

TO THE  
**PINDARI**  
GLACIER



A  
**SKETCH  
BOOK  
AND GUIDE**

BY  
**C. W. ANDERSON.**



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PINDARI GLACIER

*A Sketch Book and Guide*

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CALCUTTA and SIMLA.

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I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought  
For oft when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the joy of solitude, . . . ”

—*Wordsworth.*

## PREFACE.

IF one may judge by the visitors' book, not more than forty—or perhaps fifty—people visit the Pindari Glacier annually. And yet, for a trifling outlay of energy, and a yet more trifling outlay of money, an ineffaceable and altogether delightful memory of one of the most beautiful parts of India may be acquired by all who possess a moderate share of health and strength.

The rail-head is Kathgōdam, on the Rohilcund-Kumaon Railway, whence the first part of the tour may be undertaken by various routes. There is a motor road from Kathgōdam through Bhowali to Naini Tal, with a regular service of motors throughout the season. Thence the traveller may motor to Almora, or, if he so choose, may make his way as far as Bageswar by way of Ranikhet and Baijnath. The third route avoids motor roads and goes by way of Bhim Tal and Ramgarh, leaving Naini Tal on the left, and is the route described in the following pages. All roads lead to Bageswar, and all are described concisely in the hand books of Major Gore and Mr. Forrester.

## *Pindari Glacier*

In this little sketch-book I have not concentrated so much on the quality and condition of the roads, but have tried rather to suggest to the reader, within the limits of black and white (and for such scenery these are very narrow limits), what may be expected from those roads pictorially. Let him multiply the suggestions by a thousand, and beautify them from his own imagination, and the<sup>v</sup> result will yet be far short of the reality.

At the same time, I have tried to give those little practical details the observance of which goes so far to make the trip a comfortable one from the material point of view.

If the early summer be chosen, there are, of course, all the joys of the hill flowers, but October is the month for comfortable walking, and is also the time of year when the average toiler of the Plains needs his holiday most. Moreover he goes back to the Plains when they are cool. The conditions described are, therefore, mainly those to be met with in October, but the trip should be so timed that the glacier may be visited before the last week of the month. Snowstorms may block the road above Phurkia any day after the 23rd.

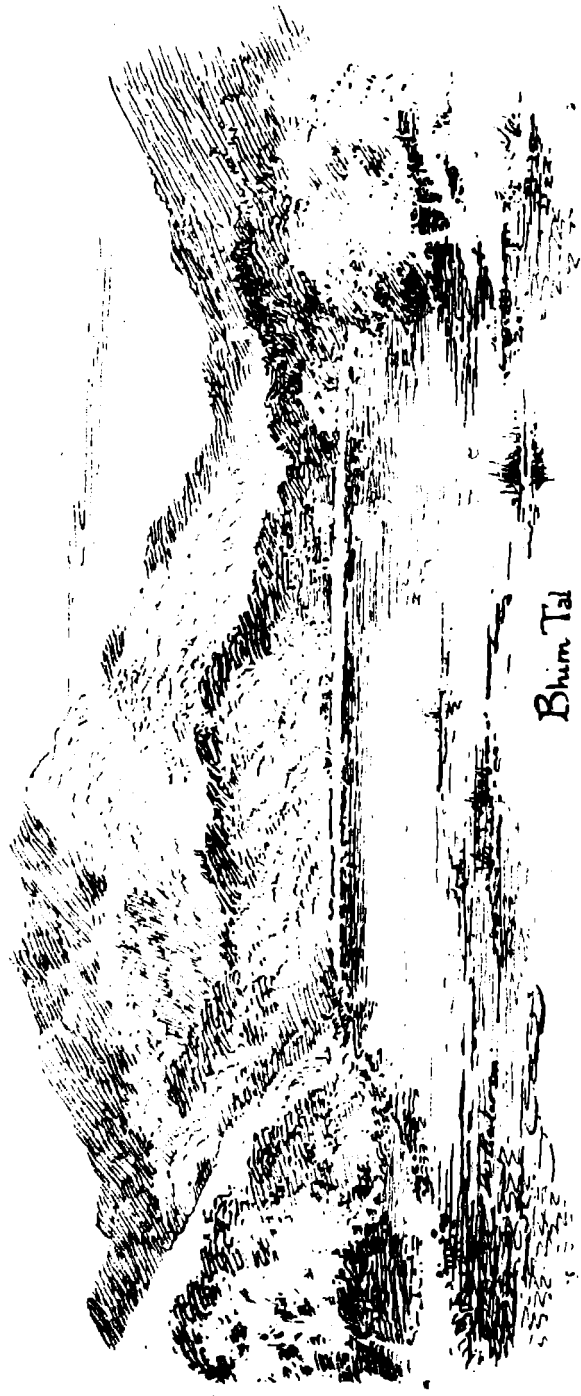
The distance from Kathgodam is about 111 miles, and by making one or two double marches, can, with the return journey, be covered in 20

## *Pindari Glacier*

days.. Allowing for rests at Ramgarh, Almora, and Bageswar, it can be more than comfortably done in 28 days. •

The cost of the tour will naturally vary with individual requirements and the size of the party. For a party of four, it need only be a little over Rs. 5 per head per day, inclusive of stores, but exclusive of railway fares.

• C. W. ANDERSON.



Bhim Tal



## KATHGODAM TO RAMGARH.

THE night train from Bareilly to Kathgodam is convenient for an early morning start up the hills to Bhim Tal. The fresh hill atmosphere is apparent from the first, and the actual ascent commences a couple of miles or so from the station. Even the most enthusiastic of walkers will do well to save his muscles for a few days, and the use of a pony or dandy is advisable as far as Bhim Tal or Ramgarh. The track to Bhim Tal is much used by cattle and baggage ponies, and is loose and shaly—probably the roughest of the whole trip to the glacier.

We are at once in fine forest country, from which many a view of the unregretted plains may be had until, at a turn in the road, the huge natural dam of Bhim Tal is seen against the sky. There are several watering places on the road, but whether supplied through a pipe or not, it is well to avoid drinking all wayside water.

On arrival at the top of the hill take the left-hand road round the Tal if you are pressing on to Ramgarh and want the shorter route; but

## *Pindari Glacier*

if there is time to spare, it is better to work round the right-hand road, and lunch at or near the Dak Bungalow, which is immediately beyond the handsome stone spill at the foot of the lake. The views from the spill and the shaded turf in front of the Dak Bungalow are very pleasant, and an hour or two may be spent here very profitably in resting before the afternoon's walk.

A start from Kathgodam at 7.30 a.m. will have brought you to Bhim Tal by 12 noon, but in all probability the baggage coolies will not arrive until about 4 p.m., and will not reach Ramgarh until about 8 p.m., so there is little object in pressing on too fast.

Bhim Tal is well known as one of the smaller hill stations, is well supplied with hotels, has good fishing and boating, and is a centre for pleasant excursions.

From the Dak Bungalow the road is wide and level until the bazar is reached at the far-end of the lake, then rises gradually for a mile or so, turns to the right and ascends steeply for two or three miles, after which a mile of level ends in a descent into a bit of English-looking lane, with cherry-trees and hedge-rows all complete.

Now commences the real work of the afternoon—two miles of stiff collar work—through beautiful and varied forest which in the spring must be decked with flowers. Turn and take a last look

## *Pindari Glacier*

at the plains before you reach the Pass—they will not be visible again for a week or two. They look their best from here, and the view from the Gagar Pass will presently banish all thought of them for some time to come.

The Gagar Pass is a narrow cutting in the rock at a height of about 7,000 feet above the plains. To get the best view, one should ascend the hill on the left for a very short distance. Away to the far north (80 miles as the crow flies) is Nanda Devi, 25,661 feet, gloriously framed between the dark lines of a forest lane. A steep descent from the Pass brings us in about half-an-hour to the outskirts of the long village of Ramgarh.

The Oak View Hotel is at one end of the village and the Dak Bungalow at the other. If you are fortunate enough to have obtained rooms at the former, you will have saved a mile at the end of a tiring day. By this time the sun is down, and pending the arrival of the baggage coolies and your warm clothing, you will, in all probability, contemplate a wood fire from between the blankets.



