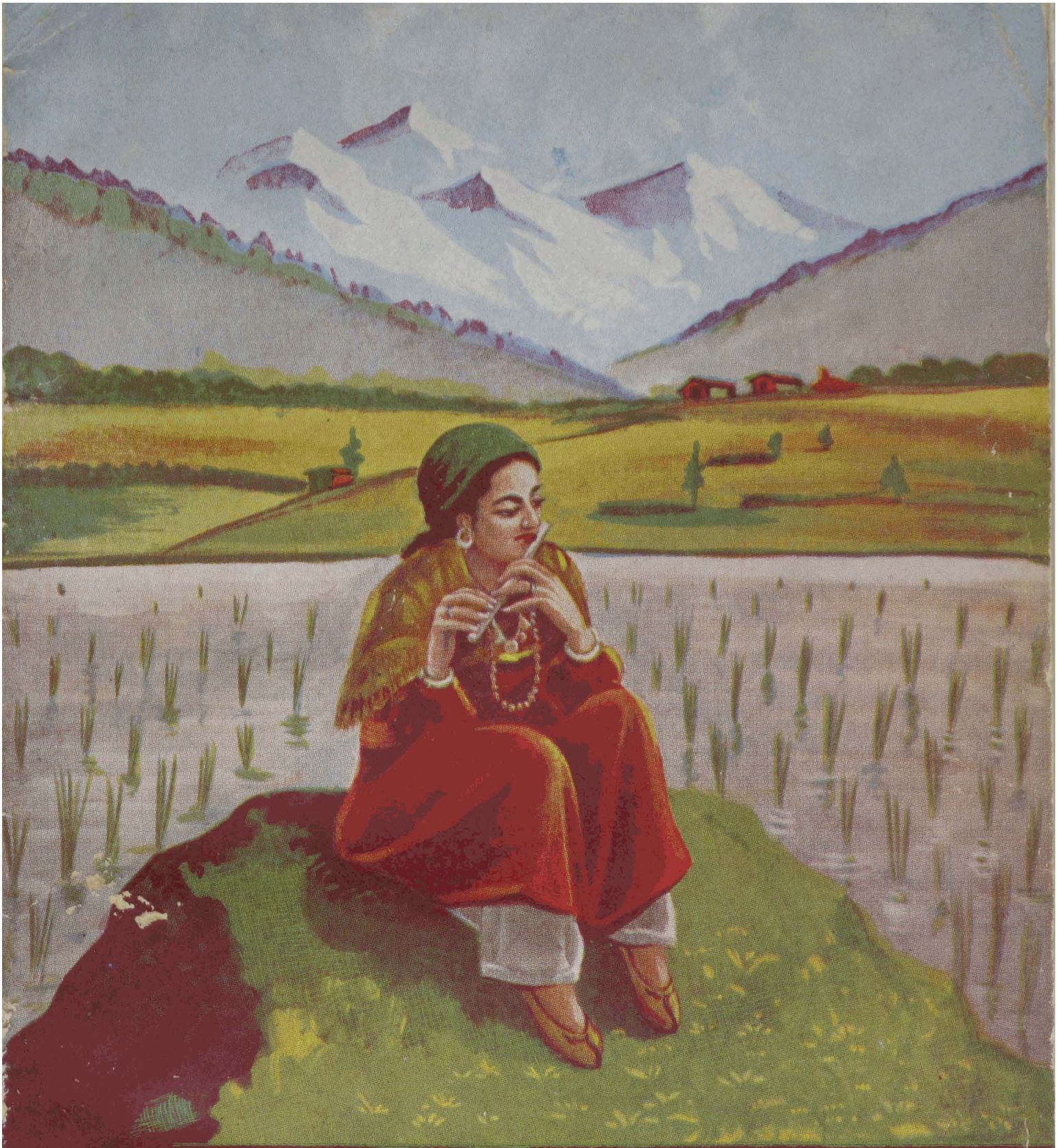

KULU

THE HAPPY VALLEY

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with a Foreword by

JUSTICE G. D. KHOSLA

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TOURIST MAP OF KULU

SUB-DIVISION

SCALE: 4 MILES = 1 INCH

CHAMBA

KASHMIR

SHING-KUN-LA 17,000'

