

**TREKKING TO THE
SACRED SHRINES
OF
UTTARAKHAND.**

**633 Miles in 30 Days.
THE PILGRIM ROUTE THROUGH
A WORLD OF WONDER**

**BY
M. H. CHALMERS.**

*This Book is dedicated
to
BABA KALI KAMLI WALLA
and to
the Nobility of
Indian Womanhood*

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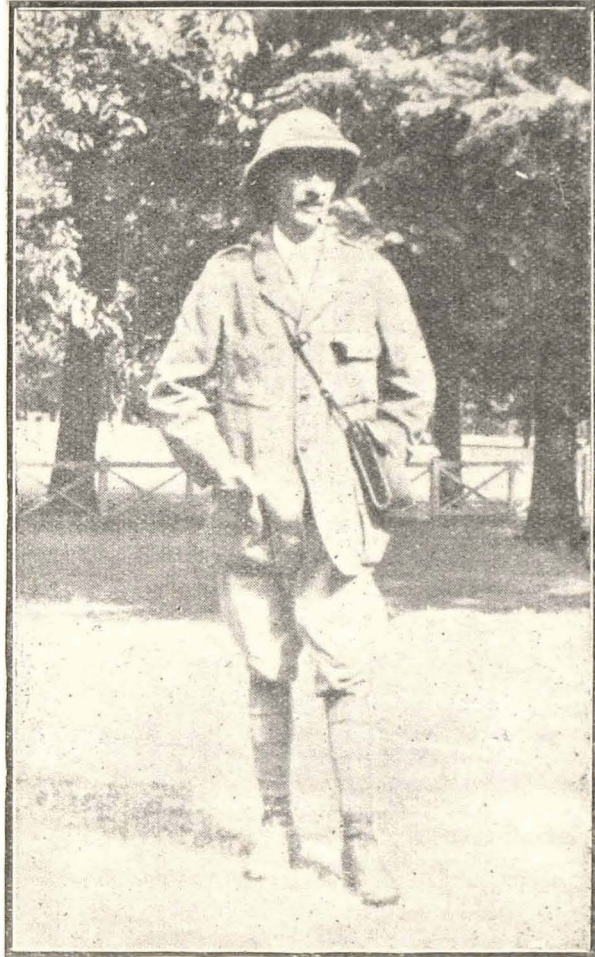
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THE PILGRIM ROUTE THROUGH A WORLD OF WONDER.

Where Millions Have Tread.

OF all the Mountain treks which I have done, the thrilling interest associated with this adventure will remain embedded in my memory.

Of the four Dharmas (principal places of worship) in India, the Northern Shrines of Uttarakhand, comprising Jamnotree, Gangotree, Badri and Kedar, situated on the banks of the holiest of Indian rivers, are held sacred in the hearts of Hindus, of whom, an estimated number of fifty thousand undertake the annual pilgrimage over this Imperial Highway to which Rishikesh (railhead) is the Gateway.

The sanctity of the pilgrimage requires that pilgrims follow the course of the sacred rivers and make a sojourn of one night at least at every place of pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage season is between April and October. To avoid the heat of the valley, the beginning and ending periods are preferably chosen.

Activities of Kali Kamli Wala

The philanthropic activities of Baba Kali Kamli Wala are in prominence throughout this pilgrimage. The origin of the institution dates back to 1884 when Swami Vishuddanand Ji undertook the pilgrimage in those days when there were no good roads to these places, no Dharamsalas and no arrangement of any sort for food-stuffs for pilgrims. This pious man garbed himself in a black blanket and was commonly referred to as the Kali Kamli Wala. The loss of life and misery sustained on this pilgrimage so impressed the Swami that, on his return, he sent out an S. O. S. appealing for funds to alleviate this distress and it met with an immediate and generous response from India's traditional hospitality. This contribution and subsequent annual donations are utilized for maintaining Dharamsalas, Pyaas

(watering stages), improvement of roads, feeding of indigent pilgrims and Sadhus and for dispensaries on the pilgrim route. The headquarters of this Institution is at Rishikesh, and Baba Shri Mani Ram is the present Administrator and Manager.

Facilities for the Pilgrimage

The Ruler of Tehri Garhwal—Captain H. H. Rajah Narendra Shah, C.S.I., as the guardian of these Northern Shrines, has elaborated on the philanthropic activities of Kali Kamli Wala, by establishing resting houses known as Chatties, with shops, at an average distance of four miles apart throughout the pilgrim route. Pilgrims, who stay in these Chatties, have to buy their foodstuffs from the owners, who in return give shelter and use of cooking utensils, free of charge.

Firewood is in abundance and not costly.

Dandies, Jahpans and Kunderes (baskets) conveyed by coolies can be had at Muni-ki-Reti in Rishikesh for the conveyance of the old, infirm, children and those indisposed to travel by foot. Silver coins and small change should be preferably carried. The National garb, supplemented with a light pair of shoes, an umbrella and a blanket, afford great convenience to travel light. Hill streams of ice-cold water are met in abundance and should be resorted to in preference to the muddy waters of the rivers.

My Arrangements

Having mapped out the route, I divided it into thirty stages, varying from 15 to 35 miles per day.

My innovation took the form of wheeled transport—a plywood box, 3 feet long, fitted with two bicycle wheels and a telescopic cover, which opened to a length of six feet to serve the purpose of a bed.

In this box I took all my luggage consisting of a fourfold sleeping bag, waterproof coat, heavy serge coat, gun-stick, camera, field-glasses, water bottle, haversack, pint mug, toilet requisites, a repair outfit and a few "iron" rations.

The box was fitted with a shaft to which the cooly could be harnessed by means of leather straps.

Having received my Passport from the Tehri Durbar and the Collector Pauri (British Garhwal) to undertake the journey, I planned my tour to evade the monsoon and set out early in May.

Following the traditions of pilgrimage, I rested for 24 hours at Rishikesh where I made the acquaintance of Baba Mani Ram who showed me round the most important places of the town.

A temperature during the day rather shook my resolution to make the trip. However, the call of the "Open Road" was insistent, and I decided to think things over. An easterly breeze swept with it, in its train, my wavering thoughts and temperature and the morning found me fit for the onward march after a good night's rest.

Setting out—Failure of Transport

The voice of the cuckoo yodled Reveille! At sunrise I set out on my journey with my servant Ramlal harnessed to my wagon, along the motor road which threads its way through dense forests. The heat was unbearable and to add to this trouble there is a scarcity of drinking water on this sector. Scarcely a mile was covered when it was dead low tide in my water bottle. We plodded on, suffering acutely from thirst. What a blessed relief to find a muddy stream trickling down the hillside and to meet a pilgrim who assured us that clearer water could be had higher up the course of this stream. We make a successful detour, slowly consume about a gallon of water, and replenish my canteen. Our attention was arrested by baboons, chattering noisily amongst the branches of the trees. All their instinctive fear could not overcome their natural curiosity to peer at us through the branches, with questioning eyes, and show the perfect contour of their teeth, whilst the

wild fowl, with their young, scampered off like scared rabbits, at our intrusion.

Everything went easy till, nearing the main bazaar of Narendranagar at high noon, there was a sudden crash—a spindle had broken. I decide to substitute my wheeled transport by a cooly and live in real pilgrim style throughout the journey.

The Good Samaritan

Narendranagar, at an elevation of 4,000 feet above sea-level, is the winter residence of H. H. the Maharaja of Tehri. The town can boast of a well-equipped bazaar, a Post and Telegraph Office, an up-to-date dispensary and a well-furnished Dak Bungalow. The Diwan Sahib has a stately edifice perched on the top of a hill, commanding a fine view of the surrounding country.

I anchor for the night under a chestnut tree, below the main bazaar, in close proximity to the State Engineer's bungalow. A "Good Samaritan" in the person of the Diwan Sahib, passes that way. My quaint wagon attracts his attention. He is interested in it and later in my project. He makes the generous offer of two coolies, without charge, to steer my transport over the rocky roads leading to Jamnotree and Gangotree. I could not be persuaded to accept his kind offer. As an alternative, he offers to purchase the wagon at any price, to which I readily assent on modest terms. He next invites me to accompany him to his friend's place where I dined and was made comfortable for the night.

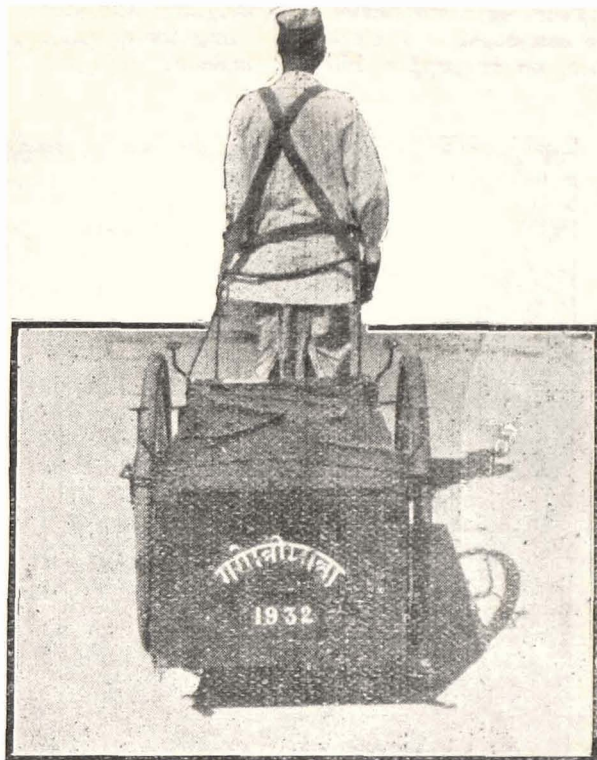
Next morning, with a word of farewell, the Diwan Sahib armed me with an authority to utilize all State Rest Houses throughout Tehri Garhwal, free of charge.

I return etceteras, chiefly tin provisions by my servant. My cooly stipulated he would walk as far as thirty miles a day but would only carry a pack of fifteen seers, selecting for his load my sleeping bag, waterproof coat, sundry toilet requisites and medicine chest, retaining as his right the use of my umbrella but refusing to carry my heavy serge coat. The .310 bore gun-stick, cartridge belt, water bottle, haversack, electric torch,

camera, field glasses, and pint mug completed my travel roll, and, with no small inconvenience and suffering in regard to heat, I donned my heavy coat from Narendranagar in the hope

endeavour, there was satisfaction neither in his look nor his voice.

The sun was low on the horizon when I passed the twentieth milestone emerging into Nagani, where I put



A novel method of transport devised by the author which, however, had to be abandoned early in the tour as a result of a broken spindle.

that it would serve its purpose in colder regions.

The day's march is trying but numerous hill-streams offer a refreshing draught. With the thermometer registering 90 degrees in the morning, the heat increased until the sun beat down like the breath of a foundry. Ten miles beyond is Phakote, up to which point the motor road is being constructed, I meet an inspiring young Sadhu. He expresses his joy at meeting a "kind-hearted Sahib" and from his conversation I gathered what he was going to say next. He was equipped with a book of Kali Kamli Wala's coupons, which entitles the recipient to free rations at certain halting stages, and tried to encroach on my purse. Having failed in his

into practice the prerogative of the wayfarer by going into the State Bungalow which was full of emptiness, had something to eat, and made myself at home on the hard ground.

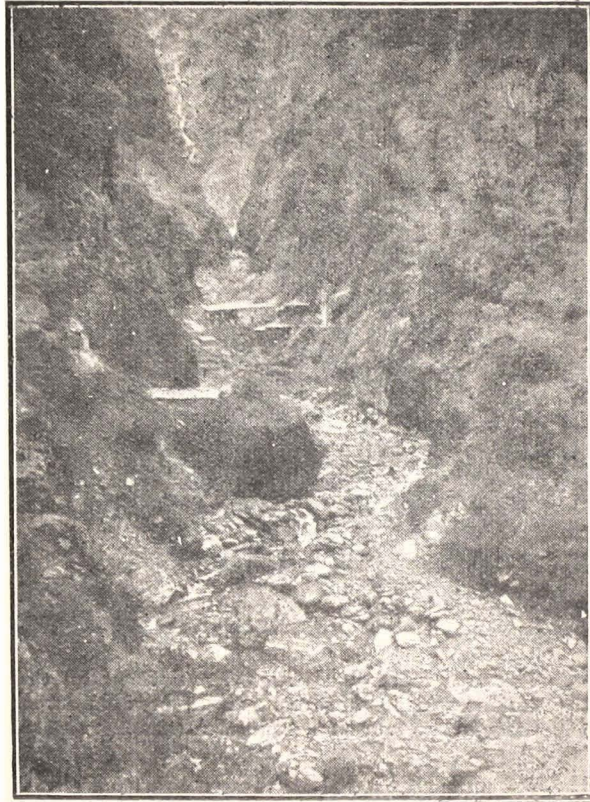
The Smiling Landscape

I set off the following morning, well in advance of dawn, to avoid the heat of the day, and at sunrise passed Chamua from where an uninterrupted view of the Jannotree peaks can be obtained. True, those who know some of the glories of the snowy peaks further ahead, think of this glimpse of them only as an introduction. But, what an introduction: Above us the blue dome of heaven, around us the smiling landscape with its familiar features, flowers and butterflies! what gorgeous butter-

flies! reminding me of the days when I was a kid out chasing them and picking berries.

From Chamua the road gradually descends for eight miles then is on the straight entering Tehri by a suspension bridge. The town can boast of a clock tower. The Palace, on an upper hill

too, is quite picturesque. Especially does this seem so when one sees them in the bright sunshine, their bronzed faces bearing a cheerful smile, where groups of families are commanding herds of cattle, chin-wagging, joking, laughing like school children, and pursuing their calling, in whole-hearted fashion.