Ramgarh  
from The Dak Burigalow

## RAMGARH.

**A** STAY of a day or two at Ramgarh is well worth while. The hotel is at 6,500 feet, an ideal altitude in October, and every excursion, either from here or from the Dak Bungalow, strengthens the muscles and lungs, and gets one quickly into form for the hard work to come. Going for a walk in any direction is like going up the side of a house. There is the climb back to the Pass to see Nanda Devi change her colours, in the sunset, or (for the hardy) the sunrise. Still finer and more extensive views may be obtained by following a track up the ridge of the hill at the east of the Pass. A climb of about 1,000 feet above the Pass brings us out on a grassy hill top from which may be seen Naini Tal, Ranikhet, Almora, and Muktesar, and beyond them the snowy panorama of Trisul, Nanda Devi, Nanda Kot with her roof-like top, and Panch Chuli, the origin of whose name is equally evident. Lovely views are obtainable from the tall hills opposite the hotel. The readiest, if not the only, means of scaling these hills is by the private paths through the apple orchards, and it is necessary to obtain



At Ramgarh.

## Pindari Glacier

permission before using them. From here look out for a tiny puff of cloud—apparently just to the right of Trisul—with luck you will make its better acquaintance at close quarters. It is the snow, which at this time of the year is continually blown from the peak (about 21,000 feet) which provides one of the *nevées* for the Pindari Glacier and, by means of it, it is possible, especially when viewed, on the return journey, to identify the exact goal of your expedition.

A nice view of Panch Chuli, though somewhat blocked by some bare red hills across the valley is to be had from the hotel verandah.

There is much to interest the botanist or naturalist in the Ramgarh forests. Down in the ravines are fine maiden hair ferns, periwinkles, wild strawberries, foxgloves, Michaelmas daisies, rhododendrons and bamboo grass, while the pines are draped here and there with scarlet virginia creeper.

The barking deer may be heard most evenings, and the call of the coppersmith commences at dusk and continues through the night. So all-pervading is this clear, bell-like note that it is ever afterwards associated with thoughts of Ramgarh and the tour to the glacier.

*Chikor* may sometimes be seen on the hillsides across the stream at the foot of the valley, and pheasants of the commoner kind,

## *Pindari Glacier*

or *murghi* as they are known to the hillmen, are numerous. These pheasants may, if one walks warily, be seen in numbers crossing the path up to the Pass, especially in the evening. A better place still is the thick jungle by the road to Bhowali.

Bhowali, the road to which place is just on the south side of the Pass, is  $6\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Ramgarh, and is interesting on account of its large turpentine factory. The walk is pretty all the way, and the work entailed puts the finishing touch on one's condition for the business in hand for the next week or two.



## RAMGARH TO PEORA.

**I**F you have spoken sufficiently firmly to the coolie agent, you will leave Ramgarh not more than an hour or so behind the appointed time. After all, the march to Peora is only  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and there is ample time to do it in. Before leaving Ramgarh village, it is worth while laying in as large a stock of apples and walnuts as can conveniently be carried.

The first two miles are a steep descent, then a mile of level by the side of a sparkling little stream. After passing a small suspension bridge there is a gradual rise of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles past an abandoned iron foundry. A little detour from the track just beyond the foundry discloses a village deserted for the winter and in charge only of a couple of chowkidars. It is a quaint and picturesque little village, the richly carved doors and windows being especially charming. The villagers have migrated to their winter quarters—Haldwani—on the plains. One meets many such migrating families on their annual trek to warmer climes, the women (many of them very comely), gorgeous in green or red velvet bodices and golden-coloured scarves, with pleated skirts tied low. The children are

## *Pindari Glacier*

strapped, sitting or sprawling, frog-like, on the backs of the little knock-kneed hill ponies, or carried in baskets on their mothers' heads or on their fathers' shoulders. All—men, women, and children—are, alas, almost incredibly dirty, a peculiarity which detracts from their undoubted charm as a people.

A less pleasant sight which one may experience about this time is a troop of lepers making their painful way to the plains from Almora.

Beyond the village the road winds upwards more steeply, in places narrowing until, with a thousand feet of nothing below, one feels inclined to hug the side of the hill. The scenery becomes more grand at every turn until the top of the ridge is reached. Here is a shop and an opportunity to replenish, if necessary, the stock of coolie cigarettes. The remaining three miles are a mixture of ascent and descent.

The Peora bungalow is at the 27th milestone from Kathgodam, pleasantly placed in the forest, and on the side of a hill, at a height of 5,900 feet. It faces due North, and if you have spun out the march till dusk you will be just in time to watch the pyramid-like Nanda Devi—hanging, as it were, in the sky above Almora—change from white to rose, and from rose to cold grey. This view of the snows is one of the most beautiful of the whole trip.

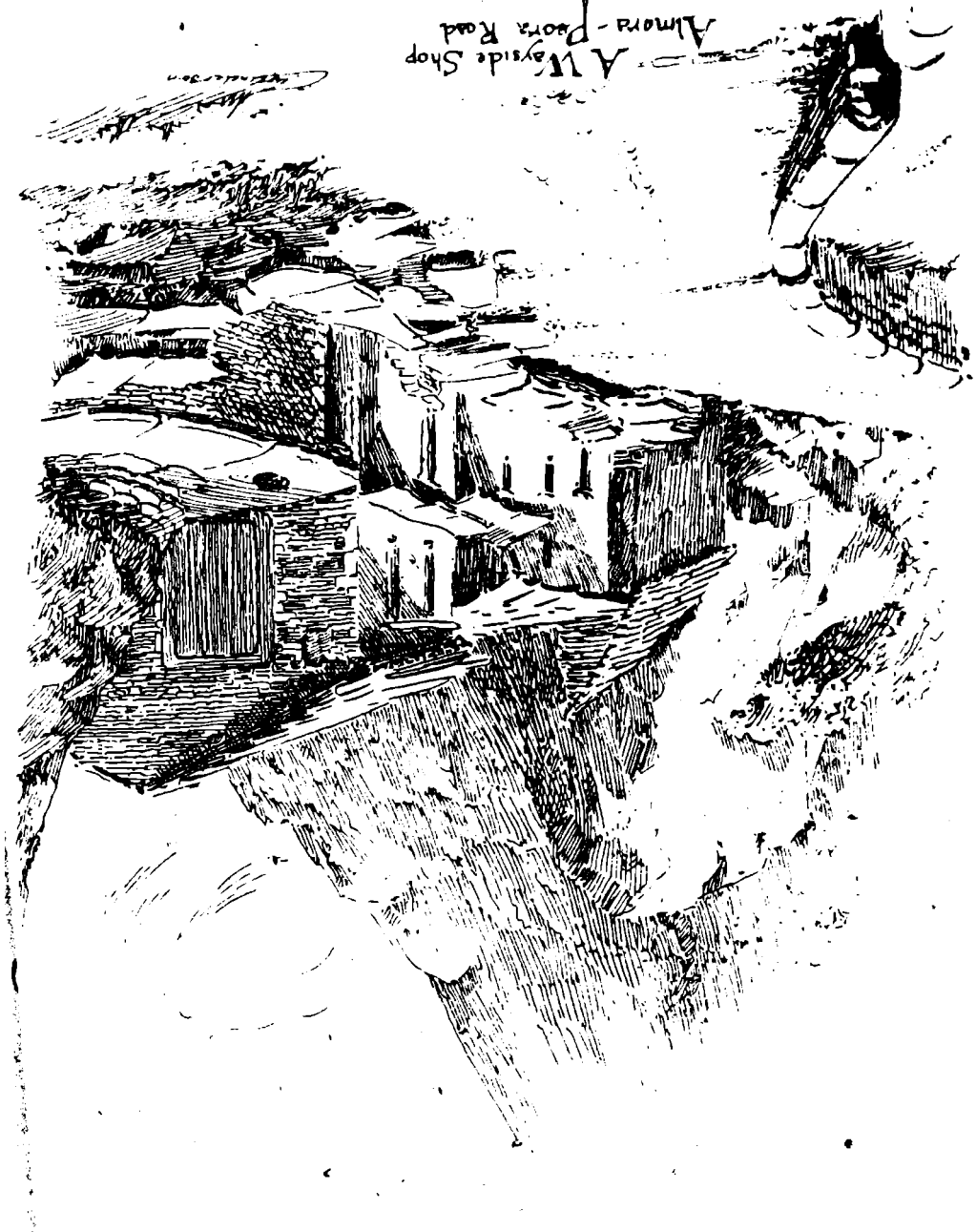
## PEORA TO ALMORA.

**A**T Peora ponies are often substituted for baggage coolies. Before starting out for Almora it is well to see personally to the roping of the baggage, as this is sometimes of the most perfunctory, not to say trustful, description. Half an hour spent in this manner will almost certainly save a long wait for the baggage at Almora, if indeed you have not saved it from going down the *khud* what time the small boy in charge has gone back for help.

