the gentle sweeps of the line give the traveller many a pretty glimpse of the forest scenery of the "Terai."

THROUGH THE FOREST, NEAR SOOKNA.



In the fastnesses of the "Terai" lurk\* wild elephants, rhinoceri, tigers, leopards, wild buffaloes, wild cattle, and deer, as well as hogs, wolves, wild dogs, monkeys, and many other small animals.

Among the smaller varieties of game are hares, jungle fowl, peacocks, partridges, snipe, woodcock, wild ducks, geese, and pigeons of various sorts; amongst the latter, a bronze-winged green pigeon is the most beautiful.

Jungle fowl and pheasants are also met with in the hills, and bears, leopards, and musk and other deer are sometimes found on the higher mountains.

Tigers have been killed at an elevation of 7,000 feet near Kurseong, but only in rare instances.

The mahsir, or Indian salmon, is to be found in the Teesta River.

After passing the ninth mile—which used to be known as "Panchkeela," or "Five Posts" (one mile post of the Carragola Road and four guard posts), and which was a most deadly place, by reason of its malaria, for the workmen engaged in making the road, we pass the first sharp curves in the line, where the traveller first realises the nature of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway line. Shortly after, a fine view opens out to the south, and displays a vast horizon, and the traveller is surprised to see how rapidly he is rising above the plains.

Passing on, amid semi-tropical scenery of great beauty, among which the giant bamboo is prominent, as also the screw pine (*Pandanus odoratissimus*), we reach the 11½ mile, the first spiral, or "loop," in the line. This runs through a deep cutting (which was closed during the rains of 1883 by a large slip of earth and rock), and forms part of the works undertaken for the purpose of easing the gradients and so increasing the hauling power of the engines. Thence working its way upwards, the train progresses along the new track some distance below the original road, which, between the 12th and 13th miles, was exceedingly steep. On this run a stoppage takes place at Rungtong Station, and again for water at the 12¾ mile, and the traveller will then have time to look about for a few minutes. The golden fern may here be seen in its native habitat. Traces of coal may also be observed cropping out from amid the luxuriant verdure of the hill sides.

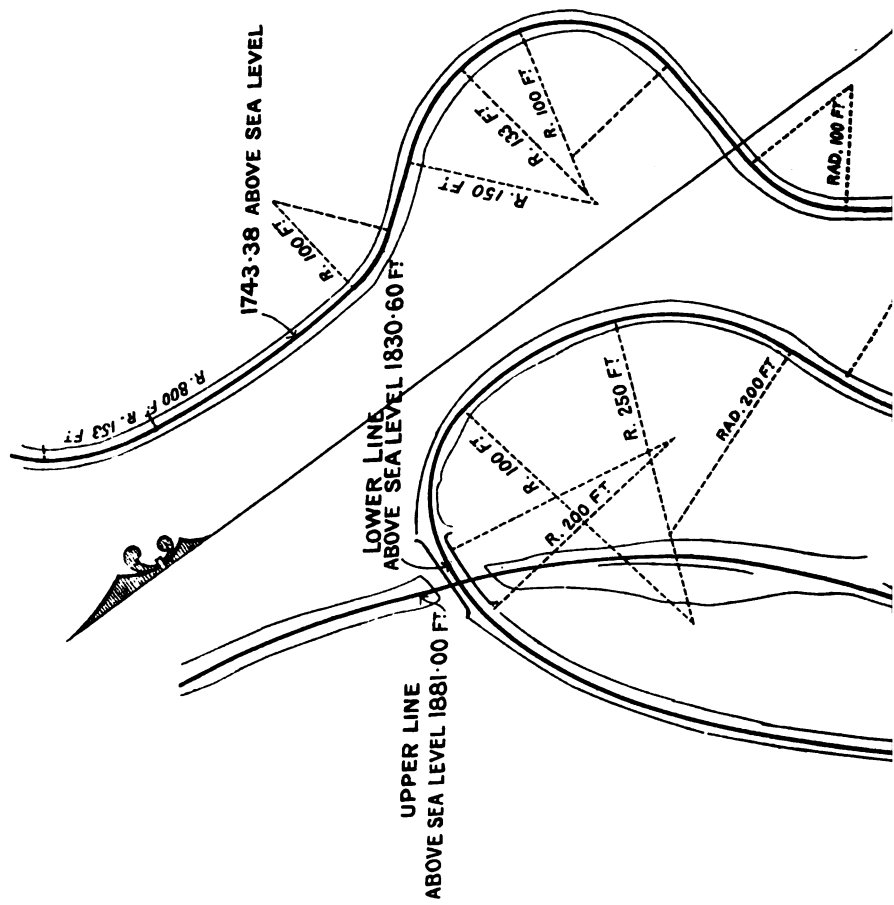
The line now turns nearly south on to a long spur, where another and somewhat complicated spiral or loop occurs (see diagram), which is interesting as an engineering work. In passing through the cutting, some 30 feet deep, a short tunnel-like opening will be noticed, and over this the train shortly passes.

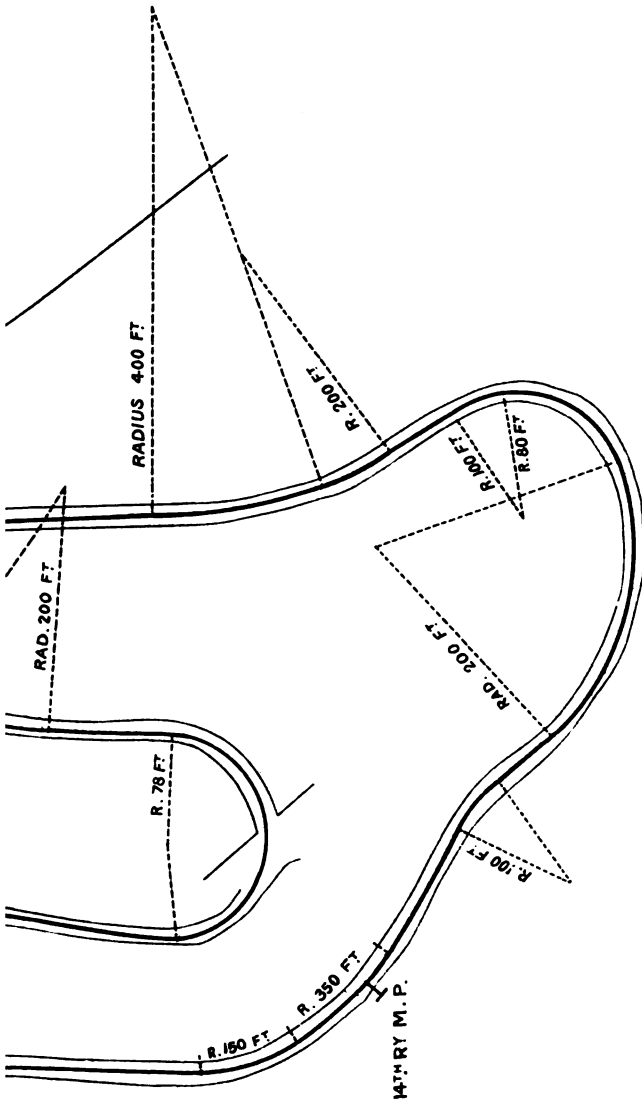
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\* On one occasion wild elephants compelled the driver to take his train back to Sookna Station.



**LOOP N°2 AT 14<sup>TH</sup> MILE.**





SCALE, 150 FT TO THE INCH.

Note, Gradient 1 in 28.



SCREW PINE.





The line, now returning northwards and eastwards, for a short distance runs along the old road, but gradually passes below it, till a third spiral or loop is reached at the 16th mile post, hard by the old Choonbattie Dāk Bungalow, which was used in the days of Tongas, as the halting place for lunch. Proceeding thence along the new track in a northerly direction, grand views are obtained of the valley below, the Bhootan range to the eastward, and the adjacent hills and valleys dotted with tea cultivation. In the plains to the south-east may be seen the Teesta River, with an island clearly conspicuous. This is known as "Tiger Island," and some few years ago three tigers were shot at one beat on the island.

The Teesta River has its source in Lake Chalamu (which is 17,000 feet above the sea, and 74 miles north-east of Darjeeling), in Thibet, and marks the frontier between Darjeeling and Sikhim in the valley below Darjeeling. An excursion can be made from Darjeeling to see the new suspension bridge over this river. There is also a new road made along the valley of this river (the photos of which are worth obtaining in Darjeeling), and this road finishes at Silliguri, a few hundred yards to the north of the Dāk Bungalow.

The next point of note will be the "zigzag," or reverse, at the 17½ mile. This is the first of a series of reverses, and is another of the works carried out with the view of obtaining an easier ascent.

The second station on the hill portion of the line is reached at the 20th mile; this is named Teendaria. The train only makes a halt here of ten minutes for tea, coffee, &c. The Company has its workshops here for repairs and for erecting new stock, and it also forms the principal locomotive station. The elevation of the station is about 2,822 feet, and is considered to be above the Terai "fever level."

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## CHAPTER VI.

**L**EAVING Teendaria, we shortly pass another of the "zigzags" in the line, and round the fourth and final spiral or loop. This one gives a better idea than the others of the way these loops are constructed. A large amount of work was done at this point to form the sharp curve of the loop: this curve is only 60 feet in radius. A few large trees still show what the original forest was, and only a few years ago this point was the haunt of the little barking deer, which are common in these hills.