Jamnotree, the birth of the Jumna.

gazes down upon this picturesque town nestling at the foot of the fortifications that fringe the entrance to the Eternal Snows. The summer residence, Pratapnagar, some nine miles from Tehri and situated at an elevation of 7,800 ft. above sea-level, on a towering cliff, stands out as a gleaming white sentinel overlooking the valley.

Cheerful and Contented People

One of the most impressive features of Tehri Garhwal is the happy, simple lives led by its inhabitants. The women, who wear long capacious dresses, appear as if they have decked themselves for an historic display. The male garb,

“Their best companions, innocence and health.

“And their best riches, ignorance of wealth.”

Sums up all that may be said of this happy and contented people.

I had no difficulty in procuring an excellent menu and reasonable terms at a local hotel, so to speak. By arrangement, a repast of “rogni rotis” and fish was made for my breakfast the following morning, but Mr. and Mrs. Tabby paid a visit to the State bungalow where I lodged for the night, and left nothing but a legacy of footprints.

A Blazing Inferno of Heat

Before the town awoke, I plunged into the holy waters of the Bhagirati and dressed, between scraps of conversation with the chowkidar, who persuaded me to visit the grave of Mr. Carter, State Engineer, who died at an advanced age. I thought it wise to switch on to something more cheering, so set the pace for an hour or so following the road along the banks of the silver Bhagirati which was rushing down a gorge some three hundred feet below the level of the road. The gradients offered easy walking. About midday, however, I found myself striking off into a blazing inferno or heat and was still wearing my heavy serge coat. Calling a halt at Baldiana, I ate a light luncheon, then managed to sleep for a few hours when the heat was almost beyond human endurance, waking to find the temperature had dropped considerably. The dharamsala was overtaxed with pilgrims. Down the long road, along protruding spurs of jagged cliffs, one finds a cheerful companion in the cuckoo, whose melodious call is echoed by his mates in the surrounding hills. Reaching Chham at sunset, I occupy a space on the offside of the upper floor of the dharamsala, the ground floor of which is used as a Primary School. The floor was overburdened with pilgrims, some massively built fellows, others tall and handsome.

The Rahri Ridge

By sunrise I had covered a distance of ten miles to Dharasau village, which has a religious and commercial importance of its own. The four roads from Mussoorie, Gangotree, Jamnotree and Tehri meet here and the river Bhagirati deviates its course. I meet a funeral procession stealing down to the river. The corps is wrapped in a saffron shroud, the bier is placed on the funeral pile and in a few minutes the grey ashes of the "past" mingle with the holy waters of the river.

The road from Dharasau, crossing the Rahri Ridge for a distance of twenty-five miles, is easy going and descends to the Jumna through shady forests of pine and oak with numerous rivulets of clear, sparkling water, as far as Kalyani.

An epidemic of a severe nature has befallen the cattle, I am told by a hill

man who stood there waiting as if he expected me to call down an antidote from the sky. "I'll tell the Diwan Sahib," I replied and moved on.

At a junction road I inquire from a villager which of the two roads leads to Jamnotree. "Please sir, speak to me in English: I am highly qualified speaking Englishman." Hiding a grin up my shirt cuff, I chat with this most engaging "savant" and prefer to keep my own counsel in regard to his English speaking qualifications.

An ascending road, through sweetly scented forests, takes me to Silkyari. With the setting sun it becomes distinctly cold.

Mountains and Valleys that Sing

As usual, in the morning, I was the last to quit the dharamsala, but nevertheless, fully an hour before Sol put in an appearance on a glorious morning such as this. Above, the clear blue firmament of heaven; below a vista of fields and shady forests, a wilderness of ferns and flowers spreading out in all shades of deep to pale, mountains and valleys which Nature has placed in a way that they vibrate and sing, flaming rhododendrons and little huts that look like mushroom patches.

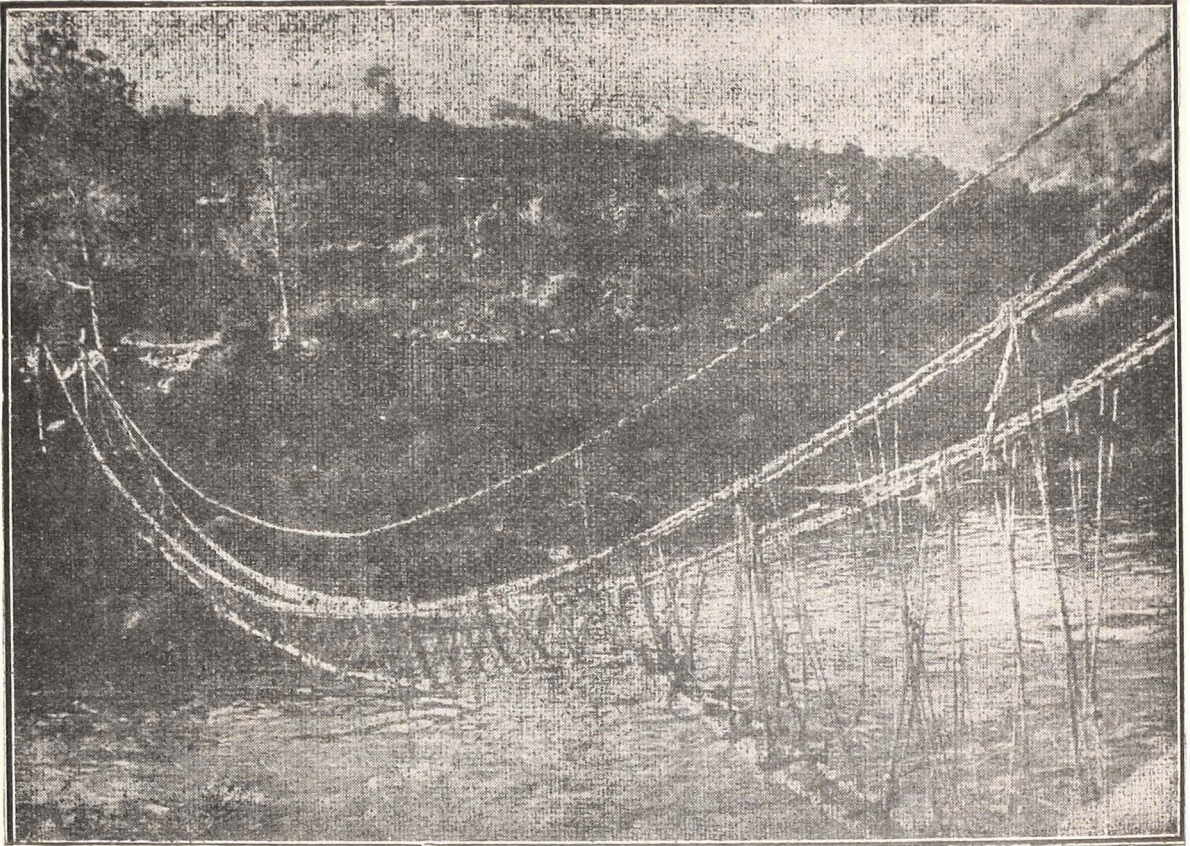
Still further on, the ascending road brings into view a pageant of flowers of great splendour, an occasional spring of ice-cold water, a stream of grassy plains, with whistling and singing birds, cooing doves and even the barking deer. What a magnificent variety of sight and sound the good God has provided us with. One wonders, then, how politicians can build barriers between the nations when flowers make such sweet bridges for the people's hearts to cross.

A World of Wonder

A few miles beyond is Simali stage where the roads to Jamnotree and Gangotree branch off. For a week I had journeyed as a vegetarian under passive resistance and began to feel that my 'tucker' bags were not quite satisfied with vegetable diet, the fine scenery provided by the mountains and a climate of invigorating freshness. And now, at this stage, Flies! Blue Bottle Flies! It is impossible to remain here with this live-stock buzzing round

me and sharing my food. I set off on the trail that winds in and out to Rana Chatti, always going higher and presenting a World of Wonder in the line of mountain scenery.

cult. I saunter up the old road which, at this point, offers more shade and less resistance, and find myself on a path strewn with boulders of all shapes and sizes. I decided not to turn back,



A swing bridge over the Bhagirati providing a perilous passage over the rushing waters below and diverting from the pilgrim highway nearing Uttarkashi.

It was fortunate for me that, on my arrival at Rana Chatti, a ram had been killed and it was not long before I was enjoying a juicy steak grilled over a copper's worth of firewood.

What a romantic effect is suddenly created at nightfall, when a beam of moonlight streams over the hill tops. The view of the Eternal Snows holds a spell over one that is well-nigh fascinating. It has become distinctly cold and I retire for the night in a Chatti which rightly claims to be a model of its kind.

The Last Four Miles to Jamnotree

A new alignment has been constructed to Jamnotree viâ Beefa village. The road is not only trying and dangerous but the pace exceedingly slow and diffi-

but clambered over more boulders and rocky ledges till, by some miracle, I finally forded a rushing torrent and emerged into the pretty little village of Beefa on the one bank of the river and stood facing the village of Khasrali on the opposite bank.

The last four miles to Jamnotree seem never ending. At more than one place the road has intermingled with the hillside, and no cooly will carry a loaded dandy over these parts. The view of the valley of Jamnotree 10,800ft. above sea-level, is enchanting. Towering mountain ranges intersect each other, and innumerable streams coming from the very foot of the Eternal Snows, whose peaks rise above in solemn grandeur, meet the gaze. The physical strain in attempting this feat

is well rewarded when it brings us to the grandeur of this simplicity of the works of Nature. And what a contrast! To be situated in the midst of two extremes. Ice-cold streams rushing in torrents from the Eternal Snows run adjacent to Hot Springs reaching a temperature of 194 degrees

the Temple. From a silver thread winding down the hillside like a string of pearls, it expands into a mighty rushing torrent some ten miles beyond. After a summary survey of the surrounding country, a brief rest and a scanty lunch, washed down with a liberal quantity of **Jamnotree** Jul, I



The female relatives of the Pandas of Jamnotree smiling in a fashion typical of the happy people in this area.

Fahrenheit in which pilgrims boil rice and potatoes. The Temple is adjacent to the Hot Springs and the Pandas, apart from their spiritual activities, have assuredly reaped a rich harvest judging from the heavy jewellery and silver ornaments which adorn their female relatives. These Pandas solicited a contribution but I gave them my blessing—a diplomatic gift—with which they seemed quite happy. The special feature attached to this holy valley is to perform religious ceremonies for the repose of the dead.

The Birth of the Jumna

The birth of the Jumna is just above

was desperately sorry to leave this dream-land. Indeed, my only complaint against Jamnotree was that time passed too quickly.

THE STAGE OF MARCH.

No. of Days	Halting Stages	No. of Miles
1	Rishikesh to Narendranagar	... 10
2	Narendranagar to Nagani	... 20
3	Nagani to Tehri	... 21
4	Tehri to Chham	... 16
5	Chham to Silkyari	... 24
6	Silkyari to Rana Chatti	... 24
7	Rana Chatti to Jamnotree	...
	and back	... 20
	Total	... 135

ON THE UTTRAKHASHI-GANGOTREE HIGHWAY

PHASE TWO

ONWARDS TO GANGOTREE.

Mineral Springs of Beefa

The pretty little village of Beefa, situated on the banks of the sacred rivers is built in terraces on a spur, and locates an important place of pilgrimage. Near by is the Hot Spring of Markandiyar, the waters of which have a sulphurous odour and the ground is besmeared with sulphur. The Diwan Sahib had suggested to me to bottle some of this mineral water and send it for investigation where it may be discovered that they would be efficacious in the treatment of certain ailments as the strong sulphur waters of Blawrtyd Wells, Wales, and those at Aix-les-Bains of the Hot Springs are employed externally being supplemented by water from the cold springs which is imbibed. The growing recognition of Spa treatment on the Continent is causing Doctors to take opportunities of visiting Spas to study Cures and the amenities offered to visitors. I remembered the words of the Diwan Sahib, but leave the investigation for experts and more competent authority than myself.

Khasrali is the village of the Pandas of Jamnotree and has a majestic temple worthy of a place in the tourist's itinerary.

The Brewery on the Hill

Returning to Rana Chatti, a voice from above arrested my attention. I stroll up the hill in the direction of the voice and find an abkari. I make a hurried purchase of the precious liquid sold here; and move on to the Chatti where my cooly awaited me. The smell of this stuff was obnoxious and the taste worse. My cooly viewed it from a different angle. He indulged in a long draught whilst I was left at my ease, with a substantial dinner and leisure for sleep.

A Race Against the Rains

Within a short time of leaving Rana Chatti the blue sky changed to inky

black. It was a race against the rains and I reached Simali stage just as the first heavy grey sheet of rain came roaring down, in but a passing shower. Onwards the road leads through dense forests, ascending and descending, till, on a high tableland, the view expands as the great mountains white with snow at their summits, and spangled with silver at their lesser elevations, come into vision in a semi-circular range. Flowers, in a fine diversity of colours relieve this tableland of hardness and monotony.