TO LEH VIA KIN LUNG

LAHAUL

TO TRILOKNATH THAROT

JHALMAN

CHANDRA RIVER

LOT

TANDI

KEYLONG 10,400'

BHAGA RIVER

16,000'

PATSEO 12,500'

ZINGZING BAR

BARA LACHHA PASS 16,200'

DARCHA

JISPA 9,500'

DOPKO GOGHA 16,200'

DOPKO YOGMA

GHEPAN PEAK 19,200'

GUNDHLA

SISSU 10,100'

CHANDRA RIVER

CHANDAR TAL LAKE

TIBET

KLAG-LA 18,500'

KIAOMD

PARANGLA PASS 18,300'

KIOTO

LOSAR 13,500'

MARAN PASS 15,000'

KHOKSAR 10,400'

ROHTAG - PASS 13,400'

KUNZUM PASS 15,000'

19,452 SOLANG PEAK

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KARCHAR

CHATRU 14,000'

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BASHASHT

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KIHAR

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KYULING KAZA

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RAISON HOTEL 4,008'

CHANDER 12,000'

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MALANA

MANIKARAN

KULU

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SUTLEJ RIVER

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SPITI

DANKAR JHULA

PIN RIVER

21,550'

MUTH

BHAGIN PASS 9980'

KANON 6400'

KASOL 5,300'

JARI 5,000'

PARBATI RIVER

PULGA 7,300'

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KULU BULI 4,000'

BULIMAHADAR TIBA 8,000'

TO PATHAN KOT

BHUIN 3,700'

3583

BAJAURA

GADSA 4,200'

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BHALAN 8,500'

SAINJ RIVER

SAING 4,000'

SHUPA KUH 18,510'

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SERAJ

TO BILASPUR

MANDI

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BANDAL 5,000'

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TAKRASI 6,000'

SOJA 8,800'

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BASHELO PASS

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10,000 JALORI PASS

SIRAKHAND

6,000

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KICHER

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RAMPUR-BUSHAHAR 3,300'

CHOWAI 8,500'

ANI 4,000'

NIRMOND 5,000'

SHILLA

NIRAT 3,000'

LUHRI 2,600

KOTGARH 6,000'

26 MILES

THANEDHAR 6,600'

NARKANDA

TO SIMLA 39 MILES

8,880'

HIMACHAL PRADESH

LEGEND

1 STATE BOUNDARY	9 POST & TELEGRAPH OFFICE
2 TEHSIL "	10 POST OFFICE
3 RIVERS OR KHADS	11 HISTORICAL TEMPLE
4 MOTORABLE ROADS	12 HOT SPRINGS
5 JEEPABLE "	13 LAKES
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FOREWORD

The need for a suitable guide to Kulu or the valley of gods as it is generally known has long been felt. Books and literature describing the charm of the valley and its attractions as a holiday resort are few and mostly out of print. Not many people even in the Punjab know much about what Kulu has to offer the visitor who is prepared to overcome the initial reluctance to make a long and somewhat fatiguing journey to this Valley of peace and natural beauty. One other thing is responsible for the hesitation which most holiday-makers feel in going to Kulu especially if their holiday is a short one—the lack of a luxury hotel in the Valley.

It is hoped that both these difficulties—of travel and of accommodation—will soon be removed. The main road to Kulu *via* Pathankot, Baijnath and Mandi is being widened and improved. It will shortly be open for fast and two-way traffic. The direct road from Jullundur to Kangra *via* Hoshiarpur and Bharwain has a good motorable surface and saves several miles to the traveller from Delhi and East Punjab. The newly opened Simla-Mandi road is not yet an all-weather route, but it is being rapidly improved. There is prospect of some kind of air service being started. This will make Kulu take its place among week-end holiday resorts as the journey from Delhi will be performed in about ninety minutes. Steps are being taken to provide comfortable living places for tourists. Besides the Government rest-houses available at Kulu, Katrain, Manali and many other places, Forest huts and aluminium houses are being provided at some of the more frequented spots. At Katrain and Manali there are excellent boarding houses where the traveller can stay in comfort if not in luxury.