The road is down hill for nearly half the distance to Almora, the remaining half a long steady pull up with a hot sun on one's back, much of the road being comparatively shadeless. But the scent of the pines in the hot sun is the second of those haunting memories of the Pindari tour, and it is stronger to-day than on any other. All along the road the resin is collected in small earthenware pots hung under a groove cut spirally near the roots of the pines—each groove being charred over after it has served its purpose.

As Almora is approached cherry trees still in

Almora - Poonja Road  
A W. S. Shop



## *Pindari Glacier*

full bloom and festooned with mistletoe give beauty to the road, while the great masses of marigold give a hint of the prevailing religion of the town, even as we notice evidences of another faith in the ancient Muhammadan tombs which dot the hill-side hard by.

At the octroi barrier a fee of one rupee for each dandy, one anna for each baggage coolie, and two annas for each pony is payable.

The left-hand road leads through cantonments; the right-hand, which is also the most interesting, through a part of the bazar, and that which must be taken by the baggage.



W. Anderson

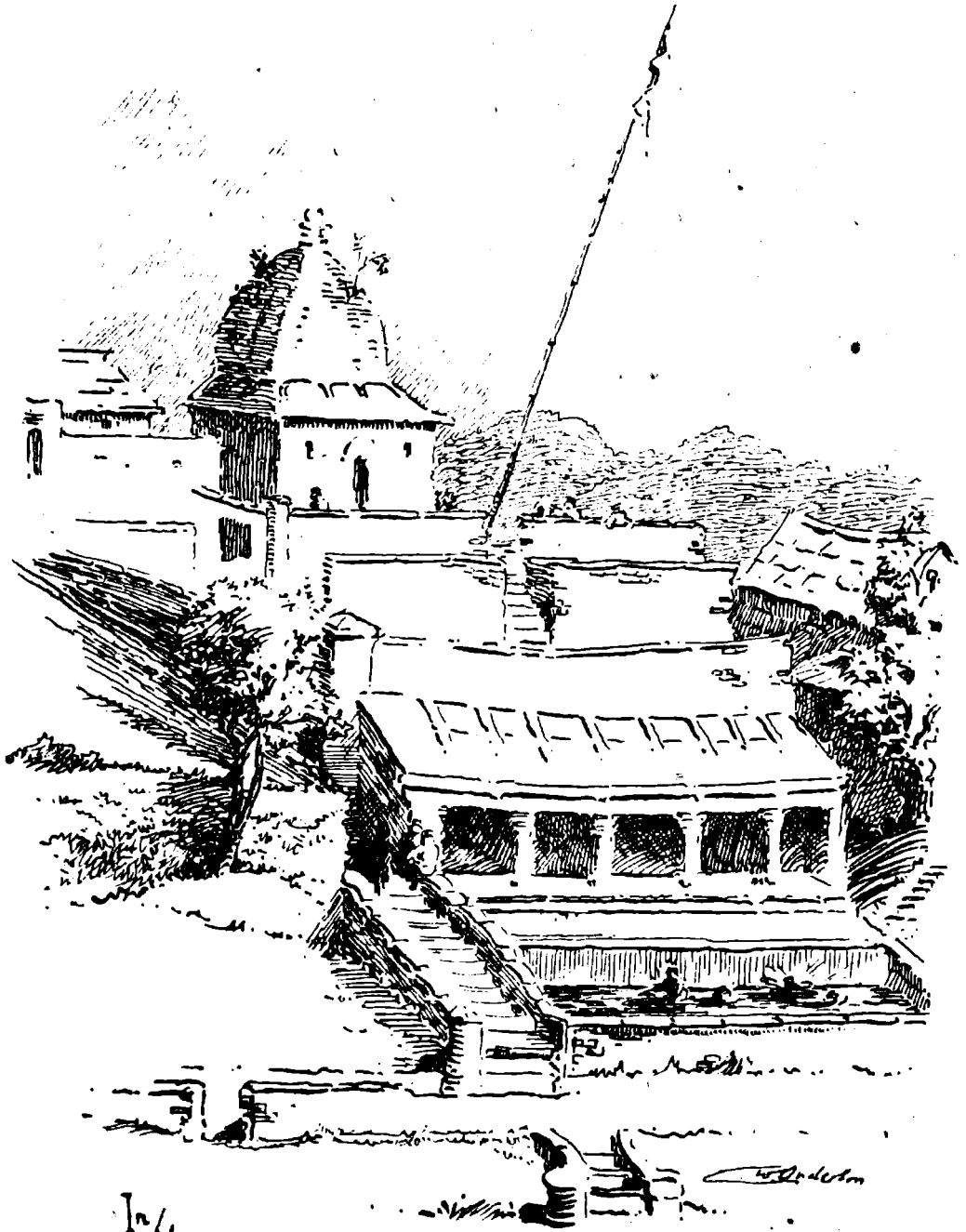
IN Alnora

## ALMORA.

THERE is ample accommodation at the Dak Bungalow, for those who do not mind a few rats and a rather dilapidated staff, and searchers for the picturesque will be more than repaid by a day's exploration of the old-world alleys and streets, the architecture of which is reminiscent of our English Tudor style, with perhaps just a dash of Greek thrown in.

Moreover there is (if you have not brought your own), a cook to engage for the 70 miles to the glacier, his requirements to satisfy and restrain, and the visit to the Kutcherry to be made, to ascertain if all is in trim for the morrow's start. The Tahsildar makes all arrangements, and the traveller will meet with every assistance and courtesy.

The stock of small change should be checked or replenished, and for this, or the engagement of a cook, or for any similar service, one cannot do better than consult an obliging old gentleman by the name of Anti Ram Sah, not forgetting to see his interesting mementos of assistance rendered to Henry Savage Landor in former days.



In Almora



## ALMORA TO TAKULA.

**A**LMORA is rich in Hindu temples, one of which is fittingly dedicated to Nanda Devi. Some of them possess very interesting carvings, whose appearance is spoilt by a coat of whitewash. As you leave the Dak Bungalow take a look at the neighbouring shrine with its picturesquely laid out steps to the bathing tank and open-air theatre.

The march from Almora to Takula is a long one, the longest of the trip, but, including a rest in the middle of the day of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  hour, may be comfortably accomplished in  $6\frac{3}{4}$  hours. It may be shortened, if necessary, by special arrangement with the Forest Department, who have a bungalow about 5 miles out from Almora. Fortunately, however, the road lacks its usual share of hill climbing, the walking rate for which is 2 miles per hour, and has a good and fairly level surface for the first  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles, followed by 2 miles of steep descent (on a very bad road, be it said), and then by 2 miles of level. The only ascent of any length is the remaining mile or so to the Takula Bungalow.

The walk is a pleasant one through scented

## *Pindari Glacier*

pine forests, the scenery, on the whole, not so fine as some of that we have already passed through, but agreeably varied by occasional glimpses of Nanda Devi, which mountain now towers higher in the sky.