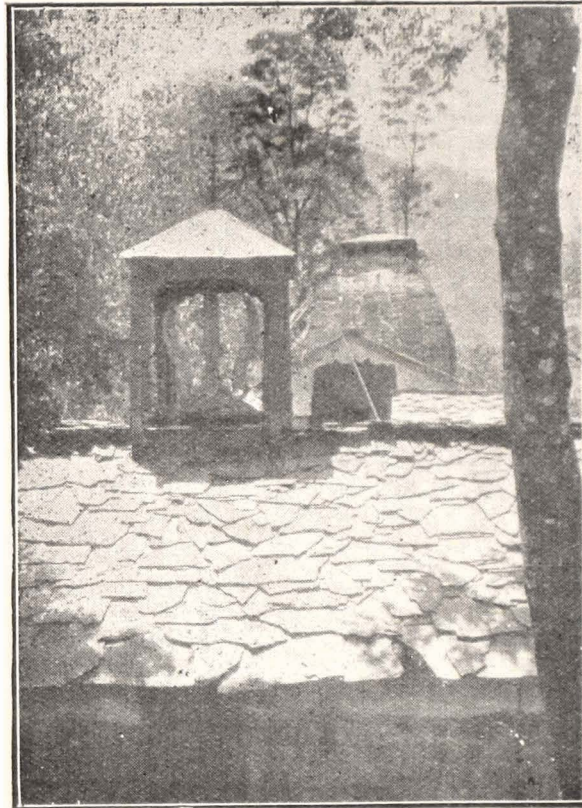
Here I meet "Somebody's mother" wearing 'Somebody's hat' plodding her way to Jamnotree with a determination to complete the tour. The road to Singot winds through shady, sweet scented forests and is covered with pine needles resembling in many places the bridal path leading from Gulmarg to Tanmarg. It is both steep and slippery. After much slipping and sliding, I reach Singot at sunset to find the dharmasala already overburdened with pilgrims and retinue of Her Highness the Rani of Tirpura. With the moon in her first dominion over the night, I trace my steps, in the company of a dozen hillmen, to Narkori, and was really fatigued that day.

The Sacred Town of Uttarkashi

Leaving Narkoli at break of day I am greeted by an old friend the Bhagirati and follow the course of its noisy waters rushing through the gorge deep down below the level of the road which leads through forests and a wide expanse of flat country. Going is easy and the climate mild. A swinging bridge (not associated with the highroad), spanning this river, is very insecure and animals cannot have access to it. They are tied together and driven into the river to swim across, but when the river is in flood, they are often carried away with the current.

A picturesque view of the sacred town to Uttarkashi is obtained fully a mile before it is reached. The town is rapidly growing into a commercial centre and is the seat of a Deputy Collector. It accommodates no less than 300 Sadhus. The Maharaja of Jaipur has erected

not the only type of sadhu one meets. There are many, who, according to their philosophy, have a perfect right to extort alms from any one whose intelligence and foresight have been rewarded with riches—a discomforting feature throughout this pilgrimage —whilst



A sceptre or weapon of Shiva housed on a building a temple at Uttarkashi.

a magnificent temple which stands out prominently amongst many other temples in the vicinity. The important temple of Vishvanath Ji with a Trishule (Sceptre of Shiva) is nearby. Luck comes my way! A letter from home and a barber to relieve me of a week's growth.

Nobility of Indian Womanhood

At high noon, with not a cloud in the sky, the sun was blazing down upon the valley. The shade of a spreading tree makes an ideal place for a siesta. I make the acquaintance of an enlightened sadhu. He is a graduate and thought it better to take Holy Orders. But this is

the opposite sex from the oldest to the youngest, with sanctity and determination stamped on their brow, wending their noontide journey over these rocky roads, present a spectacle which is impressed upon the mind of the traveller and which turns his thoughts to dwell upon the nobility of Indian womanhood.

Kalyani Trout Preserve

Three miles beyond Uttarkashi is Gangori Chatti. From here a road diverts for a distance of six miles to Kaldyani Trout which is the preserve of H. H. the Maharaja. About 11 miles beyond, branching off from

the main road, a path leads to a beautiful lake about two miles in circumference, on a plain surface at a height of about 14,000 ft. above sea-level, which presents a region of lovely peacefulness with a backing of snow-capped mountains and the river Asigunga forming an outlet to the lake.

Nearing Maneri, I meet a caravan with strapping, colourfully dressed Tibetans on their onward journey to Tibet through Nelang Pass. The Chieftain was a mountainous figure of a man scaling a good two hundred pounds of solid bone and sinew. He views my gun-stick with suspicion. I demonstrate. He is determined his mighty arm will wield a weapon such as this and offers me his best horse in exchange. But I am trekking and my gun-stick, well, it is still in my possession. The caravan had rested for the day as a foal was born. There an altar was set up and the Chieftain led the prayers, his clan repeating the chant after him. I doffed my hat and stood in silence. The ceremony over, I was served with a carefully defiled decoction of "butter tea" such as can only be prepared in Tibet, and it was borne in upon me that not only must the adventurer's heart be in the right place, but his stomach also.

At Maneri I sampled the first charitable institution of Kali Kamli Wala and was accommodated with a wooden bench and heavy carpet as a substitute for a mattress.

The night is chilly. I insert my person into my sleeping bag, lay me down on this beautiful bed and fall asleep to the syncopation of the trumpet-snoring of a hundred noses, chanting of pilgrims and the lisping and gurgling of the river.

To the Rockies Far Away

At Bhatwari I called a halt to leave etceteras there before setting out on my journey to Gangotree and back to Bhatwari where one must return to proceed to other shrines.

I was fortunate to meet two European missionaries who appeased my carnivorous appetite and presented me with a tin of kippered herrings and a liberal quantity of bacon which

served as my lunch and dinner for that day.

From here onwards, in many places, the road has been swallowed up by the hill-side, whilst in others, steps have been roughly chiselled from the living rocks and here and there bosses of stone have been left projecting giving the impression that the workmen found the task of constructing the road a difficult one. On account of this difficulty, three bridges have been made over the Bhagirati and two across the Kula and Dina streams, leading to the "Rockies Far Away." These bridges appear like great hammocks suspended across the rivers and sway heavily as pilgrims pass on it, whilst the river leaps and bounds in rapids down below.

A Chapter of Incidents

Next morning commences actively. I meet an old dame who had stumbled over the boulder-strewn road, grazing her arm and knee badly. I saturate a cotton swab with iodine from my bottle, my cooly applies it to the wounds. The dame shrank back with a cry of alarm, and sat gibbering in a language which, fortunately, was quite unintelligible to me.

I had not gone far when I heard a yell. Turning half-left I saw advancing towards my cooly a black, long, slim creature with beady, jewel-like eyes. It scrambled up a rocky ledge. Fumbling with my gun-stick, I levelled it at this creature and pressed the trigger. There was a loud click and that was all! In my haste I had forgotten to load. My gun-stick accompanies me loaded throughout my trek, but it had escaped my memory that the dear old Chieftain was the last to pull the trigger. The reptile, apparently sensing danger, promptly slid down the hillside.

The Inevitable Pugundee

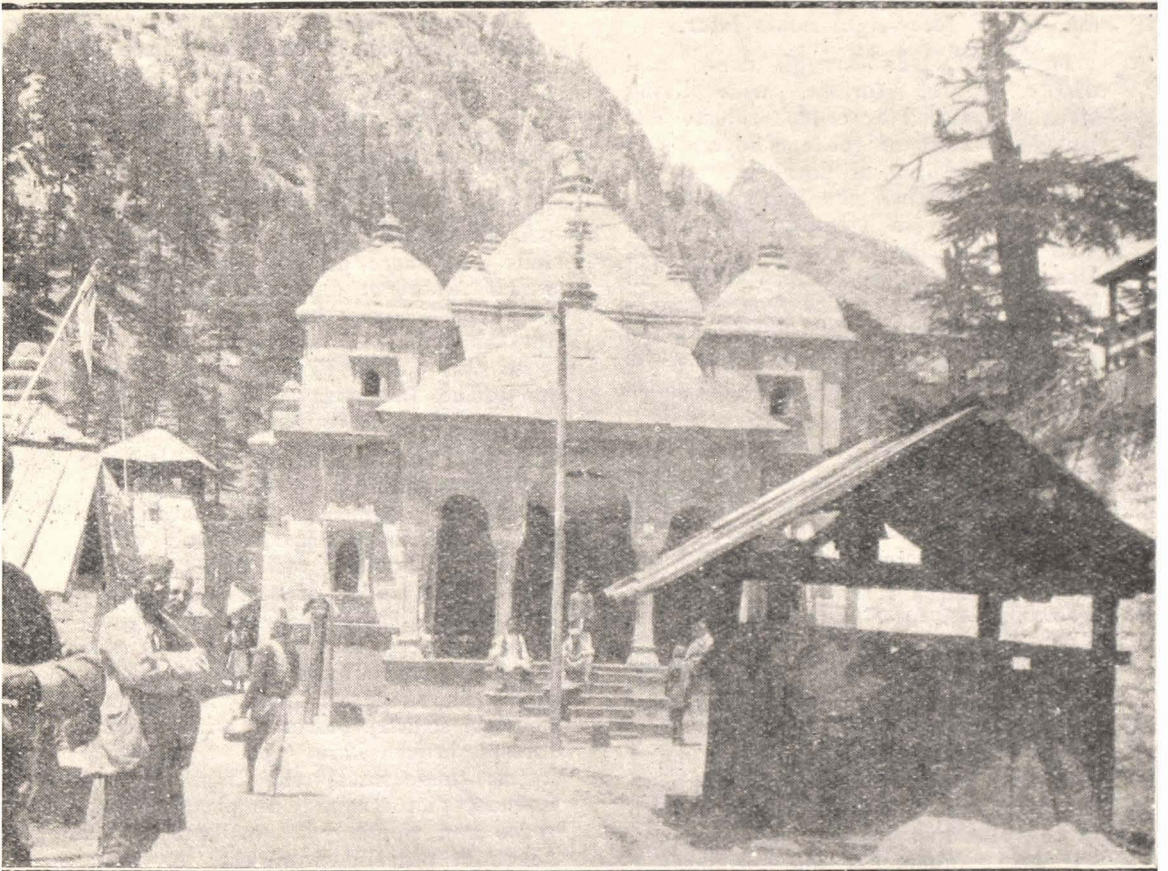
More than often my cooly drew my attention to a pugundee (short cut). If you wish to get out by the safest and easiest route I suggest you take the advice of one who has become wary by painful experience therein and give pugundeas a wide berth.

At one place, I followed the broad road presuming that the bridal path leading down to the bed of the river

was the inevitable pugdunde. Some distance further, the road intermingled with the hillside. I decided not to retrace my steps. One measures time by feeling and for what seemed like hours I continued with painful efforts, clinging to the steep mountain sides, with the fearsome thought that should I exceed my narrow foothold, I should find no other resting place than the bottom of the gorge some three hundred feet below. After a deal of mispent energy, warring against my soul for transgressing the second commandment and with the remnants of recent violent language lingering on

arms of the Bhagirati, *en route* to the settlement of Harsil which was bestowed by the Tehri Durbar on the Jud people—a nomad tribe of Tibetans.

Lovely is the scene that awaits one here. Superb mountain groups rise to soaring heights, retaining, at their summits the softest whitest snow, under the very eye of the sun, changing their shimmering garments to a rosy hue at their lesser elevations, giving way below to soft green meadows, vocal in the singing of birds and bedecked with flaming rhododendrons, orchards, beautiful trees and shrubs, with Nature's Parks scattered with a



The temple Shri Ganga Ji, erected by H. H. the Maharaja of Jaipur, at Gangotree.

my lips, I emerge on to the main road where my cooly greets me with a kind word and his splendid smile.

Harsil—A Heaven on Earth

I hurry on passing Shyam Prayag where the Shyam Ganga flows into the

lavish hand, whilst across the strips of road herdsmen pass with their multitudinous flocks of laden sheep.

From a very high pole a rainbow ensign flies, as an emblem of belief that it wards off evil spirits. The primeval beauty and loveliness of this

place merits it being selected as a Heaven on Earth but for the pagan religion and fantastic superstitions by which the inhabitants are swayed.

The Idyllic Hours

Here I meet the Forest Guard who examined my Passport. He introduces me to the Divisional Forest Officer of Tehri State who invited me to a sumptuous tea where the conventional teacup was replaced by my pint mug. For the first time on my journey did I see fruit of any description and a dozen apples from the orchards were readily accommodated in my haversack and consumed ere the sun set. I bid my host *au revoir* hoping to meet him on my return, forty-eight hours later.

The road winds through dense and deeply scented forests, with living streams spanned by crude bridges. The melodious voice of the cuckoo and the amorous crooning of doves graced the idyllic hours when the Sun's last golden beams were stealing across the blue dome of heaven and I reached Dharali, the last Indian village in Tehri Garhwal, 13 miles from Gangotree. On the opposite bank of the river on which this village stands, is Mukhana, the residence of the Pandas of Gangotree.

There is a particular sanctity attached to this locality. On the banks of the sacred river there stand out prominently two beautifully carved stone temples which tradition bears out are numbered with the 250 stone temples which sprung up in one night.

My cooly brings me a leg-o'-mutton and tells me it is quite fresh as the sheep has been killed only a few days ago. Adventure has its thrills and requires a certain amount of risk but I am not anxious to invite disaster with the possibility of being interned here in the vile dust from which I sprung, "Unwept, unhonoured and unsung."

The entrance to the apartment in this Chatti was through a door which pressed down upon our heads and we had to ape the Hunchback of Notre Dame to enter.

Perilous Path

The next day was the Lord's Day. My cooly developed a really serious stomach complaint. Whether it was

some ailment which was going to put "paid" to his account or not, I knew not, but I gave this fellow the most careful nursing for he was my right hand man. A double doses of cholera mixture and half a dozen soda mints in quick succession were administered before he showed any signs of rallying.

Finally it was arranged he should remain at Dharali whilst I made off with the dawn for the holy valley of Gangotree.

On this journey there is a very rickety bridge over the Bhagirati—an apology for the suspension bridge which was washed away during the recent floods.

The road from here is in a very precarious condition and in one place it takes the form of a narrow perilous path clinging to the hillside which requires the surefootedness of a goat to surmount this difficulty. On the way I passed Bhaironghati which has a commanding importance of its own and where, the Divisional Forest Officer tells me, there are medicinal waters which American and German Philosophers carry away in large quantities for the benefit of humanity.

At this spot a road diverts to Tibet along the Jad Ganga river through Nelang Pass.