It is hoped that with an increase in the number of visitors to the valley the problem of accommodation will solve itself. Private enterprise will not hesitate to meet the demand of tourists, but in this matter as in all other matters, supply and demand grow and flourish on reciprocity. We trust that this little book will go some little way towards making known the beauties and wonders of the valley of gods and creating the demand which will in turn foster the growth and development of Kulu as a holdiay resort.

G.D.K.

When Youth Smiles

CHAPTER I

KULU: THE VALLEY OF GODS

THE ABOVE CAPTION might be the title of a novel by a writer of fiction. The Valley of the Gods is, however, a real place, appropriately named in, perhaps, the most beautiful corner of the whole of the Himalayan terrain.

To lots of people in India Kulu is merely a name associated with the excellence of its apples. Throughout northern India and Pakistan, as the scorching summer heat approaches, Simla, Mussoorie, Murree, Dalhousie and, of course, Kashmir, are names, that conjure up visions of coolth and comfort, but Kulu, it mentioned at all, receives scant consideration. Few, even in its own province of the Punjab (India), have more than a vague idea of the locality of the Valley, the type of country it comprises, and how to get there; the general impression being that it is somewhere beyond Dalhousie or Dharmsala; that it is a wild outlandish sort of place, and that the road journey is terribly difficult. In a sense they are right. Geographically the Kulu sub-division is an outlying area of Kangra district, but divided by mountain ranges over which the only direct routs are footpaths crossing high passes. The motor road, the main connecting link between the District and its Sub-division, is a round-about way through Mandi District (Himachal Pradesh). Owing to continued improvement this motor road is gradually losing its reputation for thrills, except, occasionally, during a heavy monsoon when landslips and broken bridges may hinder through running for days or even weeks. Like most hill roads it abounds in sharp turns and hairpin bends; gentle inclines and others less gentle; but to a careful driver who can control the urge to speed it is not difficult. A "jeepable" road from Simla to Kulu *via* Luhri and the Jalori Pass has also been constructed. A landing ground for small aeroplanes, near Bhuntar (the lower end of Kulu valley), is being re-designed and enlarged.

The Kulu sub-division comprises Kulu proper, inner and outer Saraj, Lahoul and Spiti and covers an area of over 6,300 square miles (Kulu and Saraj: 1,934; Lahoul: 2,255 and Spiti: 2,155 square miles).

Historically, Kulu was one of the oldest principalities of the Punjab hills. According to known history it was founded in the first

century of the Christian era. Its legendary history is much more ancient and dates back to the time of the Pandavas when Bhim Sen, one of the Pandava brothers who came to Kulu to annihilate the "demons", ran off with *Devi* Haramba, the ancient and powerful goddess of Manali. The name of Kulu has been identified with Kuluta, the first mention of which is found on a coin inscribed "Rajna Kohitasuya Virayasya" (coin of Virayasa, King of Kuluta). On palaeographical grounds, the inscription on this coin is assigned to the first century A.D.

Up to about the 15th century rulers of Kulu held the surname of Pal; it was then changed to Singh, but the latter claimed direct descent from the original Pal dynasty. The change from Pal to Singh, in connection with which several legends are still extant, was only in accordance with a fashion of the period and had no special significance.

Like most of the surrounding States, Kulu has had many ups and downs of fortune. In the 7th century A.D., according to Hiuen Tsiang, a Chinese traveller, it included a large portion of what is now Mandi and Suket. Later it came under the rule of Chamba. In the 12th century, it was invaded and conquered by Tibetans who were finally driven out by Sidh Singh who reigned from 1500 to his death about 1532.