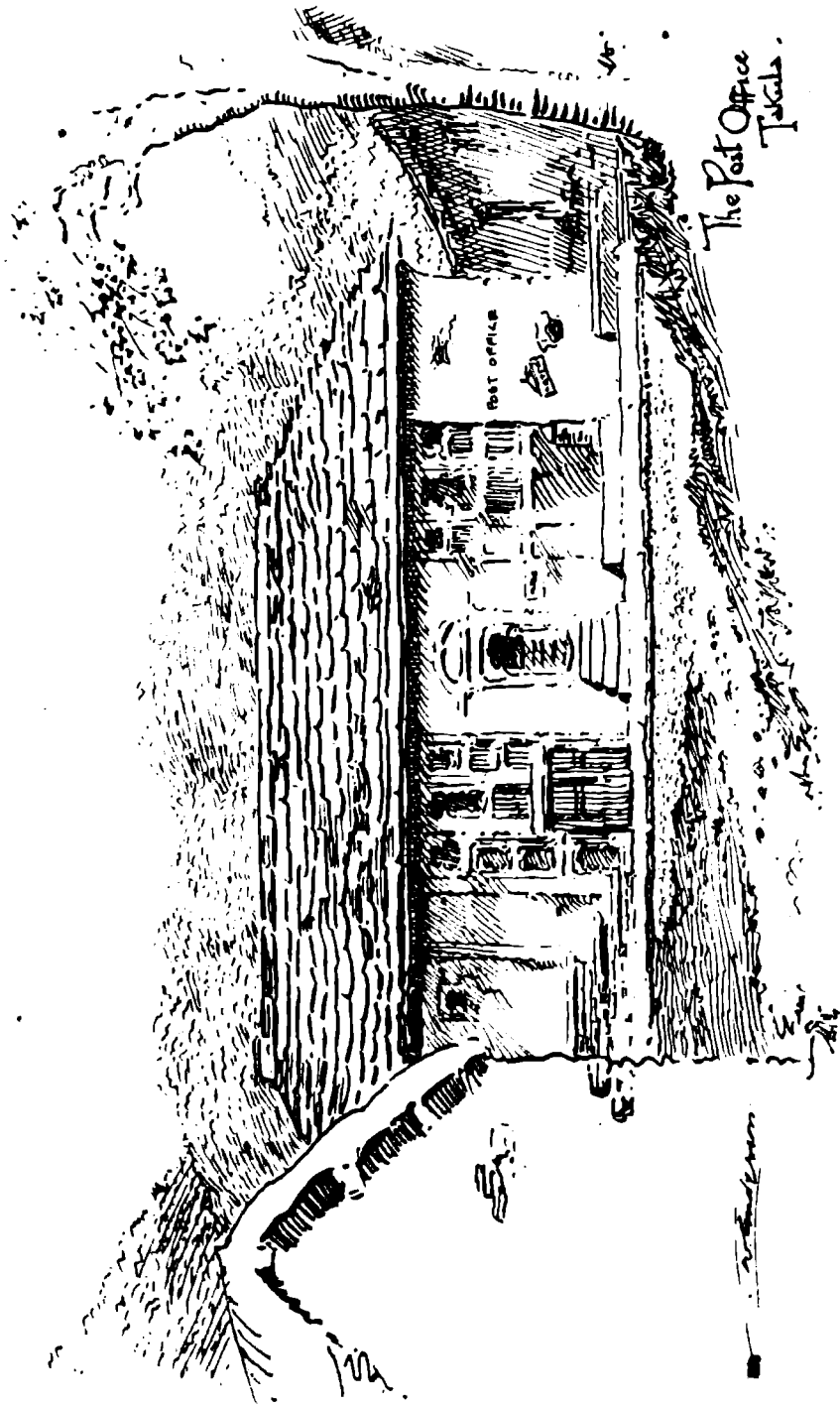
The comfort of visitors is unusually well studied at the Takula Bungalow, and they will be agreeably surprised, without doubt, by the quality of the khansamah's scones and sweetmeats at tea-time. After tea, there is ample opportunity to collect a store of pine cones for the evening fire.

## TAKULA TO BAGESWAR.

THE morning's start from here is apt to be a little problematical, and, according to the *patwari*, carriers scarce, but, in spite of any appearance to the contrary, the *patwari* is a man of his word, and your baggage will eventually turn up safely at Bageswar at the end of the day.

After leaving Takula by way of the picturesque little post office, there is little evidence of habitation for some miles unless one may except the small half-ruined temple of Ambakesvar about a mile below the village, which is interesting on account of some monoliths of prehistoric date which were unearthed there some years ago. These were re-erected on a neighbouring height by Bo. Panna Lall, I.C.S.

The march of about 11 miles to Bageswar is the heaviest of the trip, and will be still heavier on the return journey, for the Takula bungalow lies at 5,335 feet and Bageswar at 3,200 feet. The intervening distance is, until the valley of the Saryu is reached, one long switchback, for the most part on rough and rocky roads. But no one is likely to cavil at this—the ever-increasing beauties



The Post Office  
Takaha.

## *Pindari Glacier*

of the road, leave little thought for anything else. A hill-side path probably has a charm of its own in any country or climate, but combine crisp, scented air, brilliant sunshine, giant pines silhouetted against a deep blue sky, and in the background, tier upon tier of hill crowned by the dazzling snows behind, and you have a fair notion of what to-day's march will be like. Where all is so magnificent, it is difficult to choose, but perhaps mile 23 to mile 24 takes the palm. There is also a very fine view from the top of the ridge near the entrance to a tea and fruit plantation, where, incidentally, it is sometimes possible to buy very fine walnuts.

The last 2 miles of the way are along the banks of the Saryu—a glorious ice-cold green torrent on its way to the distant Ganges. At the bend where the river comes into sight a considerable distance may be cut off by following a little path along the river bank, and Bageswar is now in sight right ahead. The primitive little water-mills should be noticed as you go. The town is reached by crossing a suspension bridge over the Gumti, where that river joins the Saryu, and to find the Dak Bungalow you must thread the narrow streets and cross the Saryu by another.,



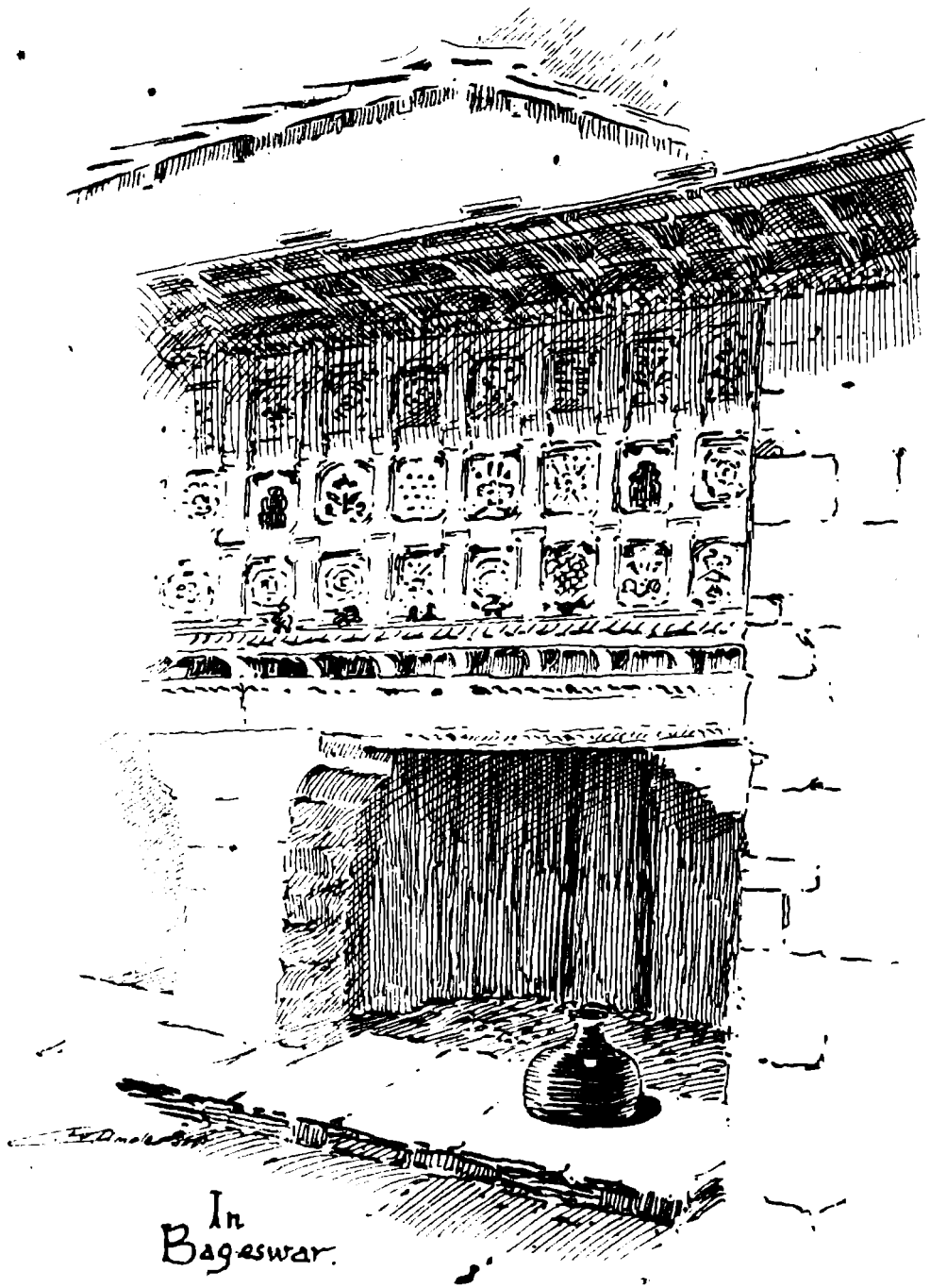
On  
the  
Road from  
Takula to Bayeswar.

## BAGESWAR.

**B**AGESWAR is a delightfully quaint little town of from 600 to 800 inhabitants on the right bank of the Saryu (or Sarju, as it is sometimes called), and no one with an eye for the picturesque should miss the chance of exploring it, sketch-book in hand. As in Almora, the streets are paved with large stone slabs, and the houses similarly roofed. The town has the appearance of having known better days, and as a matter of fact a good deal of its trade seems to have drifted direct to Almora, although Bageswar acts as a go-between for the wool trade with Thibet.