Proceeding, we note to the north-east a prominent mountain across the valley, known as the Sitong Hill, 5,574 feet above sea level, and this is the

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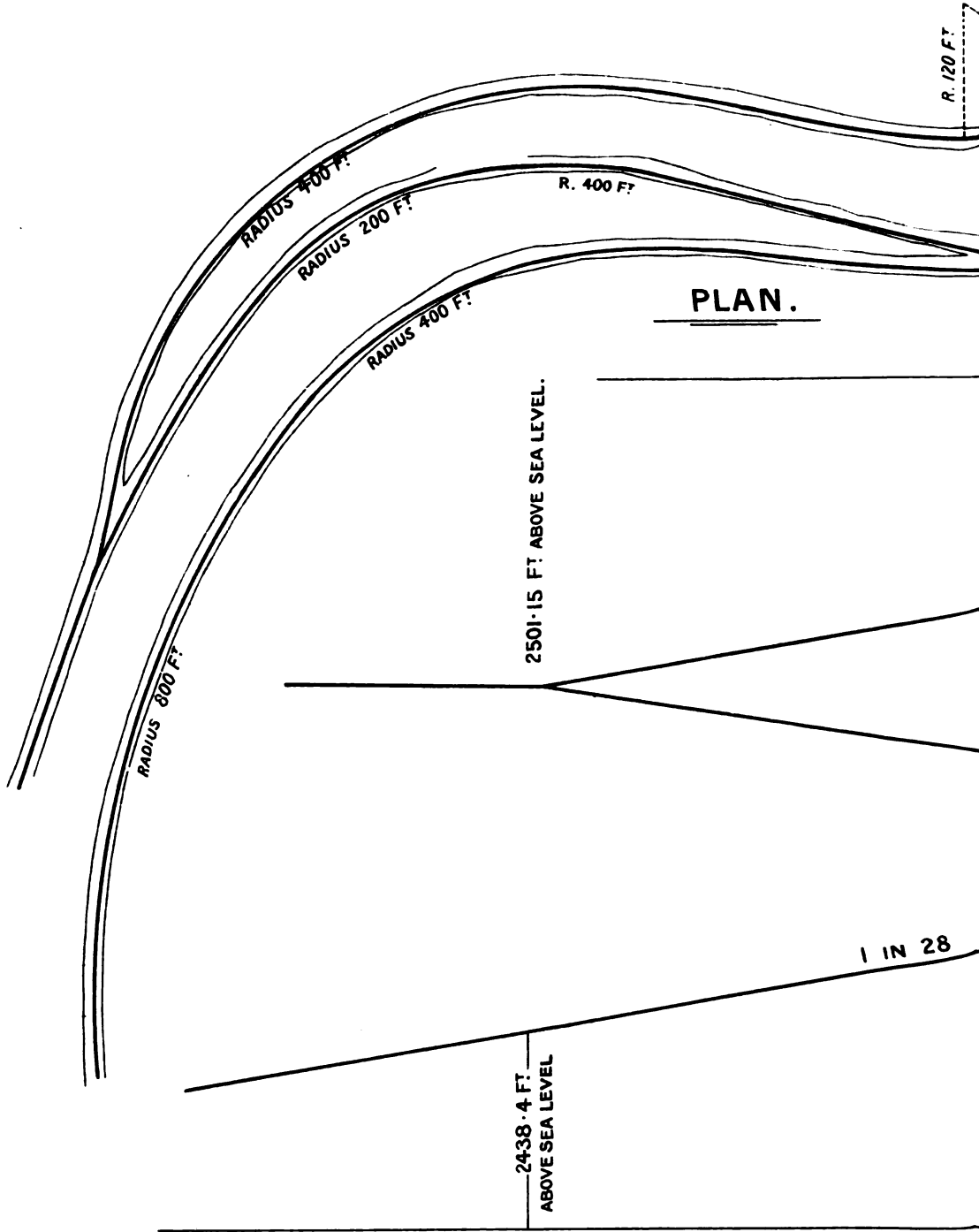
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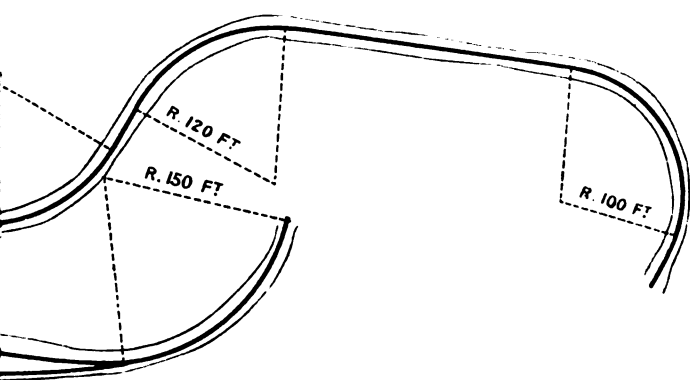
# REVERSE N<sup>o</sup>1 AT 18<sup>th</sup> MILE.



PLAN.

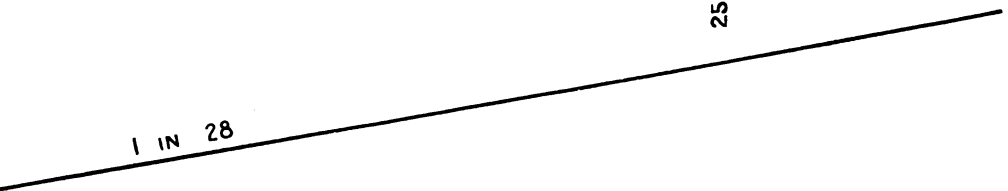
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Note, Gradient 1 in 28.

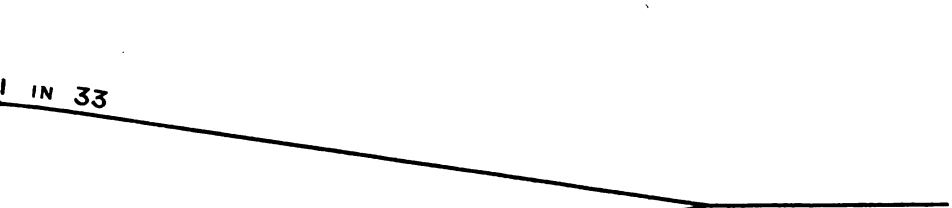


2536.5 ABOVE SEA LEVEL

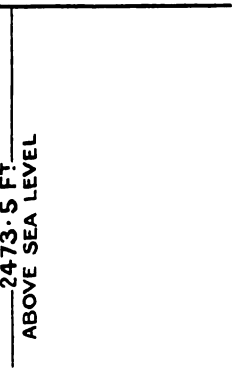
1 IN 28



1 IN 33



2473.5 FT.  
ABOVE SEA LEVEL

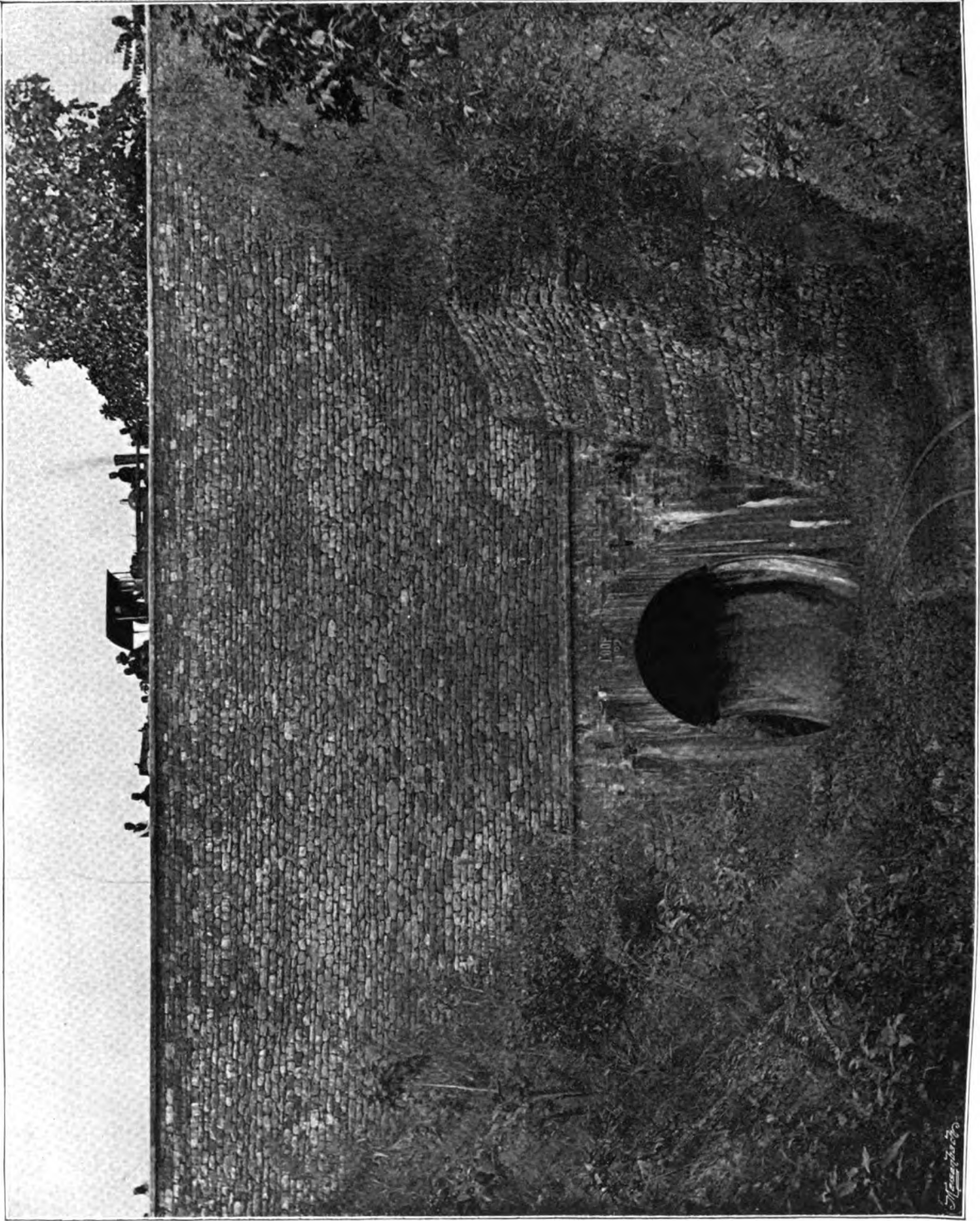


ION.