The Sacred Valley of Gangotree

A commanding view of the Eternal Snows is obtained from Dharali but the rising hills obscure the holy valley until it is actually reached. When I was at the climax of the ascent, my amazement can be better imagined than described when I was told I was in the sacred Valley of Gangotree, 10,300 ft. above sea-level. An expanse of flat country covered with deodar forests, broken here and there with kutias (little huts) the residence of Sadhus, picturesque temples, winding roads and rippling streams present a vision of peaceful loveliness, secluded, profound and silent, that smiled in serene security at the foot of mighty peaks.

There is a striking temple, Shri Ganga with its dharamsala erected by the Maharaja Sahib of Jaipur, also an elaborate dharamsala and Kshetra of Kali Kamli Wala and the Punjab Sindh Kshetra which are a boon to pilgrims.

Although the real source of the Bhagirati, descending in a mere trickle is 18 miles higher, near Gaumukha, it is at Gangotree that the pilgrimage terminates and from where the pilgrim returns with Gangotree Jul. These are the sacred places where the atmosphere of jungles and deodar with medicinal herbs help Devotees to gain their goal of self-realization where Bhagarata and his ancestors penanced for Gangaji and where Shiva Ji with other gods and Rishies dwelt. Sadhus of great honour live in these parts and American and German Philosophers visit these parts in quest of some divine powers through Divine Rishies.

The Sanctity of the Pilgrimage

After my midday meal and a long draught of the clear, sparkling, ice-cold Gangotree Jul, I filled my water bottle with this sacred liquid, and beat a hasty retreat to Dharali, which was reached in the declining light of a perfect day.

I saunter up the banks of the Bhagirati and gaze upon those jagged peaks of snow and join with the Psalmist in declaring that "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His hand work."

As on the Jamnotree road, so likewise here, pilgrims, both old and young, halt and lame, feeble and blind, wend their way to and from Gangotree with true religious earnestness and sanctity which leaves a permanent impression on the mind of the traveller.

Peculiar as it may seem, the plodding pilgrims pass each other without exchanging a word and march on, like the ant, completing their mission before the snows set in and the Temple doors are declared closed by the Ruler of Tehri, who is respected by orthodox Hindus throughout the whole of India and is known as the "Speaking Badrinath."

STAGES OF THE MARCH

No. of Days.	Halting Stages	No. of Miles.
7	Brought forward from Phase No. 1 ...	135
8	Rana Chatti to Nakori viâ Semali ...	26
9	Nakori to Maneri ...	16
10	Maneri to Ganganani ...	17
11	Ganganani to Dharali ...	17
12	Dharali to Gangotree and back ...	26
Total ...		23.

**ON THE BUDHAKEDAR-TRIJUGI-NARAIN-KEDARNATH HIGHWAY
"AND THENCE TO KEDARNATH"**

PHASE THREE

THE HOT SPRINGS OF RISHI KUND.

When the full orb of the sun was not yet visible and golden beams played across the sky through clouds sailing on their aerial course, I retraced my step to Bhatwari en route to the third Shrine, Puri Kedarnath, calling a halt at Rishikund Hot Springs for a shower bath which put me in fine fettle. This hot stream flows over the hillside, across the road and joins the waters of the Bhagirati.

The journey was a cheerful one despite the firm, yet slight drizzle, with the cuckoo calling from the thickets,

the lowing of lambs on pasture lands, the shepherds with their women and children, the latter, running amongst the flocks, and the music of the rushing waters.

Nearing twilight, I counted the twenty-sixth milestone, as I emerged into Bhatwari where my chivalrous coolly prepared a hasty meal. Needless to say, I made short work of it and monopolized the only bed in the State Bungalow and had an undisturbed night's rest.

An Excessively Heavy Climb
In my early exodus from Bhatwari I

spot a European perched on the hill top, in his night pyjamas, indulging in his morning tea. He appears to be in no great hurry.

Two miles beyond is Malla Chatti from where, with a leftwheel I cross a bridge spanning the Bhagirati and bid the waters of the sacred river *au reservoir* till I meet them again at Deeva Prayag.

By midday I was only able to make ten miles which included a slow and excessively heavy climb of four miles between Phyalu and Chhuna where the road conforms to a footpath, with strips of shade, precious little water and the sun blazing down from a cloudless sky. I meet a pahari who bewails the threatened loss of his cock bird which had been roughly handled by a cat the night previous. I strike a bargain with him for the bird and my cooly loses no time, hastens to a spot diverting off the main road performs the execution and prepares a tempting dish. This meal acted as a sort of salve to the inner man.

It was not long after I had put in at the dharamsala at midday that a cloud, the size of a man's hand developed into a monsoon of activity, with flashes of lightning slicing the grey atmosphere like rapiers, smashing discharges of thunder making the air vibrate and hailstones assuming the proportions of pigeons' eggs. Seth Balabhai, a merchant of Ahmedabad, with his family and large retinue, considered themselves lucky that they had abruptly deferred their onward journey. I had heard, at Jamnotree and Gangotree, of the benign generosity of Seth Ji and how he exercised this virtue to excess. Not only did I witness his kindly consideration for the pilgrim but was the recipient of a parcel of dried fruits from him.

The clerk of the weather intermittently opened the floodgates of heaven. That day, many a soul praised and blessed the Punjab-Sindha Syndicate for their philanthropic deed of erecting a substantial dharamsala (but for which there is no other provision for the pilgrim's comfort) and for their wisdom in locating it at the foot of a rock which reared itself almost skyward from its base. That night the dharamsala was taxed to its capacity. The rain and hail tapping on the cor-

rugated roof did not disturb me in the least.

Any Port in a Storm

Before dawn the dharamsala was alive. The rain came down in torrents adding to the discomfort of the journey by making the path slippery. A half-clad sadhu, in his effort to scale the heights the evening previous, was checkmated by the terrific hailstorm and had wedged himself in the hollow of an oak tree, keeping vigil the night through with a smouldering log before him. "Any Port in a Storm" was his motto and he was none the worse for his experience.

A Tourist's Paradise

For this sector of the March, the Guide Book mentions "True Faith and Devotion alone can guide here." To this should be added brute force, occasional picturesque oaths and physical exertion, to help surmount obstacles.

After some rough going, I was the first to step over the top on to a tableland of flowers, looking like Bunyan's Christian and feeling like no Christian at all. It was not long before the whole party, put in an appearance at the Chatti.

The rain ceased and I pressed on over the slippery path which winds down the deeply descending valley; the cold is keen and sharp; the surrounding country presents a world of wonder. Clad as it is with pine forests, one follows the charming prospect down to a foaming river, wide stretching plains of rich emerald hue, here and there white peach blossoms, thorny bushes overladen with wild berries, cascades of flowers of a variety of colour, the ever sounding rushing streams, while in the dim distance, purple and evergreen hills rising up like pinnacles into Heaven, constitute a tourist's Paradise. Yet one despoiler of this dream comes my way. A serpent—camouflaging itself near a rock. At close quarters and dead range, I discharged a shot from my gun-stick and severed the reptile in two.

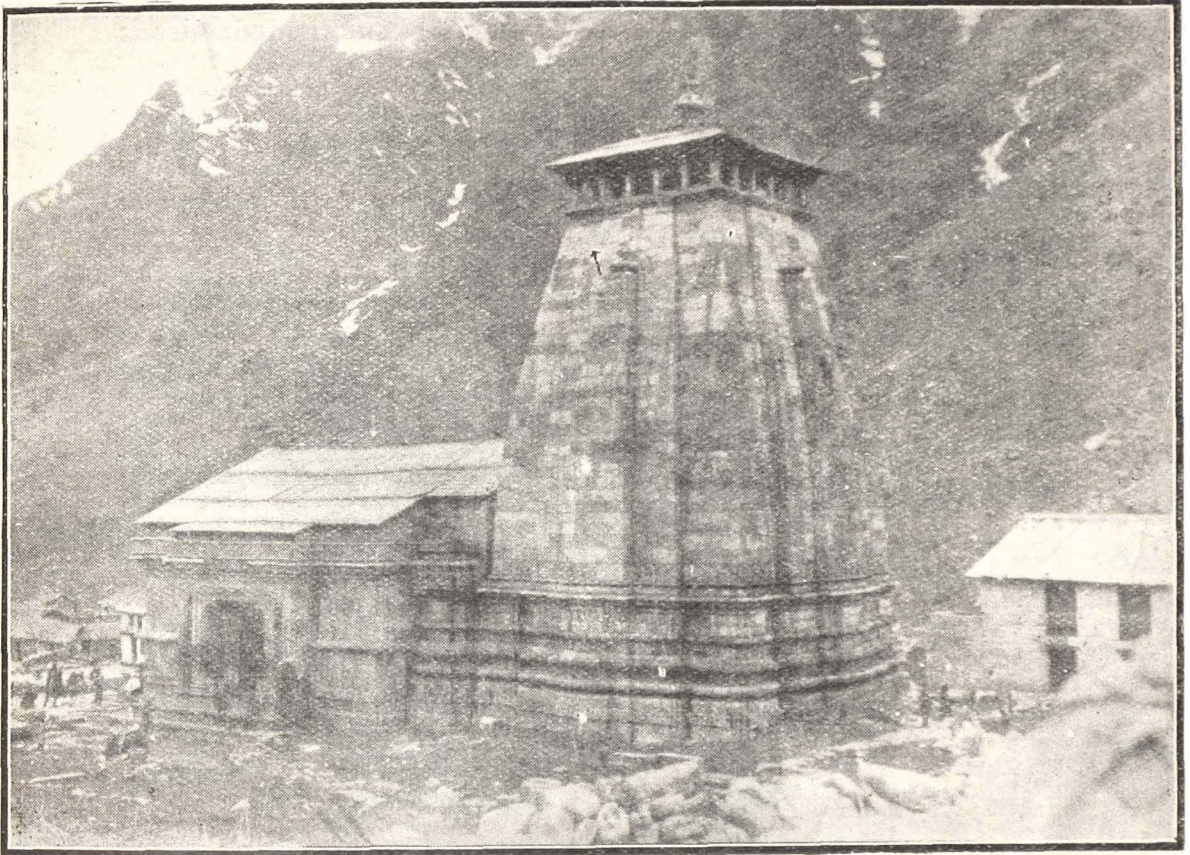
The Holy City of Budhakedar

The afternoon finds me in the pleasant looking city of Budhakedar. It has a temple of Shiva Ji which in appearance resembles a Buddhist Chorten, and a Sangam of the Bal and Dham Ganga rivers which gives it a greater religious importance. Leaving Budha-

kedar the road ascends almost perpendicularly to Binak Khal, but the Guide Book reminds me that this is merely child's play to what faces me for the next three days till I reach Trijugarain, which is the junction of the Kedarnath and Badrinath roads.

tune. It was evident that she was giving us the husks and keeping the kernel to herself.

A peculiarity attached to all chatties associated with cattle, is that there are hungry and insidious flies, number unknown, industrious and ambitious.



A side view of the Kedarnath temple with the mountains towering above, capped with snow.

The physical exertion by encountering steep ascents on the previous day's journey set my nerves on edge but the tonic mountain air considerably reduces strain and fatigue.

A Nepalese Officer who made my acquaintance accompanied me for a few miles and was a Job's comforter to me in these parts where distance is deceptive.

Tola Chatti was well patronized that night. Amongst others was a pahari woman who had the loquacity of a parrot. She was pouring forth a torrent of decidedly uncomplimentary remarks regarding the treatment meted out to her by her with and kin, who, she alleged, had robbed her a for-

Temple Dedicated by an European

I embark on the day's march, in a slight drizzle, ascending to Bharon where a European, in gratitude for some memorable service rendered to him, has erected the temple of Bhai-ravji.

Twenty-one deadly miles were covered that day over very trying ascents with the sun's rays pouring down from a cloudless sky. Amongst others wending their way, in the direction of Kedarnath, was a wealthy, aged, blind zemindar of Belliah district, and the humourous sadhu who had attached himself to me from the time I embarked on this pilgrimage.

The Enchanted Land

Before me lies the vast tableland of Duphanda 9,000 ft. above sea-level, with rolling grassy plains, the mountains rising up in a great encompassing circle, clad in snow and ever changing the colours of their garments as the chasing clouds in the blue tracery of Heaven, at intervals, intercept the rays of the setting sun reflected on their splendour.

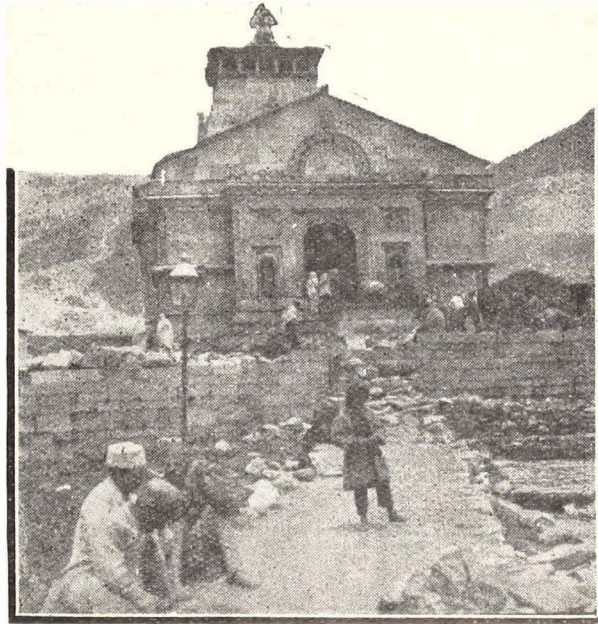
In the early hour of the morning I heard the groans of a sadhu. Another sadhu was repeating 'Sita Ram, Sita Ram,' and offering prayers near the bed side of the sick man as though ad-

for countless years, through rocky defiles and slippery ravines.

On this upland, many a "sole" lies abandoned by the pilgrim in his effort to cross the 'Rubicon' whilst others who from childhood imbibe the habit of walking barefoot sling their shoes across their shoulder rather than wear them.