Nowhere is this hint of past opulence more noticeable than in the exquisitely carved wood-work so typical of Nepalese houses and so perfectly represented in Bageswar. And yet this graceful and elaborate art is by no means confined to a few better-class houses, but is visible everywhere--the difference is in degree only.

A picturesque legend has it that when Bageswar was founded, here met Brahma, Mahadeva, Parvati, and Siva, and that Parvati and Siva contrived that the Saryu should flow past the town to cleanse all who bathed in her



In  
Bageswar.



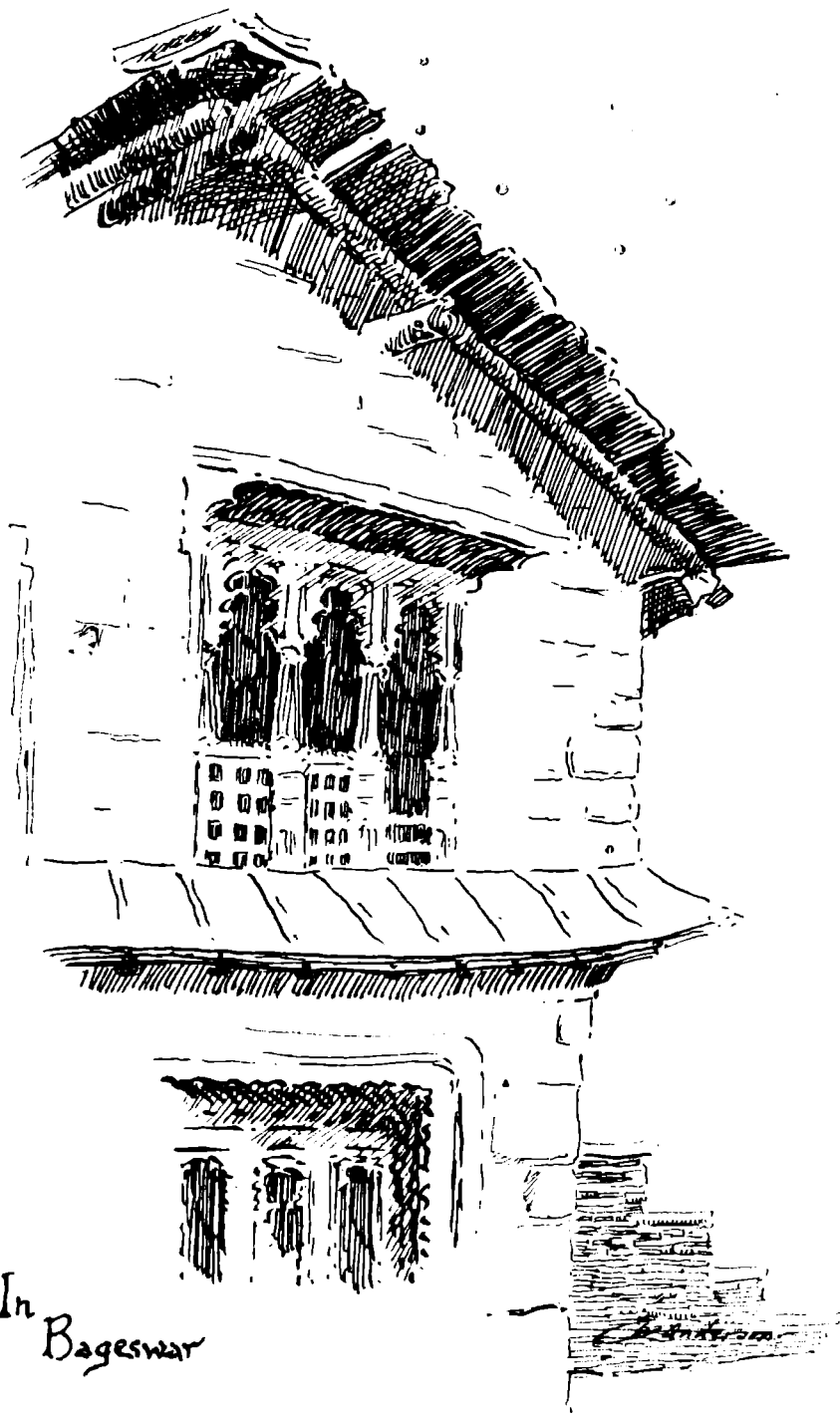
## *Pindari Glacier*

waters from sin. Hence, the town is a place of pilgrimage, one of the holiest in Kumaon. Signs of its inhabitants' piety may be seen in the numerous little earthenware images which share with the domestic cat the sunlit ledges beneath the carved window panels; and one can imagine the wandering fakir scanning these signs in search of welcome for his own particular sect.

The temple at the junction of the two rivers is probably one of the twelve earliest in India, and, like many of the shrines of Kumaon, shows Buddhist influence.

The Saryu being a sacred river the water for some distance above and below the bridge is a sanctuary for fish, and magnificent specimens of mahseer may be seen floating placidly in the crystal-green pools ten or fifteen feet below the surface. But good fishing may be had in the proper season both above and below the town.

At Bageswar we leave most of the remnants of civilisation behind, and as there are no khansamahs in the bungalows ahead, stores must be extracted from the baggage, the hurricane lamp got ready, a small supply of oil laid in, and other little arrangements made for managing 'one's own domestic affairs for the future.