HORIZONTAL SCALE, 150 FT. 1 INCH.  
VERTICAL SCALE, 30 FT. 1 INCH.



LOOP No. 2 BRIDGE.—See page 22.



head of the Sitong spur going away to the plains between the Mahanuddy and Teesta Rivers. The lower end of the spur is said to hold wild elephants, and at times also mithum and herds of deer.

Looking back from Sitong, the spur leads up to the Mahaldiram ridge previously mentioned; and near the junction point with the ridge will be seen a tea garden, known as Mahaldiram: its elevation is about 6,500 feet, and it is probably one of the highest tea gardens in the district.

At the 23rd mile we pass another "zigzag" near Gyabari Station. On the ridge above may be seen several Lepcha monuments. These are erected in many places as memorials of native chiefs and persons of note. Gyabari Station is at an elevation of 3,516 feet; from here a short cut road diverges towards Kurseong. This road was the only means of communication with the upper road in 1890, when the line was carried away at the 26th mile.

At the 24th mile we pass the fourth and last "zigzag" or reverse, and then proceed along the original road for several miles.

At the 25 $\frac{1}{2}$  mile a halt is made at one of the numerous watering stations. Here, it will be noticed, the nature of the soil has completely changed, and we see the rock formation known as "Sikhim gneiss." The water-course at this stoppage is very pretty, and is remarkable after heavy rain. A few yards up the road is the largest water-course on this side of the range, known as the "Pagla Jhora," or "Mad Torrent." It has cost considerable sums to control, and has given great trouble to the road. In July, 1890, during "the rains," nearly 800 feet of road and line were carried away at this point and for 500 feet on the upper road. The rainfall on this occasion was over 14 inches in six hours. It is the chief outlet of the rainfall due to the striking of the clouds against the Mahaldiram range, and, after heavy rain, is a roaring torrent in which large boulders are tossed about.

The enormous force of the water may be seen in the gorges below. These are, at times, frequented by deer, wild goats, and the large Himalayan bear. One of the latter was shot a few years back by a Nepalese headman in charge of the road workmen. He had no lead for bullets, and used a few "dob pice," or Nepalese native copper lump coin. These hill men, as a rule, object to go anywhere near the known haunt of the large bear. All the water-courses near here are tributaries of the Mahanuddy River, seen in the valley below.

At the "Pagla Jhora" we also reach the half-way distance to Darjeeling, and in the 27th mile we pass along a very precipitous rock face of the hill side. Here the road was blasted out, in some places, for a depth of 50 feet. The "Goomtee" bend, at the bazaar so named, is about an elevation of 4,040 feet above mean sea level. There is a crossing station here named

LOOP No. 3.—See page 24.





Mahanuddy—elevation, 4,120 feet; and to the north-west may be seen, in the rains, a fine waterfall some 150 feet sheer drop: this is the actual source of the Mahanuddy River, and the tea garden of this name is located to the south of the waterfall.

We now bowl along to the west pretty fast over a splendid bit of road. There is not much to note here except the far view of the plains and the straight bit of road along which we travelled early in the day from Silliguri. At about the 29½ mile we pass through a rock cutting, and suddenly get a fresh view of the plains. The rocks here are very bluff, and a large projecting rock is known as "Artilleryman's Rock," owing to an unfortunate man having committed suicide at the spot. At this point, above the road, is "Gladstone's Rock" (see photo), so called on account of its supposed resemblance to the statesman of that name. After passing another mile we come in view of the town of Kurseong, which is at an elevation of nearly 5,000 feet. The prominent hill to the south of Kurseong is known as the "Eagle's Craig," and is a place to visit, if the traveller halts at Kurseong. A splendid view is obtained of the plains; and, in the days when steamers went up the Ganges to Allahabad, their smoke might, it is said, at times be seen towards the Rajmahal Hills, some 130 miles to the south. The forest—reaching, at places, far into the plains—will also be seen, marking the extent of the "Terai."

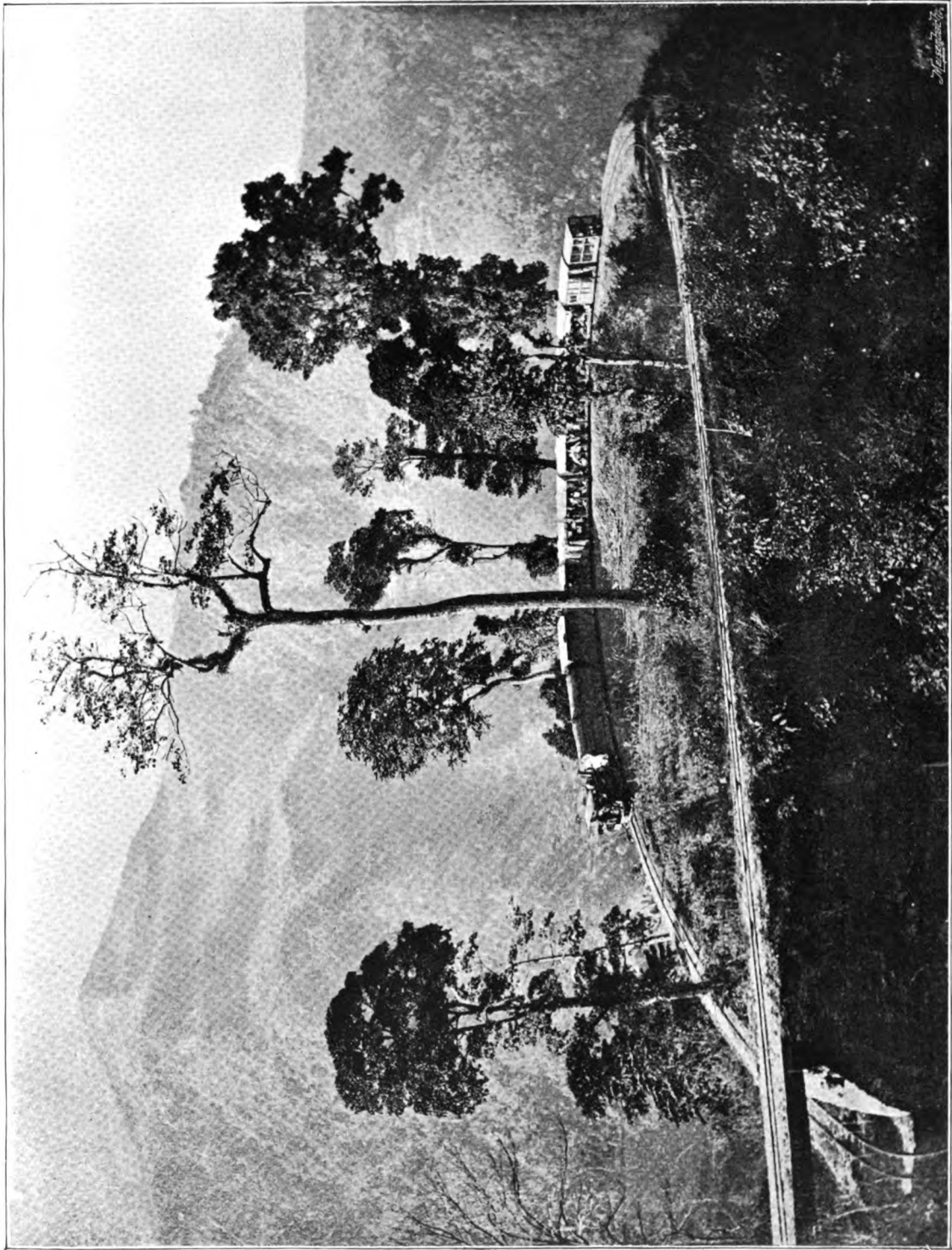
## CHAPTER VII.

**K**URSEONG is a place of some importance, and has a considerable trade. The old Punkabaree Road joins the cart road at the bazaar. This used to be the route from the plains and from Silliguri previous to the making of the cart road *via* Sookna.

From Kurseong the old road (along which troops formerly went to Darjeeling) works up to the Mahaldiram ridge, and follows it to Senchal, near Darjeeling. The barracks used to be at Senchal, but were abandoned. This will be further noticed hereafter. This road was laid out by Lord Napier of Magdala when a young officer. It is a pleasant ride in fair weather, and the views will amply reward the trouble taken.

There is a neat little church at Kurseong, besides which there is a good dāk bungalow, a railway school, a convent school, &c., and a comfortable hotel; here the traveller may, with advantage, break the journey, if not pressed for time. The train halts for half an hour at the hotel, and lunch is served in the refreshment room of the hotel.

LOOP No. 4.—See page 24.



The traveller will notice the wild profusion of English flowers, which seem to flourish as well in Kurseong as in their native clime.