Snow-burnt Rhododendrons

It takes me eight long hours to cover nine 'pahari' miles over trying ascents and precipitous descents. Here Nature was beautiful and dangerous. Each turn in the road presents a field of wonder in the blue firmament of



The temple at Kedarnath.

ministering the last rites to a departing soul.

I was out bright and early, for all good travellers set out with the dawn. The birds had begun to sing, the cuckoo breaks in with a sudden music upon this enchanted land and the traveller is thrown upon his reflections as the world is carried from darkness to light at this exquisite hour on this glorious morning with the thermometer registering 45°. How beautiful, silent and persuasive is the advance of light on those lofty pinnacles of ice. Before me lies, not a road, but Nature's Path, worn down on the rocks by the continual treading of pilgrims

Heaven and a beautiful picture lies at one's feet whilst the birds, with their tuneful songs and lambs, on their way to pasture lands, bleating and filling the air with their cries of rejoicing, make soothing company. The climax is reached at the summit of KUNKALYAKI-DHAR (Pass) at an elevation of 11,000 feet. The descent from this summit is across snow. Wide expanses of Rhododendron trees, stunted and with flowers bleached by the snows, numerous crystal streams and brown hills dotted white where snow lies dormant in crevices.

God's Garden of Flowers

What created human intelligence

can conceive the nature and full extent of these delightful Ornaments of Earth so jealously guarded by a majesty of architecture, that no Despoiler of Nature's Beauty lurk in their midst. Superb mountains of sword-like pinnacles of ice with a majesty of colour that dazzles the imagination, rising to a dark blue sky, across whose void, gigantic clouds, white and luminous sailing across their aerial course; fragrant adorable flowers in shades from deep to pale, such as I had last seen rioting in great mats and carpets on the tableland of Duphanda, luxuriantly clad pine forests, rolling meadows—such is the view that meets my gaze as I emerge into Maggu-ki-Manda. Pleasant as the place is there is the disability of obtaining water. Kali Kamli Wala's activities may be extended in the lay out of a pipe line to this Beauty Spot.

This locality marks the boundary of Tehri and British Garhwal. With rather a pang of regret I bid farewell to Tehri carrying away happy memories of my sojourn through Tehri Garhwal. Whatever be the trivial hardships, the beauty and hospitality of the road eclipses them all.

Altars Erected by the Wayside

Alternate ascents and descents for another five miles, through thick forests, ferns and flowers, with a clear view of the majestic snowy peaks of Kedarnath rising skywards in solemn grandeur, rippling streams with crude bridges, velvet-like grassy fields, all come within the reckoning of placing these surroundings amongst the most picturesque under the canopy of Heaven. The long shadows of evening lie sweetly across such a garden as this when I emerge into Trijuginarain, which is a place of great religious importance. I meet hundreds of pilgrims wending their way to the temple, with its sacred tank en route to Kedarnath. There do I find idols erected along the wayside, the Pujaree (Worshipper) beating a drum to attract the approaching pilgrims, and each pilgrim with due reverence, gives an offering and moves on. Nowhere in India is the pie ratio of money in greater circulation than on this highway where the poorest pilgrim offers his mite in the form of pies at the hundreds of shrines.

British Garhwal Mall

I cross the Mandakni river by a stately suspension bridge and find myself on the British Garhwal "Mall," for the road is very efficiently maintained.

It was a happy thought to find, that in practice, there was a road—the Rishikesh Kedarnath-Badrinath Highway—on which my wheeled transport could have been utilized with complete success.

Gaurikund and its Hot Springs

The valley of Gaurikund lies buried under snow during the winter months, but with the returning Sun, the Spirit of Life is once more abroad and Gaurikund assumes the importance of a town. Sanitation is in a high state of efficiency and the Knight of the Broom is conspicuous at each stage, on the Rishikesh-Kedarnath Badrinath Highway. Gaurikund dharamsalas were filled to capacity. A shopkeeper accommodated me in an exceptionally clean little woollen hutt adjoining his shop.

A Temple, of unknown origin, and the Hot Water Spring where the water flows through the mouth of a golden image of a cow's head into a tank, greatly increases the sanctity of this seat of pilgrimage. Feeling the need of a shower bath more than I felt the need of eternal salvation and with the counsel of my cooly I creep out of my tavern when the world is still asleep and treat myself to a shower bath to my heart's content.

The Sacred Town of Puri Kedarnath

I accelerate the journey to Kedarnath and back, the same day, a distance of 14 miles. It is indeed a very trying ascent and all along the road pilgrims were seen squatting to draw a breath and renew their energies.

A picturesque and lofty waterfall is passed en route.

The performance of the Pujaree repeats itself along this route, but on a larger scale where with the burning of incense and sounding of cymbals he attracts the attention of the pilgrim. The brass trays with accumulated pies, denote their efforts are not in vain. The impressive Temple, silhouetted against a back-ground of snowy pinnacles, marks the pilgrim's objective—Puri Kedarnath, at an elevation of

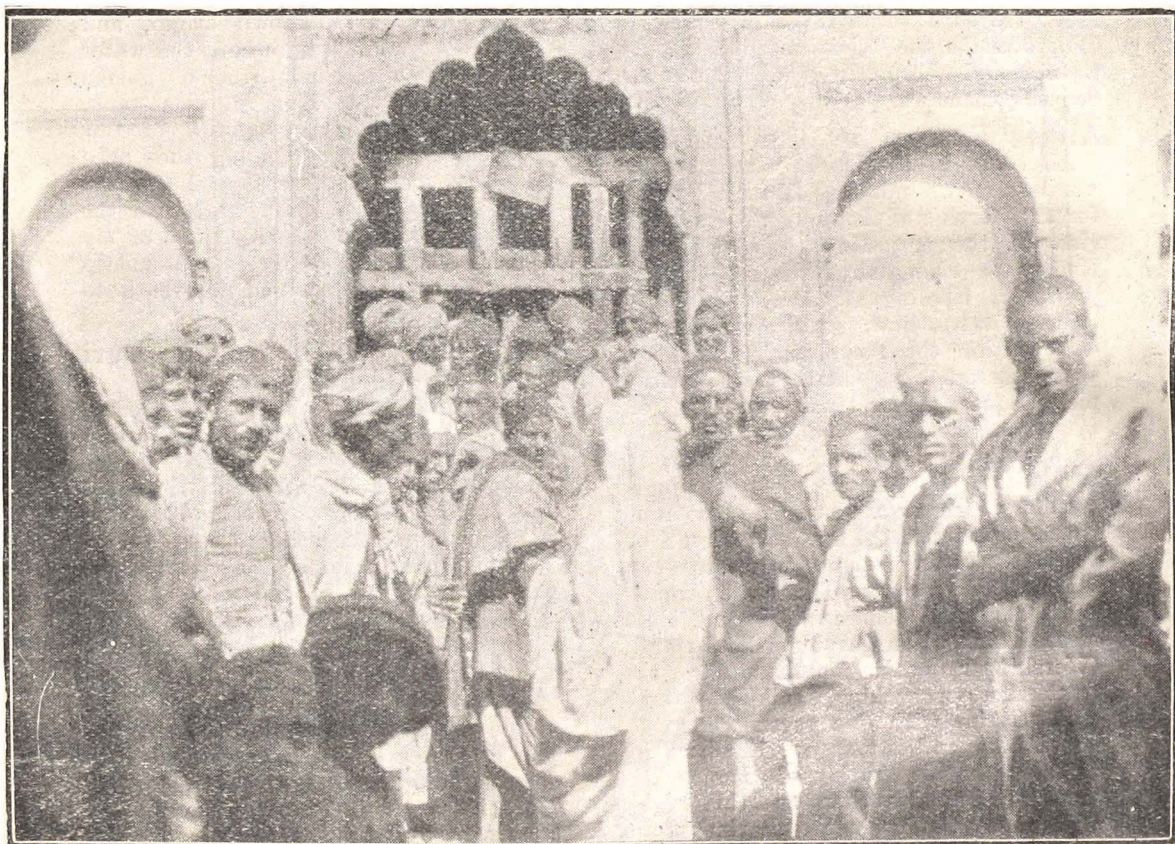
11,500 ft., above sea-level, on a marshy plain, on the slopes of the Himalayas.

At the approach of the steps leading to the Temple there sits a man selling flowers, such as met the eye on the previous day's journey, to the pilgrims who, in solemnity wend their way to the temple to perform their religious rites and make their offering. The pilgrims leave the temple by a side door and descend the steps leading to a shallow tank. There a Pujaree, after receiving the customary offering, and dipping the flowers into the waters of the tank, sprinkles it on the pilgrim's head, sending them on their way with the belief that they carry with them eternal blessings from this temple. High noon found me returned to Gaurikund where my cheerful cooly greeted me with his splendid smile and a meal from the best the city afforded. I spend an idle hour strolling up to the summit of the hill where there is an accommodating Inspection Bungalow from where an impressive view is

obtained. At eventide when a great peace falls upon the valley, and the last rays of sunlight still linger on the distant mountains lifting their snow-touched summits like altars to the threshold of Heaven, my eyes fall upon hundreds of pilgrims frequenting the sacred tank and the place is then wrapped in a sort of benediction. With the night, a silence prevails, as though the souls of these erring creatures had been finally taken to rest.

STAGES OF THE MARCH

No. of Days.	Halting Stages.	No. of Miles.
12	Brought forward from Phase 2 ...	237
13	Dharali to Bhatwari ...	26
14	Bhatwari to Chhuna ...	12
15	Chhuna to Tola Chatti ...	20
16	Tola Chatti to Duphanda ...	21
17	Duphanda to Gaurikund ...	24
18	Gaurikund to Kedarnath back ...	14
Total		354



Pilgrims seeking entrance at the gates of Badrinath temple.

ON THE GUPTA-KASHI-BADRINATH HIGHWAY

PHASE FOUR FINALLY TO BADRINATH.

Christian Administers Gangotree Jul

About ninety per cent of the pilgrims who make the annual pilgrimage, travel to Badrinath and Kedarnath. An unprecedented number of pilgrims were met this day. Finding that I had a bottle of Gangotree Jul they unhesitatingly accept my offer and drink the sacred liquid, ejaculating "Ji Gangotree Jul" for verily do they believe that this water cannot be contaminated even though administered from the hands of a Christian. I distribute half my flask amongst hundreds of pilgrims, and was happy in the thought that my efforts were not in vain.

Chatties Transformed into Markets

Chatties are unusually stocked with a variety of articles which are to be found in the bazars in the plains. Unique woodwork in the form of bowls, basins, boxes and trays, finds a ready market. Little urchins are not infrequently met, during this pilgrimage, asking, with a wealth of appeal in their eyes, for "Sooe Thaga" their customary term for "Baksheesh." The hill-folk retain their simple rustic modes of life and their customs and ideals are very slightly different from those of their forefathers.

Gupta Kashi and Ukimatha

A pleasant march through interesting country finds me at Nulla Chatti with its impressive stone Temple. The road diverts—the upper way leading to Gupta Kashi and the lower way to Ukimatha, two sacred towns, with celebrated shrines, facing each other on the banks of the Maudakni river. A visit to the Post Office left me the sadder for receiving no letter but I was happy to make the acquaintance of Victor, the Post and Telegraph Master whose hospitality I have cause to remember. After a cursory survey

of Gupta Kashi we wend our way in the direction of Ukimatha by a pug-dundee which leads down to the bed of a river and joins the Badrinath road. A sudden tug at my Jodhpurs revealed that a dog had vent the full force of his spleen on me. The brute taxed the skill of my gun-stick which missed its mark whilst he sped away leaving my anatomy quivering but whole. Before my host and I parted, he promised a reprisal by the week end provided circumstances were favourable to his plans.

Cigar as Antidote

Passing over a stately suspension bridge, I bid farewell to the holy waters of the Maudakni and emerge into the holy city of Ukimatha, the seat of the Rawal Sahib (Chief Priest) of Kedarnath. The town is built on a spur of the hill and the Temple authorities have established a charitable dharamsala for pilgrims.

Nearing Pothi Basa, which marked the 28th milestone of the day's march, I make the acquaintance of a Swami, who at one time was an Engineer in the Imperial Service but preferred to take Holy Orders. The absence of nitrogenous food for days at a time marked the only discomfort in my travel and Swami Ji presents me with a box of "Spencers" suggesting that an occasional cigar would soothe my nerves.

Nature at her Best

The road climbs the hill three miles to Chopta Ridge where Nature is seen at her best. Diverting from the main road I make a detour to Tungnath, the third Kedar at an elevation of 12,000 ft. Tungnath plays an important part in the pilgrimage and commands the finest view of British Garhwal and the most striking panoramic view of the Eternal Snows. In the far distant horizon, a belted cloud stretches across the middle of the range of snowy peaks. These pinnacles of ice soar

higher and higher, penetrating through the clouds above and entering into the very portals of Heaven. The Pandas are very accommodating and the Chief Panda fired a salute from my gunstick to commemorate my departure from the holy hills. The road descends very abruptly for three miles when it meets the Badrinath road which offers easy going through shady forests of pine and oak.

Twilight finds me five miles from Chamoli, which was my objective for the night, and faced with a portion of the road which is destroyed beyond recognition. In my eagerness to swallow up the miles before me, I must needs take the wrong road. My sense of direction has vanished, and help seemed out of the question when a kind Fate sent rolling along my way a man who was rather more than half-seas-over. Staggering and reeling about the road, he leads the way and, passing over a suspension bridge spanning the rushing waters of the Alek-nanda river, we reach Chamoli.

I was extremely thirsty, but unfortunately the pipe line had burst. My proud stomach rises victorious over the long draught I indulged in from the muddy waters of the river.

The Town of Chamoli

Chamoli lies in the valley and the intense heat in the dharamsala that night was unbearable. With my cigar drawing well, there I lay till the early hours of the morning when I fell into a deep sleep and woke with the rising sun.