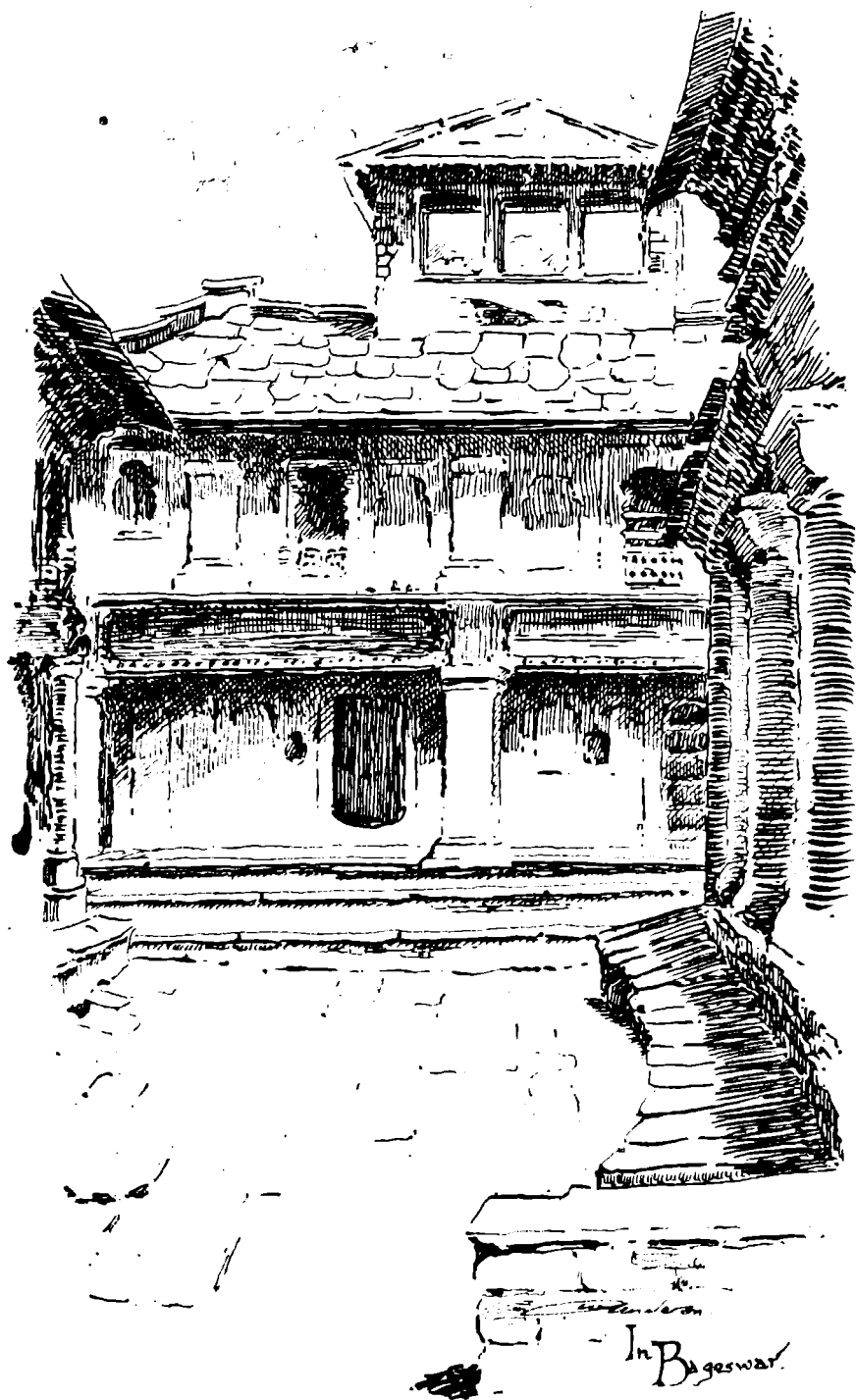


In  
Bageswar

## BAGESWAR TO KAPKOT.

THE march to Kapkot is about 13 miles; the road, which is rough, following the right bank of the Saryu through most imposing gorges. In 1917 and 1918 the day's march was a mildly adventurous one, three torrents having no other bridge than half a pine log without a handrail. This method of crossing may be found rather a giddy one, especially by ladies, and in this case the rivers must be crossed on the back of a pony or coolie, either of whom will land their charges safe—if ruffled—on the farther bank. At one of the crossings there is some risk of a wetting unless the route be chosen by the rider rather than by the hillmen, who prefer a short to a dry one. But when last I visited this spot there were signs that both bridges and roads were about to be greatly improved, and the chances are that these little difficulties will no longer be met with.

On the whole, the day's work is rather a warmer one than usual, as one travels all day



## *Pindari Glacier*

between high hills with the sun on one's back, but this will by no means prevent the change of scenery being thoroughly enjoyed.

The Kapkot bungalow lies on a small tableland overlooking a bend in the river at a height of 4,050 feet.

## KAPKOT TO LOHARKET.

THE walk to Loharket is  $9\frac{1}{2}$  miles, and, with the usual rest for lunch, will occupy about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hours. It will be found to be a most satisfying trek through magnificent gorge scenery, the path following the Saryu the greater part of the way, crossing and re-crossing the river by means of good bridges. Leaving Kapkot by a pretty path bordered by trees covered with orchids and mistletoe, the first bridge is very shortly reached. From here there is an exceedingly fine view up the river with Nanda Kot rising dazzlingly white above the purple gorges in the background. From now onwards the path follows one bank or the other for several miles, rising to a high level at times on the rocky forest-covered hill sides, only to fall again and cross once more.

At the last of these crossings there was, until recently, a rickety old signpost bearing the pithy yet spacious legend "TO THIBET." This referred to the right-hand path (the left bank of the river), and down this path have

## *Pindari Glacier*

come those invading flocks of Thibetan sheep whose advance guard, we have already, met making their way to Bageswar and Northern India. These flocks consist of 100 or 200 sheep, carrying, for the most part, packs of their own wool, and all in charge of one or two men dressed in blanket coats and decorated with all their toilet requisites, amongst which we recognise the Mongolian back-scratcher and silver tooth-pick.

As we near the end of the valley, before leaving the side of the river for Loharket, we meet a few children, anxious to sell fruit, and, probably, their pretty flint-and-steel bags.

The Loharket bungalow lies at a height of 5,425 feet, or nearly 1,400 feet higher than Kapkot, and when the traveller reaches it, he is generally of opinion that most of the 1,400 feet have been accomplished in the last mile. And he will, when he notes the position of the school at the foot of the hill, and then that of the Rest-house and village, understand how the budding mountaineers of Loharket acquire their lungs and muscles.

Looking round at the lofty hills on every side, it is apparent that the real business is about to begin on the morrow. The outlook from the Rest-house is rather a sombre one: the mountains have lost for a time their thick

## *Pindari Glacier*

clothing of forest, and are cast in a sterner mould, their quiet colouring relieved only by patches of crimson amaranth on the terraced slopes, and here and there some golden-coloured moss.



## LOHARKET TO DAKHERI.

AS Loharket supplies labour for the remainder of the journey to Phurkia and back as far as Kapkot, one escapes for a time the daily duty of paying-off—a perceptible relief when the be-all and end-all of existence is apt to appear to be tea and contemplation. All the villagers will, if necessary, turn out willingly, from the stalwart *lohar* downwards. The latter will, if he be the man I knew, ask for a double load and more than earn double pay. They are, taken all round, a cheery, useful crowd, and, if anything, less “imperfect ablutioners” than we have grown accustomed to. Guides there are, whose testimonials give glowing accounts of their attainments, and yet others whose credentials hint unkindly at their close relationship to the horse-leech. These men may be very useful to sportsmen, provided the latter are prepared to spend a lot of time looking solely for game, or they may be of use if they have a more than ordinary knowledge of the glacier, and if the object of the expedition is to explore it thoroughly. But the road



Nanda  
Kot  
from Dakheri

## *Pindari Glacier*

to the glacier, cannot be missed, and most travellers prefer not to have a man at their elbow all the way.

The next stage is short, 6 miles only, but the miles are all on end, a fact which may be appreciated by a glance at the first mile of road immediately behind the bungalow. This mile is a sheer ascent of 1,000 feet over a rough and stony road, then come a further  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles ascending another 3,000 feet. With the exception of the first mile, the road is good the whole way, and again excepting a very short stretch over a giddy height, is quite a wide one.

During this ascent the air becomes sensibly colder, and the varied forest of the previous marches gives place to rhododendrons, and to moss and lichen-covered ilex trees. At about 8,000 feet above sea level it is not improbable that some slight inconvenience may be experienced owing to the more rarefied atmosphere, but this passes off within half an hour. A mile or so below the pass the road winds along open grassy slopes, providing a pleasant spot for rest and lunch, although, at this time of year, the breeze may be chilly. Earlier in the year the lunch might have been supplemented by quantities of wild strawberries, a few of which are still to be seen. Five and a half miles from Loharket the Pass—9,600 feet above sea-level—marks the



The Heights  
above Dakheri.

## *Pindari Glacier*

end of the day's ascent. If it be not too late in the day, and the mists have not yet settled down, the view of the snows now looming large through the Pass will alone compensate, not only for the day's toil, but for a long journey from any part of India. The mountain side drops steeply away from below one's feet; across the valley rises another against whose pine-covered slopes are silhouetted sharply the snows of Nanda Kot and Sukram, every blue-shaded crevice clearly visible. For those who like their views restricted and pictorially arranged, this picture of the snows, or that from the Rest-house half a mile below, is perhaps the gem of the journey. For a more extensive view the grassy downs on the left of the Pass should be climbed, where, from a height of about 11,000 feet, a panorama extending over the greater part of a semi-circle, beginning in the North-West, and ending in the East with the still loftier peaks of Nepal, delights the eye. Once on the steep rounded slopes, a turn of the head brings peak after peak into vision, their beauty enhanced by the huge trees of the foreground, bare, weather-beaten, and hung with long streamers of lichen.

But this little expedition, together with the view from the Pass, is better enjoyed in the early morning or early forenoon, before the mists

## *Pindari Glacier*

have come down from the mountains, and while the flowering herbs still scent the breeze in the warm sunshine. The long ascent from Loharket is, moreover, apt to take away the zest for further climbing. It should, therefore, be reserved for the return journey. Or, if the sportsman is still optimistic, an extra day at Dakheri may repay him. He may kill two birds with one stone, for the rarer species of pheasant haunt the forest on this ridge.

The Dakheri rest house lies on the hillside half-a-mile from the Pass and immediately below it, at a height of 8,900 feet. It will found to be very cold, and the servants' quarters rather damp. Fresh-cut firewood is also likely to be damp and productive of smarting eyes; should you, therefore, find a *cache* of dry wood, annex it at once; it does *not* belong to the party ahead.

You will, if possible, have so arranged your journey that the arrival at the snows coincides with the full moon, and in this case, the frosty night must be faced for at least a few minutes for that most sublime spectacle—Nanda Kot in moonlit glory. It is only necessary to step on to the verandah to see her towering in the sky, apparently just across the nearest valley.

## DAKHERI TO KHATI.

THE day's march is a short and easy one of about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles, unless you elect to make a double march on to Diwali, in which event it will be increased by another six. But if time does not press, and there are no difficulties of accommodation due to other parties returning from the glacier, each of these stages is well worth a whole day spent upon it.