The views from the hotel are exceedingly fine. Across the valley to the west may be seen the mountains of Nepal, and the frontier fort of Elam, which is held by Nepalese troops. The plains lie to the south, while to the north the hills are distinct, and on a clear day a glimpse is obtained of "the snows"—the highest point seen being Kinchinjinga. The views here are as striking and varied, perhaps, as at any previous point of the line, and have been the subjects of many an artist's study.

The valley below contains some of the most important tea cultivation in the district, such as the gardens of "Singell," "Mount Teviot," and "Spring-side."

The Government boarding school for children of railway *employés*, &c., at Kurseong, is an institution worthy of note. It confers many benefits on children belonging to a working class who can ill afford to send them to Europe. The school is being further enlarged at Government expense.

It is quite a pleasure to see the healthy look of most of the children, and their rosy cheeks are a marked contrast to the pale faces of European children reared in the plains.

The buildings are well adapted to the purposes of a school, and there will be separate departments for boys and girls. In many cases brothers and sisters will then be at the school, and grow up seeing one another at frequent intervals and being drawn closer together in family ties. The hill climate has a marked effect in fitting their constitutions to meet the struggle of a life on the plains, where most of them will, probably, have to live hereafter. The grounds are very extensive, and are situated at an elevation of over 6,000 feet. There is no lack of fresh, pure air.

On the road to the "Eagle's Craig" may be noticed the rest house of the Maharajah of Burdwan. This was of great use, with many similar houses at various points of the road, in former days, when the journey had to be performed *via* Carragola and Purneah to Darjeeling, where His Highness has an extensive palace and property. Rest barracks for troops were also located at intervals, and their remains may yet be observed below the bazaar, and between Kurseong and Sonada, on the spot where the Victoria Brewery is now located.

Kurseong, like Darjeeling, owes its origin (as do Simla, Mussoorie, &c.) to the necessity that exists in India of providing places where the health of Europeans may be recruited by a sojourn in a more temperate climate.

The proximity to Calcutta of Darjeeling, and Kurseong likewise, even in the early days of the cession of British Sikhim, was recognised as an important

REVERSE AT GYABARI. — See page 26.



factor in its adaptability as a sanitarium, and now, with the railway communication which exists, and which must improve year by year, it is impossible to foresee its value to the European in Bengal, or to what extent it may reduce the cost of maintaining British troops in the Bengal Presidency, and Government, years ago, reserved 600 acres above Kurseong for cantonments. In fact, there is no reason why a mountain residence should not be extended to hundreds of Europeans who now *exist*, but can hardly be said *to live*, in the plains. There are many places from Kurseong, upwards, suitable for settlements of colonists, or for troops. Among these may be noted "Hope Town," which was started somewhat with the view of making it a European settlement—a view which should revive with a railway passing close to it at Sonada.

At "Hope Town" there is a fair prospect of farming, market gardening, &c., being rendered profitable pursuits. Should they be encouraged, vegetables, &c., could be sent to supply the Calcutta and other centres of demand during the hot season, when it is impossible to procure, in the plains, anything but a few native vegetables. The establishment of troops in large numbers would also increase the demand for farm and garden produce, so that the matter of supplies should not be difficult.

A large farm has already been started at "Rangaroon," near Darjeeling. The mere fact that the supply of poultry, eggs, sheep, &c., for the local requirements is nowhere equal to the demand, and that prices seem to increase year by year (as the monopoly is held by local dealers and others), should encourage market gardens and farms. High prices can only lead to people of ordinary means keeping away from the hill stations unless forced there for the purpose of recruiting their health.

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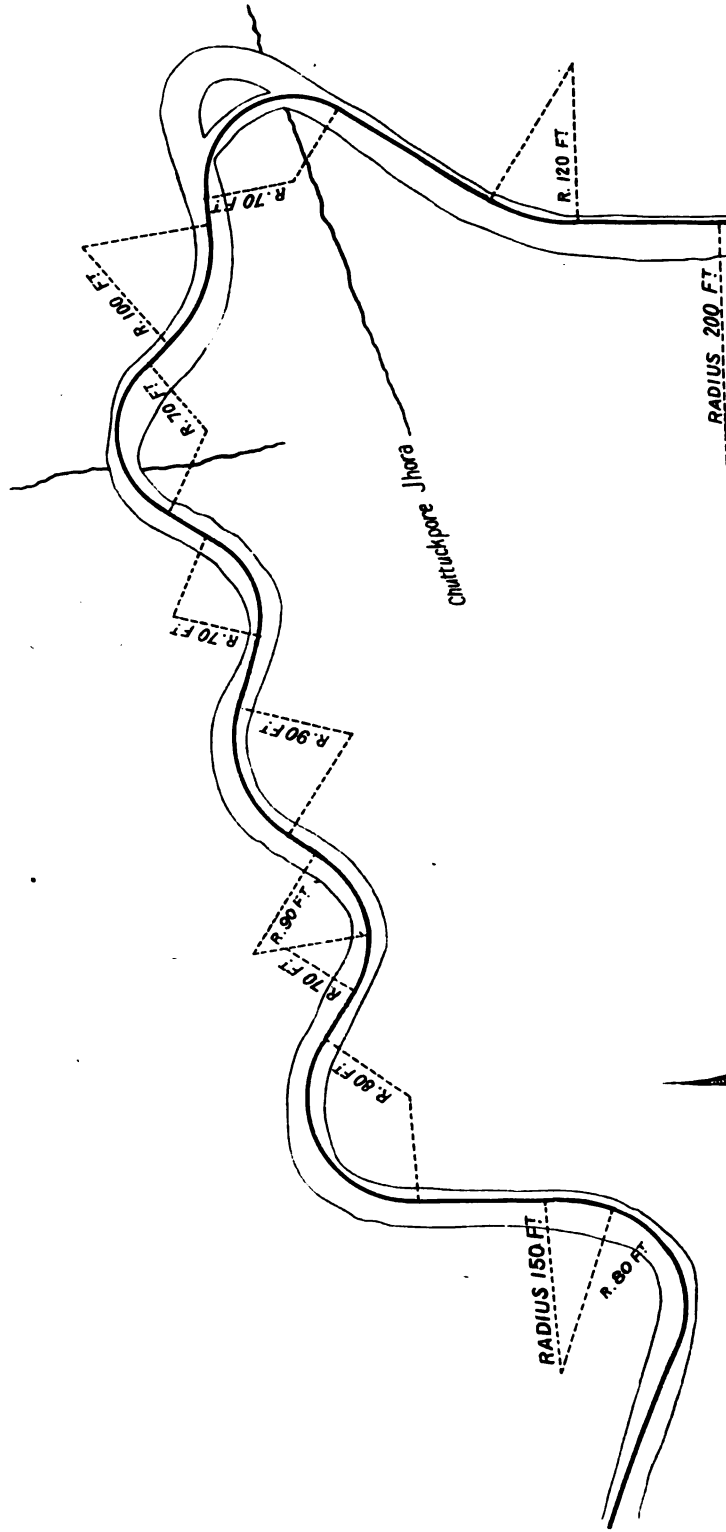
## CHAPTER VIII.

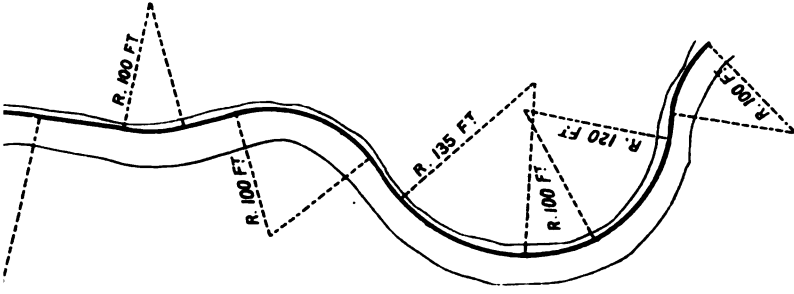
RESUMING our journey by train from Kurseong, we notice, close above the hotel, a large building: this is St. Mary's Training College for ecclesiastical students, and belongs to the Jesuits. We pass along the new trace made for the railway for about a mile, when a rest shed is passed, and Toong Station (elevation, 5,656 feet) is reached. From this point the line runs, generally, along the old cart road.

Nothing of special interest is to be seen along this track, except the profusion of the graceful tree-ferns (*Hemitelia decipiens*). We may also see some very long spans of telegraph wires, which dip across the small valleys

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PLAN OF PART 40TH MILE.





SCALE, 150 FT. TO AN INCH.

Note, Gradient 1 in 32.64.





THE "PAGLA JHORA."—See page 26.



to avoid the bends of the road ; and, at the 38th mile, we pass the old rest barracks which were used by the troops when they had to march up to Darjeeling. Troops now proceed by rail, and these barracks have been transformed into a brewery. Some sharp curves in the 40th mile are interesting (see diagram).

At the  $41\frac{1}{4}$  mile we reach the bazaar and station of Sonada (6,552 feet elevation). This is a place of some importance, as the roads from many tea gardens converge here along the Hope Town spur. Hope Town, as previously mentioned, is about a mile to the west, and will be noticed from its cluster of houses and a small church.

A little beyond Sonada Station, and above the road, may be seen another of the Maharajah of Burdwan's rest houses, now no longer used for this purpose, but as a sanitarium for the religious of the Milan Foreign Mission working in Bengal.

Proceeding from Sonada, the train passes through almost primeval forests, which here clothe the hill sides. Ascending gradually, we reach Jor Bungalow Bazaar. At this point the road from Senchal (hereafter to be described) joins the main road, as also roads to Rangaroon and the Jellapahar Troop Depôt, of which a glimpse is obtained, as also a remarkably fine view of the mountain ranges to the north-east.