Kulu reached the height of its power and territorial circumference during the reign of Man Singh from 1688 to 1719. He overran a large part of Mandi; annexed Bara and Chhota Bangahal; made Spiti a tributary State; and fixed the northern boundary of his own State between Lahaul and Ladakh, probably at or near Lingti where it still remains. Under his kingship Kulu embraced an area of about 10,000 square miles. In succeeding periods Kulu came under the influence of both Gurkhas and Sikhs and finally, in 1846, it was ceded to the British together with other trans-Sutlej States.

Bajaura, at the lower end of the valley, is the first village beyond the Mandi State boundary. Nine miles further along is Sultanpur (usually known as Kulu) the principal town and it is here, adjacent to the Dak-bungalow, that the first concrete evidence of the gods of Kulu can be seen; the *rath* of Raghunathji, the principal god of the whole Valley. This *rath* is a kind of carriage, roughly constructed of wood and mounted on a number of clumsy wooden wheels. It is used twice a year, during the festivals of Dussehra and Basant for which it is cleaned, renovated, ornamented with curtains and bedecked with garlands, as becomes the dignity of its occupant. For the remainder of the year the *rath* stands, lonely and unprotected from the elements, on the open *maidan.*

Strange to relate, Raghunathji is not a local god, but was brought from Oudh nearly three centuries ago during the reign of Raja Jagat Singh who, when Raghunathji was brought to his capital, formally conveyed the whole of his realm to the god by placing the image on the *gaddi*. Henceforth the Rajas of Kulu regarded themselves as only the vice-regents of Raghunath, and as ruling in his name.

Other famous gods in Kulu, some of which bear a resemblance to the gods of ancient Greek mythology, are *devi* Hirma (or Haramba) of Manali, an aboriginal deity: *deota* Jamlu of Malana, a nature deity; *devi* Phugni, who is all important in the Dhugi Lag area and Sarvarri valley; *deotas* Dhumal Nag of Halan (Baragarh); Bijli Mahadeva and Kali Nag of Shirrar. In outer Saraj *devi* Ambika of Nirmand and Shamshar Mahadeva of Ani are pre-eminent; while inner Saraj boasts several outstanding divinities in Sharingi Rishi of Chehni; *devi* Gara Durga of Goshaini; Pandir of Sainja and Jogni Bajhari of the Jalori range. In Rupi Narad Muni, Darbasa Rishi and Adi Brahma are famous. In Lahaul Ghopan of Sissu wields much influence.

As related elsewhere, Malana is so difficult of access that comparatively few outsiders visit this glen to attend *melas* at the headquarters of the mighty Jamlu, but festivals dedicated to other important deities in Kulu and Saraj invariably attract a big gathering of local inhabitants and visitors. Most big festivals, like that of Raghunathji, are held annually, but certain special fairs including the *kaika* ceremony at Shirrar and the *Bhunda* ceremony at Nirmand are at longer intervals, the latter being held every twelve years. Raghunathji's festival at Dussehra, which usually goes on for a whole week, is the largest of the annual gatherings, being attended by many of the *deotas* of Kulu proper and of Saraj; but their attendance is not now compulsory as it used to be in the old days under the rule of the Rajas.

On the opening day of the Dussehra festival, every road and path leading to the large *maidan* at Dhalpur, where the fair is held, is alive with gaily-dressed men, women and children; jostling, good-humoured crowds anxious to make the most of this annual *tamasha*. Visiting *deotas*, accompanied by pujaris, chelas, carriers, standard-bearers, bandsmen and followers make a brave show as they wend their way toward the rendezvous , while the Valley resounds to the shrill sounds of music produced from varied and weird instruments. Trumpets of brass, copper and silver; horns, straight and curved, with bell-shaped ends; drums and drum-sticks of sundry shapes and sizes; cymbals and pipes; all played with wild abandon as, without any restraining influence of bandmaster or conductor, individual

Image of a Kulu God

performers and combined bands strive to outvie the efforts of rival bandsmen attached to other *deotas*. On the opening day Raghunath-ji, his chariot drawn by eager and enthusiastic votaries, is taken to the habitation prepared for him on the *maidan* for the period of the fair and from which he returns on the final day. On these short journeys he is escorted by other gods, their bands and followers, and the noise and confusion attending these tumultuous processions provide some of the 'high-lights' of the festival.