The lay out of the town is very impressive. The sun beating down from a cloudless sky makes the heat utterly indescribable. The scenery on this day's march is very rugged. The road climbs almost a thousand feet above the bed of the river with its muddy waters flowing slowly through a narrow gorge in a sleepy state. The rocky mountains intersect each other, whilst in the back-ground the snowy peaks tower above in solemn grandeur.

I meet a number of blind pilgrims this day. It was a touching sight to see them struggling on their way, in this scorching sun, to perform this pilgrimage. Whatever may or may not be the true religion by which mankind is judged, the endurance and hardship

experienced by these pilgrims surely cannot go unrewarded.

Salazit (a Juice extracted from Rocks)

At Pipul Chatti the bazar is stocked with imports from Tibet including medicinal herbs and varied assortment of Yak's tails. From here onwards to Badrinath grotesque illustrations advertise the utility of Salazit (a juice extracted from rocks) which, the advertisement asserts, will cure any disease under the sun.

Extreme Midday Heat

Only extreme heat forced us to make a midday halt at Garurha Ganga where hundreds of pilgrims are seen refreshing themselves by a bath, washing their clothes, lolling in the shade to evade the tyranny of the sun's rays.

With the declining light of a perfect summer's days I emerge into Helang, which is situated at an elevation of 6,000 feet above sea-level but it felt much below sea-level. I was among the first to reach this tavern and sat watching the polyglot crowd of brown, yellow and white humanity pouring into Kali Kamli Wala's dharamsala which also offered me a comfortable night's rest. At twilight the tinkling of bells heralded the approach of a "Mail Runner" who passed on with accelerated pace through the Chatti.

In the short hours of the morning the whole crowd set out by the light of a lamp to evade the scorching mid-day heat.

I had beaten the sun by a whole hour when I reached the large town of Joshi Matha, the winter residence of the Rawal Sahib of Badrinath, with its impressive Temple. From here one road leads to Tibet through the Niti Pass.

My cooly complains of a throbbing pain in his head. His illness causes me no small anxiety for not only did the success of my journey owe much to him, but I had embraced him as my counsellor, companion and friend. I endeavour to convert the sadhu, who had accompanied me throughout the tour, as a cooly, but the only response I meet with is his permanent disappearance. My cooly is admitted into hospital. I leave my bedding at this stage and decide to resort to Kali

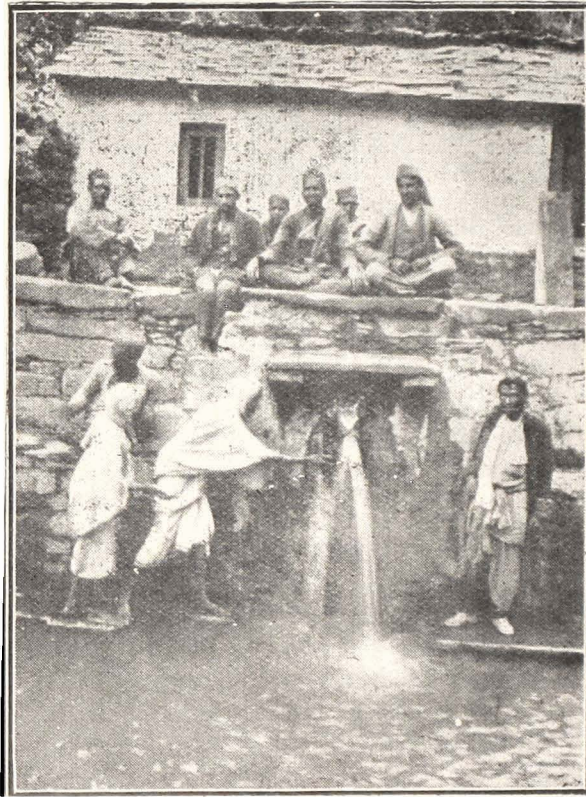
Kamli Wala's blankets till my return from Badrinath regardless as to who and how they had been used the night previous.

A Broad Stone Street

A steeply descending road takes me to Vishnu Prayag with its temple, situated at the confluence of the Aleknanda and Vishnu Ganga rivers. The bed of the river widens and the mighty rushing waters leap and bound onwards to the plains. At Pandukeshwar the dharamsalas are erected on either side of a broad stone street and the lay-out

almost half the year, the progress towards the reconstruction of its roads speaks eloquently for the Engineers who handle the task.

Three Englishmen, returning from Badrinath that evening, were also working out their own salvation over this perilous strip of road. One of them opined that "the snowy peaks of Badrinath would wipe Switzerland off the map for winter sports if it were possible to offer amenities to visitors and instal an electric railway in this part of the world where the rivers lend themselves to the scheme."



A hot water spring at Gaurikund issuing from the mouth of a golden image or a cow's head.

with its stone temple is distinctly striking and picturesque. Nearing Badrinath, the road lies along a boulder-strewn path and in one place takes the form of a narrow strip, level with the bed of the river. A sudden flood in autumn last, made itself felt by carrying away thirteen miles of the road and two costly suspension bridges. When one considers that this part of the country lies buried under snow for

Sufficient unto the Day

Sunset finds me at Hanuman Chatti. Later in the evening, a proclaimer walks through the street announcing that during the day the wooden bridge over the river had given way and movements to and from Badrinath were suspended. This bridge was a temporary structure, to serve the purpose whilst a loftier bridge was in the course of completion higher up the river. Un-

dismayed by the news, for the adventurer carries as his motto "Adaptability," I lay me down to rest between two of Kali Kamli Wala's blankets, leaving my fate to be decided with the dawn for "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Chaos Reigns Supreme

In the morning my rest was disturbed by a rowdy controversy between a "Mail Runner" and the bridge Jemadar, regarding the conveyance of the mail bags across the river. There was no means of ascertaining the exact time the new bridge would be completed, so I set out with the Jemadar. The approach road to the bridge was in a state of chaos. Pilgrims were striving to wend their way through caravans of laden sheep and once too often did the pilgrim fare the worse in his effort to cross this narrow strip of road which clings to the hillside. The Jemadar bids me follow him across the new bridge, still deficient of side railings. I cling to his hand for grim death till I pass over this hammock and as a compensation for his kindness, give him one of Swami's cigars.

Sacred Town of Puri-Badrinath

The sacred town of Puri-Badrinath in all its majesty of splendour, is reached at sunset. I see many well-to-do pilgrims emerging out of the town, garlanded with roses.

Thousands of pilgrims did I see wending their way up the steps leading to the Temple gate which is closed at intervals to prevent overcrowding. Each pilgrim contributes his offering and, I am told the Rawal Sahib is within the Temple, pouring his blessings on this mass of humanity.

The bazaar is well stocked with a variety of foodstuffs and novelties including brooches with portraits of the four Dharmas selling for a few coppers. A serious looking fellow, seated at a table with a register before him, eyes me rather suspiciously. He is apparently satisfied with his inspection, and tells me he is registering the names of pilgrims who visit this holy Shrine. The number has so far reached 8,000 and the pilgrimage is young yet.

Whilst indulging in a breakfast at a reputable shop, I make the acquaint-

tance of the Assistant Health Officer, Doctor Muttra Dutt Tewari, who invites me to be his guest on a visit to Vasudhara, four miles beyond Badrinath, at an elevation of 14,000 feet.

He is on tour with the Director of Public Health securing moving picture to promote sanitation.

Nature's Beauty Spots

Malagaon, en route to Vasudhara, is two miles from Badrinath, from which point one path leads to Mansowar in Tibet through the Mana Pass. On the road we pass a natural causeway formed by a massive mountain rock spanning the chasm. Near this natural bridge is the cave of a hermit. He secludes himself from the gaze of the outside world when any pilgrim approaches the mouth of the cave, by ascending the steps leading to a dungeon.

The air here is rarified. An apology for a road, fording brooks and over innumerable snow beds, leads to our objective. It is difficult to judge which place of all these Beauty Spots of Nature excels in magnificence, but my mind now leads me to think that these are the snowy paths to "Loveliness" and that at Vasudhara the door of Paradise has been opened as I gaze upon this scenery which offers one of the most wonderful views under the canopy of Heaven.

The sword-like pinnacle of Niel Kanta stands in close proximity and a clear view indicates that the surface has a layer of no less than 250 feet of snow. A lofty waterfall over 400 feet in height with the mountain breeze sweeping its waters into a belt of foam over its permanent snow bed, and the sun's rays playing on these waters like dancing rainbows, presents what surely must be one of the most wonderful views of the world.

About thirteen miles further lies the covetous lake of Satopantha, which is nearly two miles in circumference with innumerable clumps of trees along its shores, with overhanging glaciers encircling around, presenting a serene and magnificent work of Nature where only cultivated lands and pleasure grounds are lacking. These ornaments of Earth kept our cameras busy and I figured prominently in the "Movies" of the day. In the evening the party

made a hasty retreat to Badrinath. I take a different route along a road which switchbacked through the mountains, fording many brooks and emerging into Badrinath before darkness finally sets in.

my disposal for the night, and sleep the sleep of the Righteous. Sunshine, starry nights and hospitality marked my stay at Badrinath, one of the four Northern Shrines which are the original abodes of sages, who in ages past, attained supremo



Ukimatha temple, a celebrated shrine on the banks of the Mandakni river and the seat of the Rawal Saheb of Kedarnath.

I had left my flash lamp with the rest of my kit and was surprised to find that this important, sacred place can boast of no High Power lamps for street lighting but that the wayfarer is dependent on the light afforded by the lamps of the shops, to pick his way through the streets, and over the suspension bridge.

I was fortunate to meet the Assistant Surgeon who helped me over my difficulty, with the aid of his electric torch, and let me to the camp of Doctor Muttra Dutt Tewari. Whilst listening to the Doctor's conversation, I ate wisely and well. The world has become Arctic. I retire, in a cosy nook of the tent of my generous host, who places a camp cot and four blankets at

knowledge and wrote philosophical literature which India and the whole world is proud of.

STAGES OF THE MARCH

No. of Days	Halting Stages	No. of Miles
18	Brought forward from Phase Three	... 354
19	Gaurikund to Pothi Basa	... 28
20	Pothi Basa to Chamoli	... 21
21	Chamoli to Helang Chatti	... 20
22	Helang Chatti to Hanuman Chatti	... 25
23	Hanuman Chatti to Badrinath and environs	... 15
	Total	... 463

ON THE BADRINATH-RISHIKESH HIGHWAY HOMEWARD BOUND.

A Fiery Furnace

It was brilliant daylight when I bid my illustrious host farewell. A grey-headed Punjabi affords some comic relief by embracing me several times and conferring on me the title of "Mahatma" when he learnt I had completed the pilgrimage as the ordinary pilgrim does. The day was exceptionally hot and forewarned me of what was in store for me on this last lap of my journey—a distance of 169 miles to Rishikesh where the road runs through the valley which is converted into a fiery furnace by the heat emitted from the rocks.

During a midday halt at the prominent resting stage of Pipul Kothi, the monotony was broken by the intrusion of an ostentatious Bengali, answering to the name of Bhattacharji, burdened with curious leather buildings for boots, trousers like jointless armour, a pack on his back, miniature wind-screens to protect his eyes, and "A Walking Tour Through India" boldly inscribed on the band of his hat; he looked like an orphaned misfortune of God, nevertheless optimistic and in high spirits, with a perpetual grin on his face.

Nearing Joshi Matha I see a funeral procession stealing down to the river. Could it be my cooly whom I left in hospital a few days ago? No! I learn he is convalescent and I am now confronted with the difficulty of securing a third line of transport on the 3rd of June, the King's Birthday, when all the world, including myself, is in holiday mood.

With a firm hand-shake I bid my faithful cooly goodbye when the Assistant Surgeon sends a lad who had no objection to making easy money. He agrees to carry my bedding as far as Chamoli for Rs. 4 but had scarcely gone three miles when he feigned illness. I abandon him with an eight-anna piece. What luck befalls me! An unemployed cooly, stepping it out to Rishikesh, comes my way. We press the pace to Helang where I rested for the second time.

The Bone of Contention

A few scattered clouds in no way alleviated the day's heat but only made picture-making difficult.

On my return to Chamoli I am hospitably entertained by local inhabitants who had made my acquaintance a few days earlier when I was passing through to Badrinath.

I barter my heavy serge coat, which was the bone of contention between my cooly and myself from the commencement of the journey, for two umbrellas, one of which I left with the chowkidar to give my faithful cooly when he would pass that way, as a gift for his valuable service.

My arrival coincides with the visit of the Deputy Commissioner to the town. He was accommodated in the Rest House perched on the highest hill whilst I contented myself with sampling Kali Kamli Wala's Dharam-salas.

A Typical Sunday

At three o'clock in the morning I wend my way out of town, with the help of my electric torch. It is just sun-up when I pass the picturesque town of Nand Prayag at the confluence of the Aleknanda and Nandakni rivers. The temperature was then 90°. I meet a student of the Allahabad University. He is spending his vacation with his brother who carries on a large trade in miscellaneous articles at Badrinath.

It was a typical Sunday. Without checking my speed over a sandy road from which the air rose in "wiggles," I call a halt at Sonla Chatti, in common with other pilgrims, lazing away the afternoon heat. Pilgrims refresh themselves in right earnest in the waters of the river.

The Fall of a Tropical Night

On resuming my march to Karan Prayag a few hours before sunset I pass a sadhu, who has reached his journey's end, lying by the wayside. When undefended, unaccompanied pil-

grims die in this state of pauperism, local sweepers bury them.

A little further I meet two Europeans on horseback, one of whom was the District Engineer, Pauri, on a tour to Badrinath to investigate the conduct of the naughty bridge which had caused great chaos during the week.