Passing along through the bazaar, the traveller will be struck with the peculiar formation of the huts and shops. The merry little Bhootea children, with their rosy cheeks, and the quaint looks and appearance of their elders, will also be objects of interest.

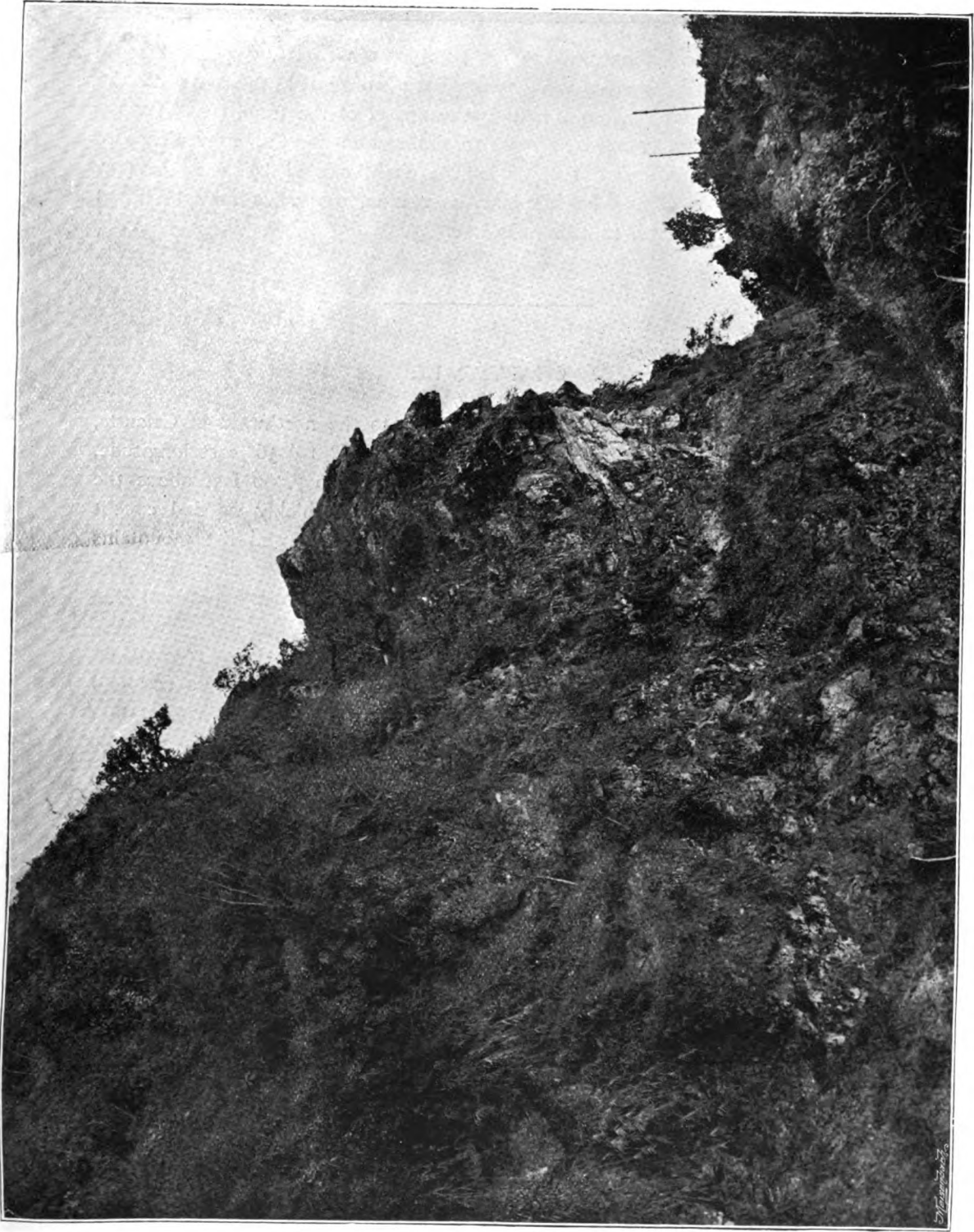
The train presently pulls up at Ghoom Station, which is situated at the highest point reached by the railway (7,407 feet above mean sea level). Thence we descend towards Darjeeling for a distance of some four miles, the line falling about 600 feet in this distance.

Immediately after leaving the Ghoom Station the line passes through a deep cutting, and near this point during the winter of 1882-83 snow proved a slight obstruction, and, probably for the first time on record, a "snow plough" was used on a locomotive engine in India. Snow is never very severe at Darjeeling, but in this instance it had drifted.

It will be noticed that the train proceeds down hill here most cautiously—the line being steep in places (1 in 23 for a short distance). About a mile out of Ghoom the line passes out on a projecting sweep, and on a clear day the snows suddenly appear to view from this point, and shortly after the hill side to the north-east is seen covered with houses. This is the town of Darjeeling.

A few minutes brings us to our destination, and the train stops at the Darjeeling terminus.

"GLADSTONE'S ROCK."—See page 28.



The traveller can now walk to his hotel or other resting place that he may have selected, his luggage having been consigned to some of the numerous licensed coolies found waiting the arrival of the train.

Some of the hotels send servants to the station for the convenience of their patrons. "Dandies," a sort of lounge chair, carried by three or four sturdy hillmen, can always be hired at the station, or ponies may be hired by previous arrangement, as also rickshaws.

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### CHAPTER IX.

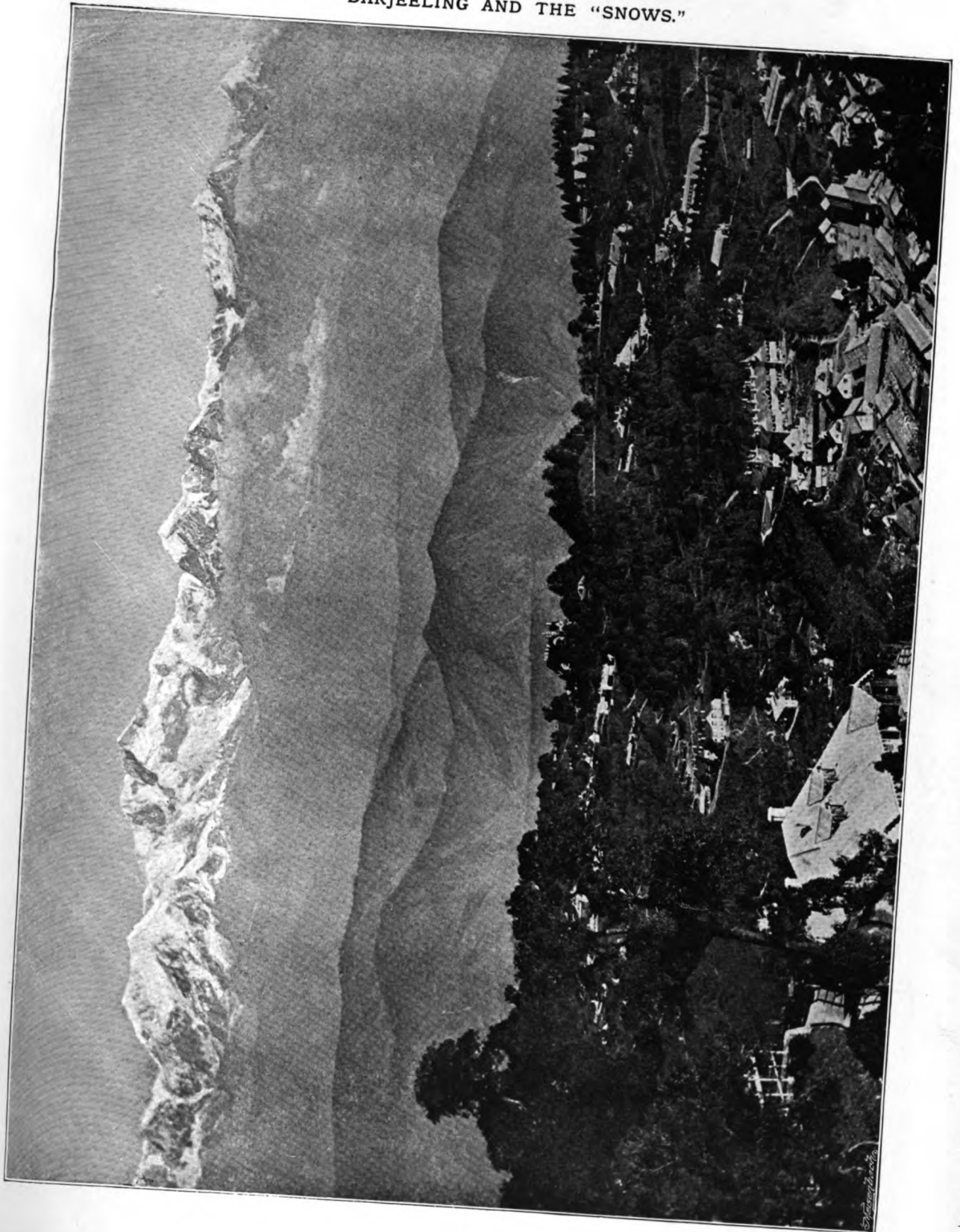
THE town of Darjeeling is some 307 miles to the northward of Calcutta, is situated in  $27^{\circ} 2' 48''$  north latitude and  $88^{\circ} 18' 36''$  east longitude, and occupies a ridge which varies from 6,500 to 7,500 feet above the level of the sea. This ridge divides into two spurs, thickly wooded except where the demand for timber has cleared the hill sides, and the mountains descend steeply to the Great Rungeet River, which, together with the Rammon and Teesta, form part of the northern boundary between the district of Darjeeling, or British Sikhim, and Independent Sikhim.