In the main Kulu and Saraj valleys and the lesser valleys which diverge from them between three and four hundred villages are dominated by their respective gods. Practically every fair-sized village has its own particular *devi* or *deota* and it is these village godlings which provide the local population with the real outlet for their occasional religious fervour. The big gods are all very well for special occasions like Dussehra and other important festivals, but the little gods, in a sense, share the everyday life of the village to which they belong. They own land, property and rights in the same or even bigger proportions than the villagers themselves. Unlike Jamlu and other nature deities these village godlings have a visible sign of their existence in the shape of masks wrought in silver or other precious metals. On ceremonial occasions these masks—the number may vary in accordance with the wealth of the community—are attached in a sloping position on a *rath*—a kind of sedan chair with extending poles front and rear—which is carried on the shoulders of temple attendants. An upright wooden staff is fixed to the *rath* on the top of which are attached coloured silken skirts or draperies which, when the god is in position, hang down by the sides of the mask-like faces and adorn the images with a profusion of finery. When not in ceremonial use these masks are usually kept in a treasure house attached to the village temple.

Though not conforming to any precise standard of design and construction, temples of the local deities are well-built structures of wood, or of stone liberally bonded with deodar. They are usually found in the vicinity of the village green, but may occasionally be found on a hill-top or in a secluded grove some distance from the village. Pillars and other woodwork in front of the temple are frequently decorated with carving, but interiors are bare and unfurnished. In addition to the actual temple the out-buildings may comprise a kitchen for use on feast days; a granary for storing grain rents; a treasure house; a room or verandah for musicians and their instruments; and a room or shed for the shelter of sadhus. A house nearby or in the village is usually provided for the pujari. Some of the temple attendants are allowed land, rent free, in lieu of payment for their services.

Although many village *deotas* attend Kulu during the Dussehra fair to pay homage to Raghunathji, each village has at least one fair

a year at which the local deity is worshipped in his or her own environment. At these village 'melas' the people of the village to which the *deota* belongs, as well as other nearby villagers, dressed in their best and decked out with flowers, jewellery and ornaments, turn out in full force to do homage to their own particular godling. Social intercourse between village and village is amply provided during summer months by an almost continuous succession of such 'melas.' The village *deota* can, if necessary, be invoked on other occasions. To secure this privilege, however, it is necessary to feast the god's attendants and musicians. Also, occasionally, he is taken out for an airing or to visit another *deota* in a neighbouring village, and sometimes to the hot springs at Bashisht or Manikarn. On such occasions he is paraded with due solemnity, accompanied by his attendants and musicians and all men of the village who can conveniently leave their farming or domestic occupations. This means practically all the male population as, with the exception of ploughing and harrowing, women do most of the work in both fields and homes. The outing usually ends with a feast and jollification.

The inhabitants of each village look towards their own *deota* for help in time of trouble or want. Incidentally the *deotas* may become liable to punishment, especially during prolonged periods of drought when, after due propitiation, they remain refractory and hard-hearted. One method of chastisement is to incarcerate them for a night in the gloomy interior of the Dhungri temple at Manali until they become more responsive to their urgent intercession.

CHAPTER II

THE MAIN ROAD TO KULU

TWO MAIN LINES—one from Jullundur *via* Mukerian and one from Amritsar *via* Batala and Gurdaspur—converge at Pathankote, which is the broad-gauge rail terminus for Kulu. From Delhi, the former route is the shortest. Good food and comfortable accommodation are available at Pathankote railway station.

Beyond Pathankote, alternative methods of travel are available:

(*a*) *Kangra Valley Railway.* A narrow-gauge line to Jogindernagar; then by bus or station-wagon taxi to Kulu;
(for train timings see Northern Railway time-table)

(*b*) *Through bus service to Kulu:* This through-service leaves Pathankote at 5 A.M. and is timed to reach Kulu (Sultanpur) at 6–15 P.M. (subject to seasonal alterations).