High above the road at Karan Prayag which is situated at the junc-

apparently sensing danger did not pay its usual visit. To camouflage my fears, I make a hasty retreat to a more centralized spot in the bazaar, as being more suited to my convenience. The drains and surroundings here are none too sanitary and I set about ridding the place of this discrepancy. A word to the sweeper and a scribbled note to the Assistant Surgeon for a



Somebody's baby doing the pilgrimage in what is probably the most comfortable manner.

tion of the Aleknanda and Pinda Ganga rivers, is a magnificent temple which every pilgrim visits, on this journey. I lodge for the night at the extreme end of the bazaar in a dharamsala where I meet a few officials and the Assistant Surgeon.

With the sudden fall of a tropical night, the conversation took a sinister turn. They tell me a leopard frequents this spot, and on two occasions has carried away a dog. The District Engineer had, the night previous, tied a bait and set a watch but the animal

liberal quantity of phenyle, soon made the surroundings pleasanter.

My cooly turns up a couple of hours later with a high temperature. If you've been out on such an adventure, I expect you know that one has no time to spare on administering any other antidote than one's sympathy. An immediate arrangement was made with a local cooly. This fourth line of transport accompanied me to my destination and earned the second umbrella as a consideration, in addition to his wages.

A conversational Mahomedan made my acquaintance. He tells me he had been an Indian Officer, in a Punjabi Regiment. Whilst an Officer, this Mahomedan had been instrumental in saving the life of a wounded General on the Mesopotamian Front when the latter with one leg riddled with bullets, was sinking in a bog. He threw the end of his turban to the General, pulling him ashore and carrying him, picking a back to a place of safety. For this gallant deed his family enjoy a special Life Pension. This fellow has contented himself to take Holy Orders and, in his saffron garb, and clean-shaven face, I mistook him for a Swami.

The Sacred Town of Rudraya Prayag

When the prowlers of the night were seeking their retreats to rest, I started the day's march reaching the important sacred town of Rudraya Prayag where the transparent waters of the Mandakni flow into the muddy arms of the Aleknanda. An elaborate Bathing Ghat affords facilities for pilgrims to bathe at this confluence. Probably Rudraya Prayag is one of the most important places on the pilgrim highway but the shops present an atmosphere of indifference and neglect.

With the thermometer registering 110° in Kali Kamli Wala's Dharamsala my midday halt is speedily located in the shade some thick foliage adjacent to a Chatti where the shopkeeper placed a wooden bench at my disposal. I consume my lunch and have a brief nap, balancing, with wonderful skill, on this plank, I learnt but too late that the comfortable Chatti at Gulabrai, a few miles distant, afforded greater comfort.

The day's journey was completed to Bhattisera Chatti where every facility offered for my dinner and a comfortable night's rest.

Nocturnal Journey

In common with other pilgrims, I set out on my nocturnal journey to avoid the heat of the day. Early morning finds me at Shrinagar the only town of any size or importance in Pauri district. It has an elaborate and well-constructed bazaar with a broad street and many magnificent

buildings. Not far from the town is the temple of Kamleshwar which plays an important part in the itinerary of the pilgrim. I meet three horsemen and find they were sharing the same fate as myself of being vegetarians under passive resistance. An hour later we had shaken hands and gone our separate ways.

About a mile beyond is the picturesque town of Kirthinagar, on the banks of the Aleknanda river, founded by H. H. Raja Kirthi Shah Bahadur, in 1896. Like other places on the journey, there is nothing to indicate where the various roads lead to. It would be well if those interested would cater for the needs of the occasional traveller.

The day's halt was made at Vilva Kedar where there is a famous temple of Shiva Ji. I met two well-to-do persons from the "Sunny South," one of whom presented me with a bottle of grape juice. But for this and the ghastly heat, the day's journey had nothing to commend itself. A string-mesh bed is placed at my disposal for the night at Rani Bagh.

Deva Prayag—The Most Sacred Centre

Sunrise finds me at the most sacred centre on the pilgrim highway—Deva Prayag, the winter residence of the Pandas of Badrinath built on either bank of the confluence of the Bhagirati and Aleknanda rivers, which latter river is reinforced by the waters of the Mandakni. The spot where the waters meet is marked by a lofty white flag hoisted on a rock. In these sacred waters thousands of pilgrims bathe and perform a ceremony for the repose of their dead. It is a striking town and the bazaar is well stocked whilst the dharamsalas afford every possible comfort. It is from this place that one road leads to Yamnotree and Gangotree along the banks of the Bhagirati and the other direct to Badrinath along the banks of the Aleknanda. The river on this sector is some 300 feet below the level of the road. The devastation wrought by the floods in the autumn of 1924 can be better imagined than described where the high-flood level is seen marked on a rock at a considerable height above the level of the road.

By mid-morning, at Byasghat, the air has become like steam. The corrugated roofing of the dharamsala had rendered the upper storey into an oven

This was the last night of my itinerary and I was treated to a comfortable bed and a good night's rest.



Pilgrims tramping onwards in spite of the approaching darkness.

with a temperature of 110°. I vacate and pass six hours of the day in a thatched chatti where the thermometer limited its activities to 102°.

The Last Night of my Itinerary

The Assistant Surgeon of Kandi, with his compounder arrives at the Chatti after inoculating the hillmen against cholera. I feel rather uneasy at the thought of the prevalence of this epidemic and was glad to shake the dust of this place off my feet.

In the company of the doctor I reach Kandi and was entertained by him in the whole-hearted fashion that travellers soon learn to expect. I bid my host goodbye with happy recollections of his hospitality and wend my way onwards reaching Semal Chatti at nightfall.

Homeward Bound

At three o'clock in the morning I commence my journey and pass a Handloom Weaving Factory which is well patronised by pilgrims.

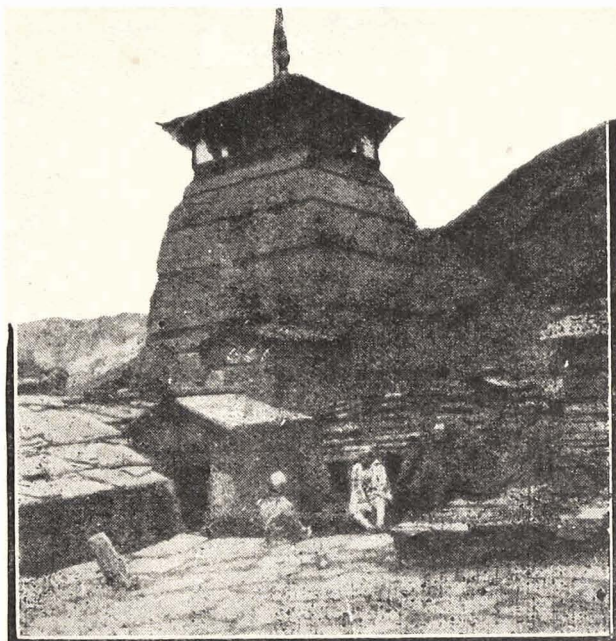
A steep ascent of three miles faces me from Bandarbal, the base of the ascent where a long draught of good rich milk reinforces my energies for this strenuous climb. The physical strain and the penetrating sun's rays were burned up in the fire of my enthusiasm to reach my objective—Rishikesh—which would find me in the "Homeward Bound" train when the last rays of the sun were disappearing over the horizon.

Kali Kamli Wala's Pyaons serve a very humane purpose on this highway

where I more than often refreshed myself.

In the evening the most impressive scenery and the sight of a number of huts and dwelling houses reminds me that I am nearing the sacred town of Laksman Jhula. The majestic, lofty

where aerated waters, with cordials and ice were sold. I order a long draught of a mixture of 'waters' and cordials. When my cooly got an eyeful of the 'cocktail' he smiled over his jersey. The thirsty looks he bestowed on the drink moved me to share it with him. It was well worth the rupee



Tung Nath temple, 12,000 feet above sea level.

suspension bridge across the Holy Ganges, with wooden flats anchored on the river where silent religious obligations are performed by sadhus whose little huts are dotted along the banks, add much to the beauty of the scenery and the sanctity of the town. On the right bank of the river stands the ancient temple of Shri Laksman Ji, on the wall of which a notice reminds "Ladies and Gentlemen" to "Beware of Imitations" and emphatically "declares that this is the very spot where Shri Laksman stood for one hundred years to wash away the sins of his ancestors"—a mighty feat which eclipses the patience of Job, and which appears to have been unnecessary when the rushing waters of the Ganges are right there to wash away the universe if necessary.

After thirty days did I strike a shop

I paid, for it renewed my energies for the last lap of three miles which seemed never ending, through just one prolonged city extending from Laksman Jhula to Rishikesh, passing Muni-ki-Reti where all transport arrangement for the pilgrimage are controlled by the Tehri Durbar.

It seems incredible, in a "Changing world" as we live in that when half a lakh of pilgrims visit these Northern Shrines annually, there is no headway towards the strengthening of bridges and constructing a motor road a considerable distance beyond the present limitations at Laksman Jhula. The nature of the country suggests forcibly that the motor road can be extended for at least a distance of ten miles up to Nayee Chatti.

With the setting sun and in the stillness of the evening, I retraced my

step happy in the thought that I had dodged the monsoon; happier for all the hospitality that had been bestowed on me and happier still that I had successfully completed my mission, emerging into Rishikesh as "A Pioneer of the Forest." Though I had pressed the pace to cover the day's journey of 28 miles in the burning heat of the sun, I arrive at 'Railhead' in time to see the tail lamp of the last train of the day moving off the platform. The pleasant alternative of a motor drive through the city of Hardwar brought my activities to an end and the morning found me in the plains in the midst of sweltering heat but with the happiest of recollections which will remain green in my memory for years to come.

24	Badrinath to Helang	...	20
25	Helang to Chamoli	...	23
26	Chamoli to Karan Prayag	...	20
27	Karan Prayag to Bhattisera		28
28	Bhattisera to Rani Bagh	...	23
29	Rani Bagh to Semal Chatti	...	25
30	Semal Chatti to Rishikesh	...	28
Grand Total			... 633

Average miles per day 22.

"Whether we shall meet again I know not,

"Therefore my everlasting farewell take!

"For ever and for ever farewell



Companions of a long trek the author and his faithful cooly, Mallar part company.

STAGES OF THE MARCH		
No. of Days.	Halting Stages	No. of Miles.
23	Brought forward from Phase Four	... 463

Mallar.

"If we shall meet again, why, we shall smile,

"If not, why then, our parting was well made."

**Printed at the Statesman Press,
"Statesman House"
CALCUTTA**

Address :—
M. H. CHALMERS,
C/o.

*“ To travel broadens one’s outlook,
“ Widens one’s views,
“ Increases one’s power of perception.”*

ILLUSTRATED TRAVEL TALKS.

(As good as a Cinema with a “ Talkie ”—the traveller-- behind it.)

THE REAL THING
of Exceptional Educational Value and Entertainment
for Boys’ and Girls’ Schools.

“ MY MARCH FROM INDIA TO ENGLAND 1933 ”
through
Twelve Countries of Asia and Europe,
(Baluchistan to London) 5324 miles.

SUBJECT
(I)

“ A TREK THROUGH THE HEART OF THE HIMALAYAS 1929 ”
through
Glorious Kashmir, Ladakh (Middle Tibet) and the
Kangra Orchard Valley (Rawal Pindi to Simla) ... 900 miles.

SUBJECT
(II)

“ TREKKING THE PILGRIM ROUTE THROUGH A WORLD OF
WONDER 1932 ”
reaching
The sources of the Majestic Ganges and Jumna Rivers
where the Hindoo Shrines nestle at the foot of the
peaks of the Mighty Himalayas (Jumnotree-Gungo-
tree-Kiddernath-Badrinath and the “Five Prayags”) 633 miles.

SUBJECT
(III)

DURATION FOR EACH LECTURE—ONE HOUR.

HIGHEST REFERENCES AND CREDENTIALS FROM THE
INDIAN EMPIRE.

(For credentials— see within.)

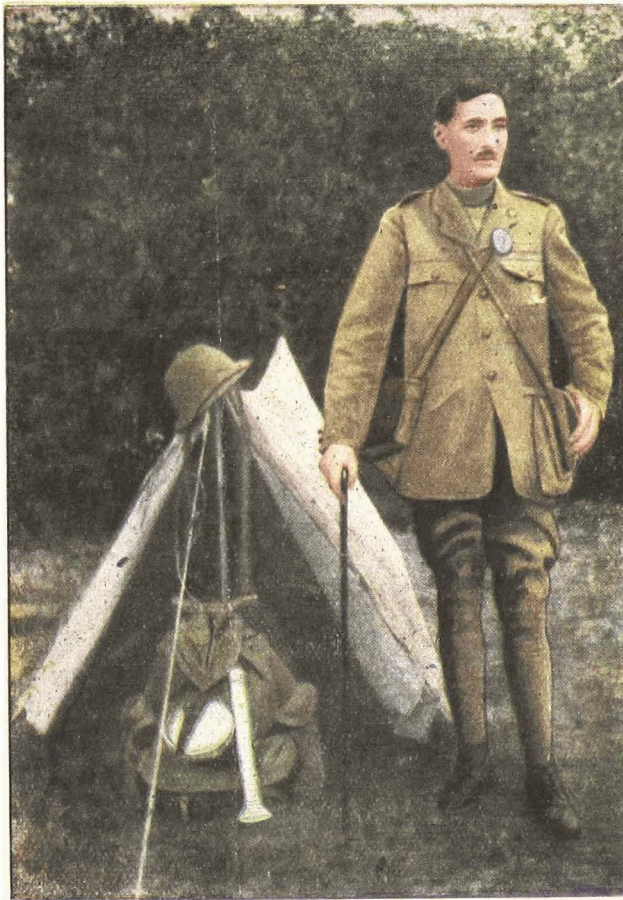
*The Traveller presents his compliments and credentials and offers his services for
the customary Honorarium for each lecture.*

**ORIGINAL TESTIMONIALS ALWAYS ACCOMPANY THE
TRAVELLER FOR VERIFICATION.**

“MY MARCH FROM INDIA TO ENGLAND—1933”

(For credentials—see page opposite.)