The annual rainfall in Darjeeling is, on an average, about 125 inches. Four-fifths of this may be said to fall between the middle of June and end of September. During November, December, and January the temperature is as low as  $25^{\circ}$  at night, the weather is superb, and the magnificence of the uninterrupted view of the snowy range and all surrounding scenery, indescribable.

The traveller should choose this season to see the place, as during the rainy season the clouds and mist frequently hide all views. Darjeeling, during the summer months, is the local seat of the Bengal Government, and the Lieutenant-Governor's residence, known as "The Shrubbery," is a pleasing and prominent feature in the landscape.

The Eden Sanitarium (named after the late Sir Ashley Eden, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal) is a handsome building, just above the market-place, and affords the advantages of an hospital to the invalid, together with careful medical attendance. This institution is open during the season (March to November) to the general public. The terms for treatment are very moderate, and can be learnt on application. There is also the Lowis Jubilee Sanitarium for native convalescents. It may be noted that there is also a private sanitarium at Kurseong, which is mostly frequented by invalids of larger means who desire the comforts of a home and qualified medical attendance.

DARJEELING AND THE "SNOWS."



The Club is available to visitors, who can become honorary members for short terms, on election. It faces the Bazaar, and is a neat building, and has every needful comfort. The billiard room, which holds four tables, is one of the finest in India.

There is also an Amusement Club, to which a small subscription gives admittance. Here lawn tennis is carried on with vigour during the season. A covered-in, so-called, "squash" tennis court has lately been erected, which provides pleasant recreation. The grounds are situated close to St. Andrew's Church. There is a town hall, used for dances, theatricals, &c.: this is between the lawn tennis ground and covered tennis court above mentioned.

Just below is "The Mall" (7,000 feet above sea level), which forms a pleasant walk, giving a variety of views. Here pony races and other sports used to be held at intervals from March to October, and ladies indulged in the sport of tilting at the ring. Such sports are now carried on at the Lebong Parade Ground, below Darjeeling, as also polo, &c.

There are churches and chapels of different denominations; also schools, such as St. Joseph's College, North Point, St. Paul's School, Jellapahar, The Convent, and others. The buildings of St. Joseph's, St. Paul's, and The Convent are fine specimens of stone work; as also the Archbishop's residence.

Darjeeling contains several good hotels and boarding houses, among which the following are the most frequented:—"Woodlands" Hotel (adjacent to the railway station), "Drum Druid" (on "The Mall"), "Rockville" Boarding House (on the road to Jellapahar), and several others.

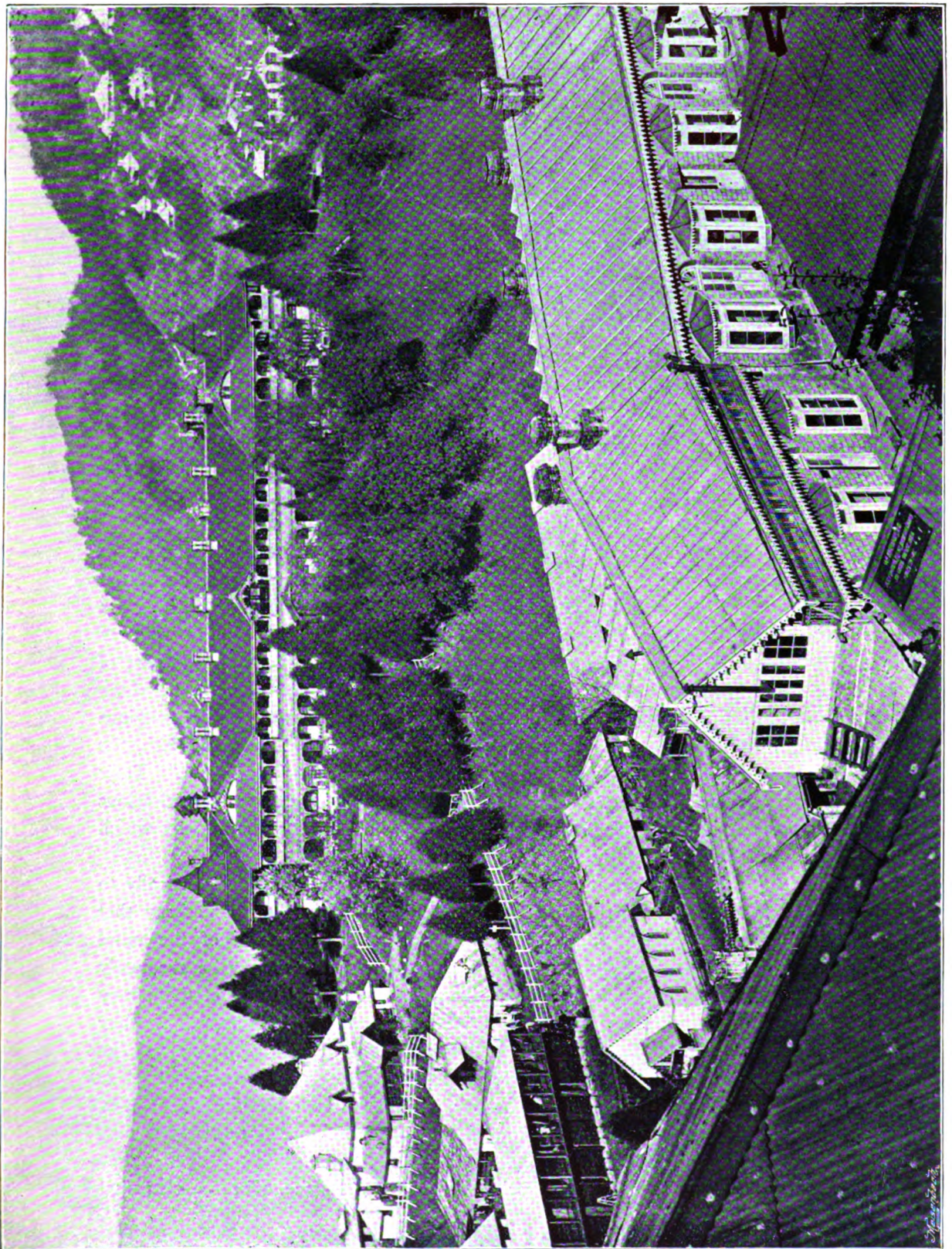
The People's Park, at the north end of "Birch Hill," forms a nice ride or ramble. We would recommend the visitor to hire a good hill pony for his excursions. The rate of hire is about Rs. 3 per day, and ponies can be procured through most of the hotels, and will save much fatigue. In fact, most of the localities require the use of a pony, or of a "dandy" for ladies, should they prefer it.

The Botanical Gardens have not been long started, but will well repay a visit. There is also a short excursion that can be taken to the "Victoria Falls." These are situated on the lower ("Victoria") road leading to the Palace of the Maharajah of Burdwan. Although the body of water in the falls is not large, they, with their surroundings, present a beautiful appearance, especially after rain.

The buildings of the Maharajah of Burdwan's Palace, and a circular enclosure surrounding a Hindoo Temple, may be noticed on a spur to the south-west of the railway station.

One of the best and prettiest rides or walks close to the town is round the north face of Birch Hill. The vegetation here is well developed, and will prove interesting to the botanist. The visitor must, however, be on his guard against the leeches, which are very troublesome at times, and are common all over the hills, especially in wet weather. Many planters and local residents wear leech gaiters to guard themselves from leech bites.

THE EDEN SANITARIUM (in centre of Picture).—See page 36.





The "Bhootea Bustee," or local village of the Bhooteas, is situated on the east side, below the Mall; here, at times, may be seen absurd and grotesque lama dances, which take place at the Buddhist temple, where there is also a large praying wheel, &c.

Three classes of Bhooteas are to be found in the Darjeeling district—namely, the Bhooteas proper, belonging to Thibet; Bhooteas from Bhootan, and Sikhim Bhooteas. Also Sharpa Bhooteas—a cross between the Thibetan Bhootea and the Lepcha.

"Bhot," according to Dr. Hooker, is the general name for Thibet, not for Bhootan. The Bhooteas, who are natives of Bhootan, or of the Dharma country, are called Dharma people, in allusion to their spiritual chief, the Dharma Rajah. They are a darker and more powerful race than the Thibetan Bhooteas, rude, turbulent, and Thibetan in language and religion, with the worst features of those people exaggerated.

The Dharma people are numerous in Darjeeling; they are often runaways from their own country.

The lamas, or priests, form a large proportion of the population of Bhootan. Entrance into the priesthood is obtained by the permission of the Deb, or Secular Rajah, on payment of a fee. In addition to their religious duties, the lamas are charged with the medical care of the people; but, as exorcism is the only system of treatment attempted, assurance on the part of the practitioner, and faith on that of the patient, is all that is needed.

The village lamas, and the people generally, confine their religious exercises to telling their beads and rotating their prayer wheels, with the constant, dreary repetition of the sentence, "Om—mani—padmi—om." Their preparation for a future state seems to consist in the personal or vicarious performance of this rite; hence the praying wheels and machines, by which countless repetitions of the sentence are produced.

Prayers are also produced on strips of cotton or calico, fixed vertically to poles; these may be noticed in many roadside places. The lamas say that the soul of religion is mental abstraction and the withdrawal of the mind from all mundane consideration, in order that the thoughts may be absolutely concentrated on the attributes of Buddha; but the most devout of them may be seen listening to, and smiling at, the conversation of others, whilst they pass the beads through their hands and mutter their everlasting formula. The conversion of Bhooteas to Buddhism has not altogether eradicated their paganism. The common people believe in an innumerable host of spirits, and make offerings to them of flowers and bits of coloured rag, which may be noticed in some places.