As the ascent from Loharket marked a definite change of climate, so also does Dakheri definitely mark the beginning of a different zone of vegetation. But this is not, as one might expect, a continuation of the sombre ilex-covered slopes of yesterday, but a reversion to a softer growth of great variety and beauty. For, mingled with the pines, are planes, chestnuts, walnuts, all with their autumn tints more advanced than in the lower valleys, and showing by their luxuriant coating of moss the influence of the mountain mists. The first mile of descent from the bungalow is, in particular, a scene of sylvan charm not soon forgotten. Farther on, the road opens out on to a hill side dotted with ferns, bracken, thistles, wild raspberries and strawberries.

## *Pindari Glacier*

There are several fine peeps of the snows, and one in particular, as we come within sight of Khati, gives every gradation of warm and cold colour. There is a path up this ravine by which, the hillmen say, it is possible to make an expedition to the snow line.

The Khati rest house marks the entrance to the Pindar ravine, and for the next few days we shall never be far from the sound of its rushing waters.

At Khati there is quite a settlement of hill folk, growers of grain and the all-important amaranth (a food which is fortunately not banned in times of fasting); and it is probable that here your transport coolies will ask for the gift of a sheep that they may not die by the wayside. The truth is that the nights are now bitterly cold, and there is scant accommodation for the baggage coolies ahead. A sheep will keep them happy and has, in all probability, been well earned. One of your chaprassies has, ere this, asked leave to await your return to warmer climes, and as a matter of fact there is no need of a second chaprassie this side of Loharket.



## KHATI TO DIWALI.

THE path from Khati at first climbs the left bank of the Pindar through dense forest, and if one looks carefully in the thick carpet of fallen leaves, many a walnut, thick-shelled but palatable, may be picked up—that is, of course, if the numerous monkeys have left any.

The little Pindar falls in a torrent through a narrow, thickly-wooded ravine. Normally it is clear as crystal and sparkles merrily over the boulders, but if much snow has fallen in the mountains, may look grey and muddy for a time. Many visitors prefer this short stretch from Khati to Diwali to all others for the charm of the rushing water, and the grandeur of the deep ravine, whose sides are clothed with forest combining the beauties of both temperate and sub-tropical climes. Nanda Kot, Trisul, and other snow-capped peaks, are hidden by the ravine on the left, and Kuphini—a brilliant sentinel at the head of the valley—has pride of place. Here and there we pass waterfalls, one of them dropping a sheer thousand feet. After the bridge to the right bank of the Pindar



On the  
Khati  
Dinoli  
Road

## *Pindari Glacier*

is crossed, blackberries may be picked in large quantities from tall canes growing near the stream. Within a mile or so of Diwali is a sheep corral guarded by remarkably handsome and powerful dogs, whose deep bay can be heard at the rest house throughout the night.

The Diwali bungalow is romantically set on a rocky eminence just above the junction of the Kuphini and the Pindar, and to reach it we cross the latter by a wooden bridge. It faces up the Kuphini valley, but with an end window looking down the valley we have just left. Kuphini mountain is now right overhead and a little to the left, and should be viewed again by moonlight. If time permits an extra day or two, the ascent to the Kuphini glacier can be made from here by following the river. As there is no bungalow on the mountain, either tents must be taken or a descent made the same day to Diwali.



The Gorge  
Phurka.

## DIWALI TO PHURKIA.

IT is quite possible for the young and vigorous to reach the glacier from Diwali without an intermediate stop at Phurkia. The success of such an attempt depends not only upon the youth of the climber, but on the time of year the attempt is made, and upon how much of the glacier it is intended to explore. Certainly nothing more than a very short visit can be made and the fringe of the glacier touched. The writer made one attempt in the last week of October which had to be abandoned a mile or two beyond Phurkia, owing to exhaustion, the final obstacle being a snow-slide about 20 feet deep.

Although only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Diwali, the climb up the gorge to Phurkia is a stiff one, and the glacier is 3 to 4 miles farther, the path ascending all the way. The road is quite good on the whole, but is apt to break away in one or two places.

On foot these are quite easily crossed, but may be awkward for ponies. If the season be late, a snow slide may be met before Phurkia is reached, from a peak about 3,000 feet above the path, but this may be crossed lower down with little difficulty.

## *Pindari Glacier*

The scenery becomes more and more austere as we ascend; the luxuriant vegetation of the lower valley gives way rapidly to rhododendrons and hardy pines, and these in turn to low scrub. On the sunnier slopes wild raspberries are plentiful, but by the time Phurkia is reached the landscape is bleak and bare as a Yorkshire moor in winter, and not improbably sprinkled with snow and frost. A backward look down the gorge gives many a sombre and magnificent view, to which life is given by clouds of blue pigeons and chattering choughs flying from one precipice to another—their wings flashing against the golden moss.

The Phurkia rest house lies at the 70th milestone from Almora, on the left of the Pindar river, and facing the right side of the ravine. Here all one's rugs and warm clothing will be needed; the temperature at these altitudes is low and the bungalow is without anything to soften the rigour of its stone floors. But, as in all the other bungalows, it is possible to secure a fair degree of comfort with a good wood fire. An hour may now be very profitably spent in studying the very interesting entries made in the visitors' book, more especially by those who wish to make a scientific rather than scenic exploration of the glacier. And, if such be the intention, hints for the achievement of new climbing records by the use of adventurous *pagdandis* will be

## *Pindari Glacier*

found in the book. A camp on the Martoli slopes would be the best base for work of this kind, as it would save a mile or two of preliminary walking.



The Last Leap  
from Phatka

W. L. ... 1907



## PHURKIA TO PINDARI GLACIER.

THE distance to be covered to-day varies according to the taste of the visitor. A walk of perhaps three miles will be sufficient to reach the medial moraine, but a mile or two more will be covered if much climbing is done, and if the snout is to be visited. At about 2 miles from Phurkia there is a good view of the ice cascade, and a little farther on of the left *nevée*, supplied by a peak which is 21,624 feet in height. The glacier now rapidly opens out into view, and when the grassy slopes, called Martoli, have been reached, and passed, we cross a dip in the ground and climb the old left lateral moraine, following this along the top until a little track descends the other side towards the glacier.

A short clamber from here brings one out at the foot of the old medial moraine formed by the junction of the Pindari ice with that of Nanda Kot on the right of the observer. Atmospheric conditions now begin to tell with ever-increasing effect, and by the time the top of the medial moraine has been scaled and something over 13,000 feet achieved, the average visitor will feel

## *Pindari Glacier*

that he has gone high enough. But his reward is indeed great! Facing him are the two Pindari *nevées* and the peaks from which they flow; immediately below the *nevées* the upper cascade—a wide wall of snow and ice—at 15,000 feet, and to its left, huge green walls of ice split by crevasses.

Behind and to the left is the glacier reft from side to side, and tumbled in billowy confusion, its surface marred by mud and stones, and on the right are the slopes of Nanda Kot, that mountain which has marked our goal at intervals all along the road. Nothing breaks the intense silence but the sound of a stone falling down the mountain side and rousing eerie echoes as it finds its way to the bottom of a crevasse. The puffs of snow from the peak above the cascade speak of the perpetual blizzard raging there. By about mid-day these become merged in the mists, and the blazing white peaks in their brilliant blue setting are quickly blotted out—a warning that it is time to descend from the rather slippery heights of the moraine.

There is yet time, perhaps, to see the snout, by following the ridge to the left lateral moraine, but the beauty of the day is over, and with it much of the glamour of the scene, for it is most true of the lower cascades of a glacier that "distance lends enchantment." Noble and

## *Pindari Glacier*

awe inspiring sight though it be, a glacier at close quarters is, as some one puts it, a dirty, and untidy mess which should be swept up.

And so, having reached our goal, we bid farewell to the eagles soaring overhead, and the marmots peeping from their shelters in the rocks of Martoli, and turn towards the sunny valleys below, prepared to enjoy them all over again.

## OUTFIT.



AGGAGE should be kept as light as possible. A large supply of clothing is unnecessary. A cotton drill khaki shirt with shorts and putties is ideal marching kit for men, and linen, khaki drill, or similar material for ladies. Three changes should be ample. Changes of temperature should be provided for by warm underclothing, and a sweater or "puttoo" coat kept always handy for the rests in the shade. A single warm suit or anything woolly is necessary after sundown, and a warm dressing gown is also invaluable.

It is impossible to lay too much stress on the importance of serviceable and comfortable boots and stockings. Three pairs of strong boots should be taken, of which at least two should be well supplied with nails.

The usual plains bedding roll may be cut down as to pillows and sheets, but should be doubled in respect of quilts or blankets. Naturally, coloured pillow-slips will be better than white ones. Some of the beds at the outlying rest-

## *Pindari Glacier*

houses are mere "charpoys" and short for Europeans; under these circumstances a pair of woolly bed-socks should not be forgotten.