On this march, I carried with me the written good wishes of His Excellency the Viceroy of India—Lord Willingdom, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India—Field-Marshal Sir Philip Chetewood, and a letter of introduction from His Excellency the Governor of the United Provinces (India)—Sir Malcolm Hailey, to the British Consulates of the Continents of Asia and Europe requesting them “to render their good services, when necessary”.



The Traveller in the uniform in which he marched from India to England 1933.

*For Traveller's autograph see page 4 (bottom).

APPRECIATIONS FROM THE EMPIRE OF INDIA.

St. Patrick's
High School,
Asansol
(Bengal),
INDIA.
4th March
1934.

“ Last evening at the School Assembly Hall, I listened to a most interesting lecture by Mr. M. H. Chalmers on “ HIS MARCH FROM INDIA TO “ ENGLAND.” To illustrate his description of town and country Mr. Chalmers “ used lantern slides made from snaps actually taken *en route*.

“ The most interesting lecturer finds it difficult to keep up the interest of young “ people, but Mr. Chalmers was able to keep the attention of 400 boys and girls for “ over 2 hours.

“ The lecture was not only interesting but of considerable educational value “ being the observations of an eye-witness and being supported by very clear “ lantern slides it was felt to be very different from a geography lesson based on “ the inevitable text-book.

“ I congratulate Mr. Chalmers on his wonderful feat as well as on the great success he has attained as a lecturer.”

(Sd.) J. E. McCANN,
Principal.

“ Mr. M. H. Chalmers delivered two travel lectures to the students of this “ School, on the 25th and 26th February 1936.

“ Mr. Chalmers' lectures were excellently illustrated by slides taken by himself “ during his extensive travels in Asia and Europe. He is an amusing and fluent “ lecturer and his talks were much appreciated by the students and staff.

“ I feel confident that these travel talks would prove interesting and amusing “ to boys in English Schools.”

(Sd.) W. BROWN,
M. A., (Honours) Dublin University,
Colonel (Late Indian Army),
Principal.

Col. Brown's
Cambridge
School,
Dehra Dun
(U. P.),
INDIA.
2nd March
1936.

“ Mr. Chalmers has just delivered a delightful and most instructive lecture on “ his journey on foot from India to England.

“ The rapt attention of the children was sufficient proof of their keen interest “ and appreciation.

“ We hope to have the pleasure of hearing Mr. Chalmers and of seeing his “ instructive pictures of another of his journeys one day soon.

“ I strongly recommend other Institutions to avail themselves of the opportunity “ of treating their scholars to a most instructive and interesting Geography lesson.”

(Sd.) M. STEPHINE. I.B.M.V.,
Principal.

St. Mary's
Convent,
Cawnpore
(U. P.),
INDIA.
31st October
1936.

B-4

SUBJECT
(II)

**TREKKING THROUGH THE HEART OF THE HIMALAYAS
THROUGH KASHMIR, LADAKH (Middle Tibet.)**

(For credentials—see page opposite.) 44



The Traveller in the Tibetan National dress of a Buddhist (Red Sect.).

M. H. Chalmers
Walking Tour
"India - England - 1933"

PUBLIC OPINION FROM THE INDIAN EMPIRE.

“ Mr. M. H. Chalmers, Transportation Officer, Indian State Railways, at the special invitation of this Society, delivered a lecture on “ A WALKING TOUR FROM RAWAL PINDI TO SIMLA VIA KASHMIR AND LADAKH (Middle Tibet) on Monday the 9th February, 1934.

“ The lecture was profusely illustrated by interesting lantern slides and was highly appreciated by Members and Visitors present. The description of his travels was so vivid and his enthusiasm so great that the audience seemed to live in the scenes of his adventure.

“ The Society thanks Mr. Chalmers for having kindly consented to deliver the lecture under its auspices.—”

(Sd.) K. K. SEN GUPTA,

Vice President.

The Calcutta
Geographical
Society,
Calcutta,
(Bengal)
INDIA.
21st April
1934.

“ Mr. M. H. Chalmers delivered two most interesting and instructive lectures to my students, and the boys heard him with rapt attention. He is a fine lecturer with a sense of subtle humour and his lectures, illustrated as they are with beautiful magic lantern slides, are most suitable for the boys of any school in the world.”

(Sd.) J. P. MUKERJEE,

M.Sc., L. T.,

Principal.

Government
High School,
Cawnpore
(U. P.),
INDIA.
2nd Nov.
1936.

“ If there is one thing more than another that struck me as particularly noteworthy about the Illustrated Travel Talk of Mr. Chalmers, it was the ease with which he was able to attract the attention and maintain to the end the interest of the boys no less than that of the grown-ups who were privileged to hear him on Friday last.”

“ He led us with the help of pictures taken by himself “ THROUGH THE HEART OF THE HIMALAYAS BY WAY OF RAWALPINDI, KASHMIR, LADAKH (Middle Tibet) AND THE KANGRA ORCHARD VALLEY” in his journey from Rawal Pindi to Simla. Mr. Chalmers is a keen and careful observer, and this, added to his courage and enthusiasm, has enabled him to get the best out of his travels through tracts and roads and passes whose lonely and perilous condition might well have daunted a less determined soul.

“ The majestic beauties of the Himalaya heights, the gorgeous scenes through which he passed and which beggar description, the unspeakably filthy condition and incredible poverty of the people inhabiting these altitudes, their simplicity and exploitation of the Buddhist Monks of the various Monasteries situated in the most elevated positions of the Himalaya Ranges—all these and other most interesting facts were brought before our mental vision by one who possesses in a marked degree the gift of public speaking.

“ This journey on foot is an achievement of which Mr. Chalmers may well be proud: and his Travel Talk was so vivid and interesting that it is no exaggeration to say that he has in him the making of a very competent lecturer in Geography.”

(Sd.) N. CELESTINE, O. C.


Principal.

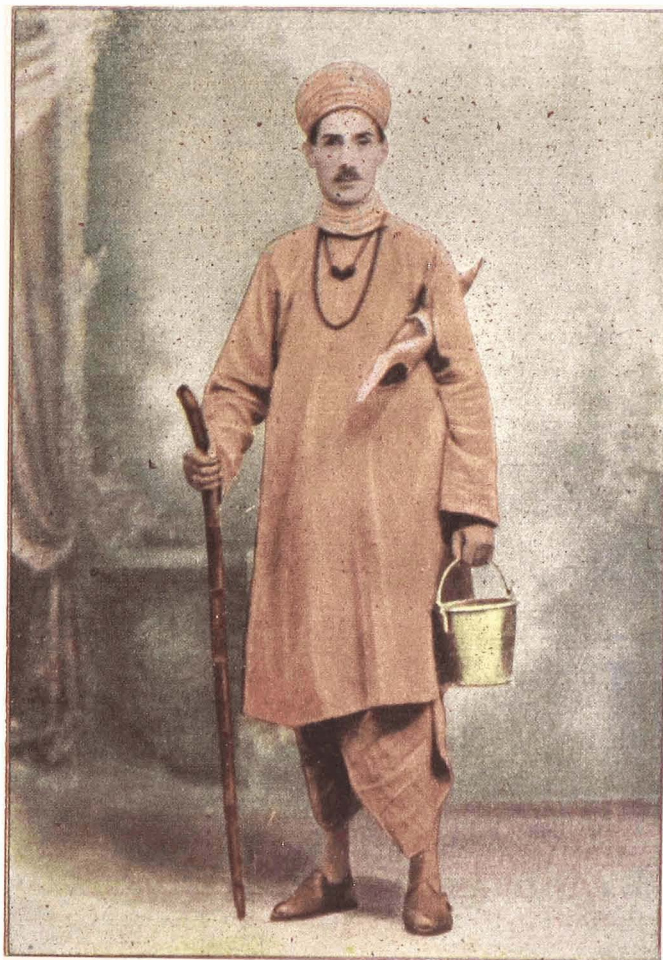
St. Francis'
College,
Lucknow
(U. P.),
INDIA.
10th Jan.
1936.

B-6

**SUBJECT
(II).**

**TREKKING TO THE SOURCES OF THE GANGES AND JUMNA RIVERS
WHERE LIE THE SACRED HINDOO SHRINES IN THE
GARHWAL HIMALAYAN REGIONS.**

(For credentials—see page opposite.) 



The Traveller in the robes of a SADHU (Hindu Priest).

PUBLIC OPINION FROM THE INDIAN EMPIRE.

“ Mr. M. H. Chalmers’ brilliant lecture on “ HIS TREK TO THE SACRED SHRINES OF UTTRAKHAND (GARHWAL REGIONS) ” delivered at St. Patrick’s High School to the children of St. Patrick’s, St. Vincent’s and the Loretto Convent on the 17th July 1935 was an unqualified success.

St. Patrick’s
High School,
Asansol
(Pengal),
INDIA.
23rd July
1935.

“ The Teachers of the three schools were well impressed with the matter in hand and manner of delivery.

“ I congratulate Mr. Chalmers on the success of his enterprise, and also on his graphic description of it which was much appreciated by all who were fortunate in being present.”

(Sd.) J. E. McCANN,
Principal.

“ Mr. M. H. Chalmers delivered two interesting lectures of his renowned tours, illustrated with beautiful slides in the hall of my school. The lectures were interesting and instructive and the Masters and Students were greatly delighted.

Khattri
High School,
Cawnpore
(U. P.),
INDIA.
30th Nov.
1935.

“ The illustrations of beautiful scenes, buildings and life in the Hilly Districts of Mussoorie—Uttrakhand (Garhwal regions) were greatly appreciated and of great educative value.

“ If Geography were to be taught through lantern slides with teachers like Mr. Chalmers, it would indeed be very interesting. Mr. Chalmers is a fine personality, and the account of his adventures are very valuable.”

(Sd.) A. MEHRA, M. A.,
Head Master.

“ Mr. M. H. Chalmers delivered a series of lectures illustrated with lantern slides to the staff and students of this school on his notable achievements in trekking. A large number of parents also attended. In his third lecture he dealt with the Northern Himalayan shrines of Uttrakhand (Garhwal Region) comprising Jumnotree—Gungotree—Kiddernath—Badrinath and the Five Prayags. The lectures and slides were informative as well as interesting, the more so because of the pleasing frankness of Mr. Chalmers who possesses also the happy gift of adapting his remarks to the understanding of his young audience.”

Harcourt
Butler
High School,
Simla
(Punjab),
INDIA.
14th May
1935.

(Sd.) KAMESHWAR NATH,
Secretary.

**MAHATMA GANDHI IN HIS POSTCARD, DATED CAMP—28th May 1934
WROTE AS UNDER TO THE TRAVELLER.—**

Dear Friend, Your illustrated pamphlet dealing with your trek through Uttrakhand is certainly entertaining. I envy you your good luck in being able to pass through those Holy Places.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI.

NOTE.—The pamphlet referred to above deals with Subject (III) of my trek to the Hindoo Shrines in the Himalayas which I published and dedicated to “ THE NOBILITY OF INDIAN WOMANHOOD ”.

(FOR APPRECIATIONS FROM EUROPE & GREAT BRITAIN—see reverse.)

**PUBLIC OPINION FROM THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE AND GREAT
BRITAIN (a few of many).**

During my march from India to England in 1933, I was invited to speak generally on the social, religious and economical life of the people of India without the aid of pictures. The subjoined are extracts from the original writings from various people in my book titled "THE DIARY OF A TRAMP—INDIA—ENGLAND—1933".

English
High School,
ISTAMBUL
(TURKEY).
29th April
1933.

"To listen to Mr. Chalmers is to feel that one is learning something that is not the result of preconceived ideas, propaganda or self-satisfaction, but some thing that he has experienced personally."

(Sd.) L. H. PEACH,
Principal.

American
College,
SOFIA
(Bulgaria).
5th May
1933.

"Mr. Chalmers spent the night in the College and spoke to the Students in their Assembly—All were delighted with him. He is a good talker, a pleasant companion and a good marcher. He will be welcome if he comes this way again."

(Sd) FLOYD BLACK,
Principal.

American
Grade
School,
SOFIA
(Bulgaria).
11th May
1933.

"The children of the American Grade School had the unusual pleasure of hearing Mr. Chalmers. They drank in every word and I am sure they will be talking about this interesting man for a long time to come."

(Sd.) ALMA S. WOODRUFF,
Principal,
SOFIA (Bulgaria).

University
of Budapest,
(Hungary).
27th May
1933.

"We were all extremely interested and found Mr. Chalmers' talk most instructive. We wish him good luck and God Speed for an undertaking which demands a whole man."

(Sd.) ARTHUR YARLAND,
Professor in English Literature.

Bruges.
(BELGIUM)
28th June
1933.

"At Bruges on the 28th June, a traveller decked with all the National Flags of practically all Nations in his helmet, and denoting the Countries through which he trekked in his march from India to England met us, almost like an irresponsible heretic in appearance and after a very enjoyable talk—most stimulating in many ways—he stalked on his way - full of the "beans" that represent British pluck and endurance. Good luck and fine fellow."

(Sd.) J. V. DAVIES.

STOUR-
BRIDGE
CONSER-
VATIVE
ASSOCIA-
TION
BIRMING-
HAM
(England).
22nd July
1933.

"Mr. Chalmers gave a most interesting lecture at Hill and KAKEMORE CLUB, BLACKHEATH, BIRMINGHAM when an audience enjoyed fully the relation of his experiences in India and of his travels to England and they wish to record their vast appreciation of his intellectual points and of his methods conveying to his Countrymen his extensive views of Indian Legislature".

(Sd.) W. MUNSLOW,
Chairman.