The Lebong spur, which is below the Bhootea Bustee, affords a charming

ride, and is worth the visitor's attention. On this spur, barracks for European troops are being built: this should further add to the usefulness of Darjeeling, as it is proposed to locate a wing of a regiment here.

The hotels and boarding houses are often visited by traders in curiosities of sorts. "Prayer wheels" may be bought, but these rarely contain the genuine sacred writings of the Buddhists; the makers are satisfied with inserting strips of old newspapers. Buddhist bells are also brought for sale, besides "khukri," and "bān" knives, collections of butterflies, some of which are worthy of attention—dried ferns, stuffed birds, skins of the musk deer, etc. Tails of the yâk of Thibet, and the skin of the gorgeous monal pheasant, can also be obtained. Jewellery, turquoise, agate, snuff-bottles, may also be included in the list of these traders' wares.

Photographs of the scenery around Darjeeling are available at several shops; some of these are worthy of the best collections.

Darjeeling can also boast of its jackals, and a story is told that they were imported some years ago, together with crows. Jackals are, however, to be found at Kurseong, and other places on the road, and it seems possible that they have followed civilisation up from the plains.

"Cat-bears," peculiar little reddish animals, are common in these mountains, and skins may, at times, be purchased. The most handsome skin which can be procured here is that of the snow leopard, but it is rare.

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## CHAPTER X.

JELLAPAHAR, the invalid depôt for troops, at an elevation of some 7,500 feet, lies to the south of Darjeeling. The parade ground at Jellapahar is also used as a cricket ground, where the local matches are played. Lawn tennis and a theatre also help to add to the amusements, as well as football.

The visitor may vary his rides by passing over Jellapahar to the Jor Bungalow Bazaar, whence he has a choice of returning along the east side of the Darjeeling ridge, or *via* the Auckland Road on the west side. He could also return by the cart road following the railway.

There is also a wide cart road leading from Jellapahar to Jor Bungalow Bazaar. Along this road carts may be seen toiling up with firewood and stores to the depôt.

By the roads here mentioned is the route taken by pic-nic or other parties to visit the "Ghoom Rock." The road to the rock branches off a few hundred yards north of Ghoom Station.

The "Ghoom Rock" is about three and a half miles westward from this part, and is situated close to the bridle road passing through the forest and leading towards the Nepal frontier. The rock has a flat place at the top, and gives enough room for a small pic-nic party. It will be seen that the rock overhangs the road at a height of some 50 feet.

It is said that criminals used to be forced over this rock in execution of the decrees of the local powers, in the "good old days" of the hill tribes.

We must not omit to pay a visit to the Botanical Garden at Rangaroon, which lies to the south-east of Jellapahar. The road branches off from Jor Bungalow Bazaar in an easterly direction, and the ride through the forest gives an excellent idea of the moisture at certain seasons. The long moss hanging from the trees has a most weird look. This feature of the forest may also be noticed *en route* to the "Ghoom Rock," &c.

The little brown squirrel, very similar to the English one, is common in the forests, and may be seen on the roads.

The Botanical Garden at Rangaroon was started in 1876, under Government auspices, "for the cultivation of plants, shrubs, and trees suitable to the soil and climate of the Eastern Himalayas." The site of the garden is 6,000 feet above the sea, and on a slope at the lower edge of the great forest which clothes the Senchal Mountain. Trees of the coniferæ were planted some years before the Government garden was started, and were already flourishing. The gardens cover some 47 acres.

We now note, incidentally, that the cinchona plantations in the Darjeeling district were commenced by Government about 1862, and are now giving a good return. The chief plantation is at Rungbi, in a long, narrow valley. In 1875 there were 2,000 acres of Government cinchona plantations, in which the trees were from 4 to 30 feet high, according to age. The cultivation has now extended greatly, and cinchona febrifuge is a recognised article in the market.

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## CHAPTER XI.

THE chief glory of Darjeeling is its splendid panorama of "snows." The finest view is to be obtained from "Tiger Hill," near Senchal.

The ride from Darjeeling to Senchal is not a great undertaking; and if the visitor can only be favoured with a clear day, and undertake to be at "Tiger Hill" (8,514 feet), near the site of the old barracks on Senchal, before sunrise, he will have before him one of the finest sights of the snowy

range which the Himalayas can afford. We will quote Dr. Hooker's description of the scene:—

“Early next morning I caught my first view, and I literally held my breath in awe and admiration. Six or seven successive ranges of forest-clad mountains, as that whereon I stood, intervened between me and the dazzling white pile of snow-clad mountains, among which the giant peak of Kinchinjinga rose 20,000 feet above the lofty point on which I stood. Owing to the clearness of the atmosphere the snow appeared, to my fancy, but a few miles off, and the loftiest mountain at only a day's journey. The heavenward line was projected against a pale blue sky, while little detached patches of mist clung here and there to the highest peaks, and were tinged golden yellow or rosy red by the rising sun.”

Mount Everest (29,000 feet) is seen to advantage from “Tiger Hill.” “A jagged line of snow” connects the two highest mountains—Everest and Kinchinjinga (28,000 feet). This line of peaks is not so much a chain of mountains as the advanced portion of the vast mountain region of Thibet, frowning the immense country to the north of India.

Notwithstanding the seeming excellent site, the barracks on Senchal had to be abandoned, as the troops did not flourish there. There were very many cases of suicide, and now all that remain are the chimneys and foundations of the barracks.

The unsuitability of Senchal for a residence may be due to the extreme mists experienced there, and which are, partly, cut off from Darjeeling and condensed on the forests of this range during the south-east winds.

On the way up to Senchal may be noticed the water-pipes which convey water to the town of Darjeeling. The supplies are taken from the water-courses at Senchal, 17 springs being tapped. Darjeeling is thus placed most favourably as regards water, and it is plentiful even in the driest weather. This certainly gives her an advantage over several of the other hill stations in India, and Pasteur filters are now being arranged; with these in working order this sanitarium should have some of the finest drinking water in the world.

Should the visitor not care for the journey to “Tiger Hill,” he may, except for seeing Mount Everest, get nearly as fine a view of the snowy range from “Observatory Hill,” above The Mall. The elevation here is 7,168 feet, and more than 24 peaks ranging from 10,000 to 28,000 feet high are visible, not counting the smaller mountains.

## CHAPTER XII.

THE visitor to Darjeeling district, if unacquainted with the manufacture of tea, should, if possible, pay a visit to one of the numerous tea gardens and factories; this will not be difficult by obtaining an introduction to one of the planters.

The planter's welcome to his guest in his lonely home, and his hospitality, are as proverbial in this district as in other parts of India.

Tea manufacture is the staple industry of the Darjeeling district, and is conducted almost entirely by means of European capital and under skilled European supervision. The cultivation of the plant has made steady and rapid progress. The discovery of tea in Bengal dates from 1826, when Mr. Bruce, who commanded a division of gunboats in Upper Assam in the first Burmese War, found the plant growing indigenously, and brought down with him some plants and seeds.

The Assam Company, which was established about 1839, was the first, and is still by far the greatest, concern for the cultivation of tea in Bengal. Attempts were made to introduce the cultivation into Darjeeling some time previously to 1853; but the real date of its commencement in the district may be taken as 1856-57.

In 1866 some 39 gardens existed, consisting of 10,392 acres, and the out-turn of tea was 433,715 lbs. In 1874 the gardens had increased to 113, the acreage to 18,888, and the out-turn was close on 4,000,000 lbs. The total number of labourers employed in 1874 was 19,424, or rather more than an average of one per acre during the year; but a larger number of hands are employed during the manufacturing season—March to November—and a smaller number during the months when no tea is made.

In 1894 the out-turn exceeded 8,000,000 lbs. for the "hill" gardens only.

## CHAPTER XIII.

IT remains yet for us to notice a few places where excursions may be made from Darjeeling.