For the dandy, a cushion with a pocket in the cover will be found a great addition to one's comfort.

An alpenstock should be brought, if possible, from headquarters. They may be obtained at Almora later on, but the spikes are inferior.

A small coil of stout cord will come in useful in a dozen ways.

A camp bed is often useful; some of the smaller bungalows in the outer hills have only three beds for two rooms.

On no account forget your dark glasses.

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*Note.*—A little thought given to the size and shape of the various items of baggage results in an expeditious start each morning. Cabin trunks, for example, require to be slung on a pole, often a lengthy process. On the other hand, the ideal size and shape is that of a good large suit case. Nothing which will not stand a fair amount of rough usage should be taken.

## TRANSPORT.

THE authorised load for a coolie is 25 seers, or 50 lbs. It will be found advantageous to keep the packages as near to this weight as possible. Sometimes a coolie will carry more, in which case he is paid by the load or fraction over it which he carries. The rate of pay varies according to district, from about 4 to 6 annas per *bojh* or load per stage. A little *bakshish* will not be grudged; the hillmen are, as a rule, a willing crowd; and in particular a few cigarettes will move mountains. They should be paid off personally at the end of each day as far as Loharket; from Loharket they need only be paid on the return to Kapkot, after which the former system is reverted to.

A quantity of small change (4-anna and 2-anna bits are most useful), say Rs. 100, should be taken solely for the payment of coolies. Treasury notes are looked on with suspicion and dislike, as the Bunnia takes a large commission for changing them. Moreover the coolies are drawn from different villages, and often it is not possible to lump them together for payment. Treasury notes are of no use at all beyond Bagéswar. If

## *Pindari Glacier*

necessary, arrangements may be made for cashing cheques at Almora with Anti Ram Sah, banker and agent, who can usually also supply a limited quantity of small change.

A day or two's notice should be given to the coolie agents at Kathgodam, Bhim Tal, Ramgarh, and Peora, for the requisite number of coolies, dandies or ponies to be supplied. Personally, I found it better to engage the first day's transport right through from Kathgodam to Ramgarh, avoiding Bhim Tal agency altogether, but this was in war time, and labour supply may be better now.

From Almora onwards the villages supply labour on the requisition of Government, and it is necessary to write to the Deputy Commissioner of Almora stating requirements and date. Every courtesy and assistance is extended to travellers, and although priority of right of occupation of the rest houses is not guaranteed, it is possible to obtain useful information in that respect. The Tahsildar will supply two chappassies, one of whom goes one march ahead to arrange coolie supply for the next day, and the other marches with the baggage.

Dandies are hired with the coolies from stage to stage as far as Almora, and thence to the glacier and back again to Almora. A dandy requires five coolies (six, if it is much used), and

## *Pindari Glacier*

is practically indispensable to a walking party. It is always available in case of a sprain or a blister, and few walkers will be too proud to join the coats, sweaters, etc., for a mile or two each day.

For those who elect to ride, fairly good riding ponies can be hired at Kathgodam or Almora, and these can easily manage the greater part of the way.





## STORES.

HERE are khansamahs at the Bhim Tal, Ramgarh, Peora, Almora, Takula, and Bageswar bungalows who will supply and cook all meals required. But it is convenient to have one's own luncheon materials even up to this point, and it is necessary to take all supplies for the journey from Bageswar onwards and back again to that place. Lighting is poor, but generally sufficient as far as Bageswar. Some of the stores should be brought from headquarters ; but, to reduce transport, several items are more conveniently obtained at Almora. The following hints will be useful.

## STORES TO BE BROUGHT FROM HEADQUARTERS.

A ham, hump, or tongues (with a supply of grease-proof paper).

Bacon.

Sugar, tea, coffee, jam.

Rice, prunes or other dried fruit.

Grape Nuts or other breakfast cereals.

Plain biscuits, plain chocolate.

Mustard, pepper and salt.

Pepper pot and salt cellar, teapot.

Cigarettes for coolies.

Screw-topped bottles for jam and sugar.

Matches, candles, two hurricane lamps.

Knives, forks, and spoons. (These are scarce, even in the fitted bungalows, but there is a plethora of sugar basins).

Cups and saucers.

A fitted tea basket, an empty biscuit tin, and a good sized spirit kettle outfit.

Felt-covered water bottle.

Dekchies.

## STORES TO BE OBTAINED IN ALMORA.

Butter. (By post to Almora).

Apples. (At Ramgarh and Almora).

Bread, potatoes. (These will not keep if brought from headquarters).

A joint or two of mutton. (Sheep may be bought farther along the route).

A fire grate or *angheti*.

Two good sized native baskets.

Methylated spirit.

Kerosine oil may be bought in small quantities all along the route.

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*Note.*—Packing cases for stores are best padlocked and hinged to facilitate frequent packing and unpacking, and should be strong enough to withstand a good deal of wear and tear. They should be made reasonably flat and within the capacity of a coolie's back.

## SPORT.

**F**OR particulars of the game to be found, and for licences to shoot, application should be made to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Naini Tal, and for the Almora District to the same official at Almora. I have seen pheasants and *chikor* at Ramgarh, and more varied species of pheasants on the route from Dakheri onwards to Phurkia. Mountain sheep may be seen on the heights above the Saryu river.

But it is hardly worth while carrying a gun or rifle on the chance of a casual shot; if sport be an object, a stay of a day or two at a time should be made in one place.

Good fishing (mahseer) is to be had in the proper season in the River Saryu, especially some distance below Bageswar.

## ITINERARY.

	MILES	HEIGHT
Kathgodam to Bhim Tal . . . . .	8	4,450
Bhim Tal to Ramgarh . . . . .	9½ (Hotel)	6,500
Ramgarh to Peora . . . . .	9½	5,900
Peora to Almora . . . . .	11 (Town)	5,337
Almora to Takula . . . . .	15½	5,335
Takula to Bageswar . . . . .	11	3,200
Bageswar to Kapkot . . . . .	13	4,050
Kapkot to Loharket . . . . .	9½	5,425
Loharket to Dakheri . . . . .	6	8,900
Dakheri to Khati . . . . .	5½	7,650
Khati to Diwali . . . . .	6	9,000
Diwali to Phurkia . . . . .	3½	11,700
Phurkia to Pindari Glacier . . . . .	3	

111

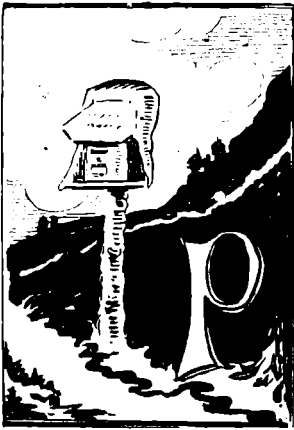
*Note.*—Mileage is marked along the route from Kathgodam to Almora ; commencing again at Almora, it is marked as far as Phurkia, which is at the 70th milestone.

The milestones are somewhat contradictory in places, and both mileage and heights given above are approximate only.

## BUNGALOWS.

**T**HE Dak Bungalows at Bhim Tal, Ramgarh and Almora are roomy, and no fear of want of accommodation need ordinarily be entertained. At Peora and Bageswar there are three or four rooms.

The Rest Houses at Takula, Kapkot, Loharket, Dakheri, Khati, Diwali and Phurkia have only two rooms each, with the usual bathrooms attached.



## POSTAL FACILITIES.

POSTAL facilities vary from the post-office at Almora to the tiny box sometimes placed in a kerosine tin on a post by the hill-side path.

There are post-offices at Bhim Tal, Ramgarh, Almora, Takula, Bageswar, Loharket.

That at Almora is large and very business-like, the others are small, and in places like Loharket or Takula, the Postmaster is often also the village schoolmaster, and available only, at intervals.

I found it most convenient to have correspondence addressed to be called for at Ramgarh, Almora, and Bageswar, or forwarded on between these places, at all of which it is safely delivered. It is true that during a stay at Ramgarh a Dak runner was seen adjusting a parcel more comfortably to his back by hammering it with a stone; but this was probably mere bric-a-brac; butter, for example, would arrive quite safely.

## SERVANTS.

**A** BEARER is, of course, a useful servant to have with one the whole of the journey.

A cook is necessary from Almora onwards. If one's own cook is not taken, good men, who are used to the trip, may be hired at Almora at a reasonable figure.

There are no sweepers in the Rest Houses beyond Bageswar, and they are difficult to obtain anywhere on the route; although occasionally the bungalow chowkidars can get one in the villages.

All servants require warm clothing.