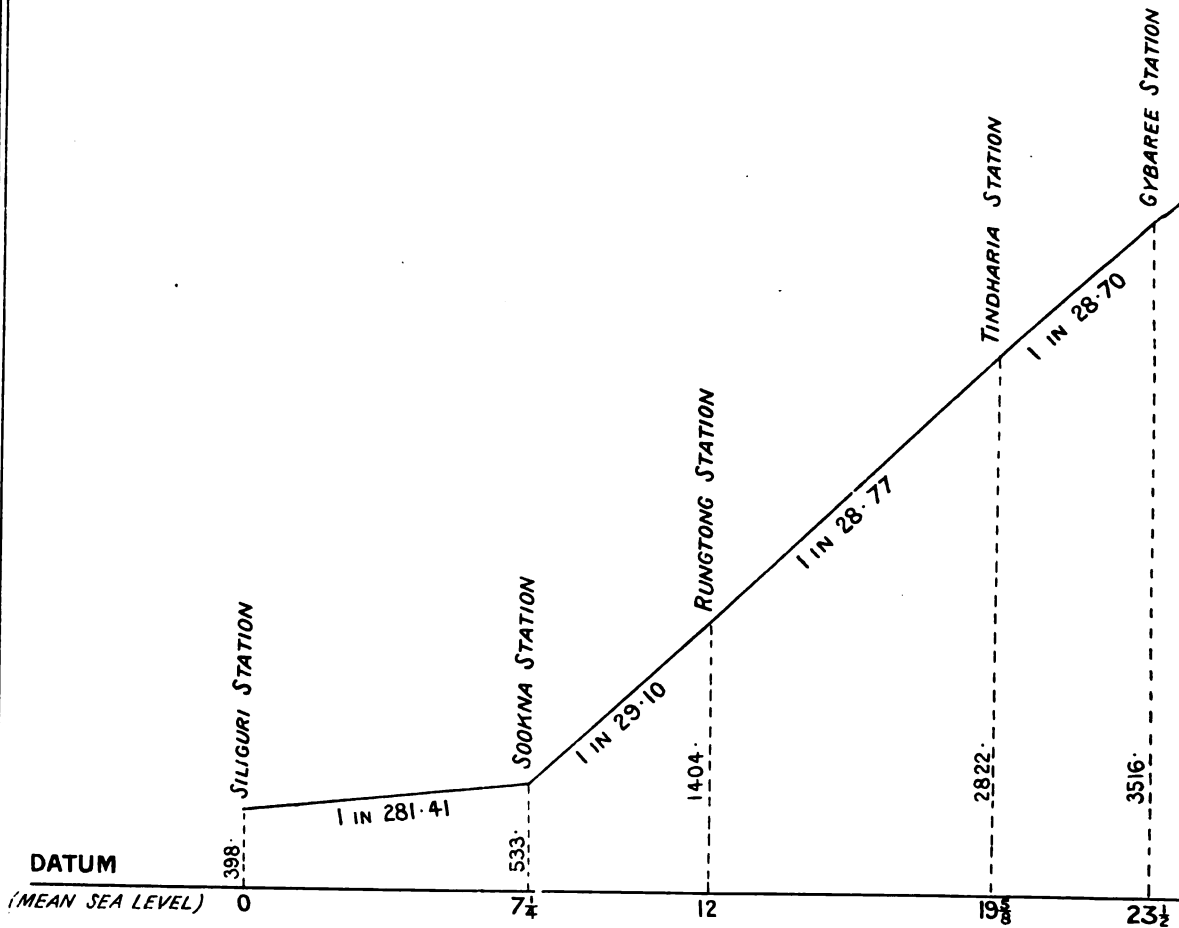
The most ambitious, and at the same time enjoyable, trip to be made from Darjeeling is out to the line of mountains to the west of the town, and which form the boundary of Nepâl, and are known as the Singalila range. The highest mountains of this range are the following:—(1) Phalalum, otherwise called Phalut, height 11,811 feet; (2) Subargum,

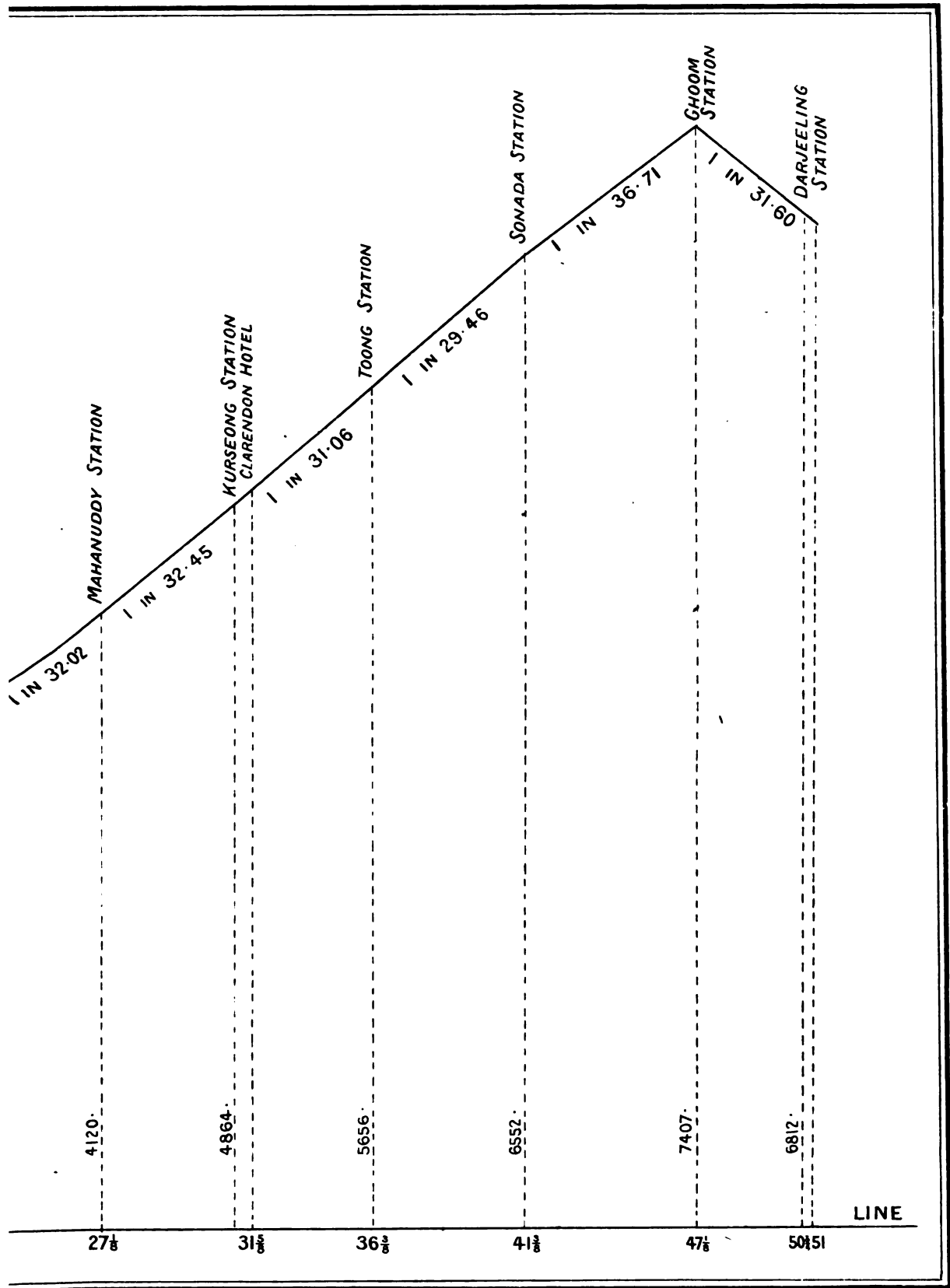


# D. H. R.

## INDEX SECTION.

HORIZONTAL SCALE, 5 MILES TO THE INCH.  
VERTICAL SCALE, 1000 FEET TO THE INCH.









height 10,430 feet; (3) Tongloo, height 10,074 feet. The first of these mountains is of a conical shape, but on the summits of two last named some extent of undulating land is found.

The excursionists should make all arrangements to move "camp fashion" as regards bedding, cooking utensils, and food, as also servants. There are staging bungalows in charge of watchmen at various points along the route, and these contain some little furniture.

The regulations for the occupation of the stage bungalows can easily be learnt in Darjeeling. Several days may be spent out at these places with benefit to anyone who is strong enough to stand the fatigue of the trip. The road to Tongloo passes the Ghoom Rock.

There is another trip which is not difficult of accomplishment from Darjeeling, viz., to the junction of the Rungeet and Teesta Rivers, and to the new suspension bridge, which was built to supersede the old *cane* bridge. This latter bridge was made out of the large hill canes, similar to those which, shod with iron, are in use as "Alpine stocks." The cane bridge was so continually being swept away by the floods that it was found necessary to erect a more permanent structure.

The new suspension bridge was put up through the agency of the Public Works Department. It has a clear span of 300 feet between the abutments, and the roadway is 20 feet above the highest floods. It was a curious procession when the wire cables were taken down from Jor Bungalow to the Teesta (*via* the Rungaroon Road): some 80 coolies, walking one behind another, carried the long snake-like steel wire (465 feet long) cables down to the site of the bridge, and travelled the 18 miles in three days.

The scenery about the Teesta River is very pretty, but the locality is unhealthy, and the trip can only be made in safety during the cold season. Some good photographic views of the locality can be purchased in Darjeeling from the local studios.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

**I**N conclusion, we would refer to the more technical part of the work of this little railway.

The Index section will give a general idea of the *average* grades that have to be overcome. The steepest average is seen to be about 1 in 29. It should, however, be noted that there are so many parts steeper, for short lengths; and 1 in 26 is met with, as also 1 in 23, for a short length, when leaving Ghoom for Darjeeling.

Some of the curves were 50 feet radius originally, but the sharpest is now  $69\frac{1}{2}$  feet.

The speed up hill, on easy parts, is safe at 12 miles an hour, or more, and 9 miles an hour down hill.

There has never been any accident of importance, and no loss of life or limb has been sustained by passengers in some 16 years of working.

Owing to the heavy rainfall in these mountains, difficulties occur at times, specially in July and August. Delays are caused by landslips, etc. Such trouble must, of course, be expected on this line, as in similar localities.

Landslips and breaches in the road have at times necessitated carrying all traffic by short-cut roads, or transferring it over the breaches, but it has always been possible to keep up communication.

To the casual observer it may appear that carriages might be made on the American bogie principle; that couplings and buffers might be improved, etc. The present types of these in use are, however, the result of experience in working, and found to be the most suitable, after many experiments.

Referring to plate showing Loop No. 2 at the 14th mile, it will be seen how the line has had to be "fitted" so as to suit the natural formation of the locality; and this gives an idea of the difficulties of the setting out of such a line. The curves had to be made to suit the trace, and not, as usual on ordinary lines in the plains, to lay out the line to plan fixed without such binding conditions.

Similar reasons forced the peculiar bends in reverses as the one on the 18th mile (see diagram). This is further exemplified by plan of part of the 40th mile. (The Chuttuckpore jhora, or water-course, is at the  $40\frac{1}{2}$  mile.)



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