Travellers continuing the journey by rail must change into the small train which runs up the Kangra Valley to Jogindernagar, the present rail head. Between Pathankote and Jogindernagar, the Kangra Valley Railway, in its gradual ascent of several thousand feet, traverses some beautiful country and, if the journey is made during daylight hours, affords a continuous and interesting panorama of natural scenery. A comfortable dak-bungalow is located at Jogindernagar.

Two motor transport companies operate over the Pathankote-Kulu and Jogindernagar-Kulu direct routes; the Himachal State Transport and the Kulu Valley Transport Ltd. These road transport companies have booking offices at Pathankote, Baijnath, Jogindernagar, Mandi and Kulu.

Pathankote to Kulu, by the motor road, is 176 miles; Jogindernagar to Kulu about 78 miles. The through journey from Pathankote, according to present bus timings, occupies 13¼ hours which, in these days of rapid road transport savours of dawdling, but frequent stoppages, one-way traffic over part of the route with consequent halts at crossing stations, and the winding nature of the narrow motor road, all retard any tendency to speed. Under existing conditions

Every year before the onset of winter, the *gaddis* drive their flocks of sheep to the lower regions to save them from the rigours of cold.

one-way traffic commences at Mandi on the upward journey and the crossing stations are at Mandi and Aut. The barriers at each of these places are manned by police and are only opened for motor traffic at specified hours. Despite the number of short halts *en-route* it is not always an easy matter to arrange for regular meals, and, to be on the safe side or in case of accidental wayside stoppages and late running, it is expedient to carry a tiffen basket or box containing food and drink sufficient for the journey. The most likely places for obtaining food on both upward and downward journeys are at Palampur, Baijnath, Jogindernagar and Mandi.

The main towns between Pathankote and Kulu are Nurpur, Shahpur, Palampur, Baijnath, Jogindernagar and Mandi. With the exception of Nurpur (13 miles from Pathankote) dak-bungalows are located at each of these places. Nurpur received its present name during the reign of Emperor Jehangir; it was originally called Dhameri. The historic fort, ruins of which still form a conspicuous landmark, was built by Raja Basu and restored by several later rulers. Leaving Nurpur the altitude gradually increases and after passing Shahpur the valley opens out and affords some magnificient views of the snow-capped Dhaula-Dhar range. Dharmsala, the official headquarters of Kangra District, built on the lower slopes of this range, lies seven or eight miles to the left of the motor road and Kangra, the ancient capital, three miles to the right. A few miles beyond Nagrota and extending to the slopes above Baijnath, the motor road is frequently bordered by tea gardens which, in recent years, have been resuscitated and extended to meet the increased demands for this commodity.

The bazar at Palampur is a thriving centre of miscellaneous trade and its main street usually thronged by a motley assortment of people: Kangra *gaddis* (shepherds) in their distinctive rope-girdled duffle kilts and cone-shaped caps of the same material; *paharis* from surrounding villages; and Punjabi plainsmen. Post and Telegraph office, tehsil, police station, veterinary hospital, agricultural centre, schools, dak-bungalow and P.W.D. rest-house are all within easy distance of the motor road. Above and beyond the bazar, in a peaceful pine-studded setting, is the Canadian Mission compound and adjacent church. The Mission has done much good work in the Kangra District and comprises, among other activities, schools, hostels, *Zenana* hospital and leper home, as well as the teaching of handicrafts. The Palampur church, which was severely damaged in the 1905 earthquake, lay derelict for many years until rebuilt and renovated by the Mission. The adjoining churchyard contains some interesting and locally historical tomb-stones.

Baijnath-Paprola and Baijnath are nine and ten miles respectively beyond Palampur. The Baijnath dak-bungalow is situated

on a wind-swept mound just off the main road and is within easy distance of a beautiful old temple of more than local importance. Built in 1204 A.D., as shown by inscription slabs in the porch, this temple is one of the few buildings in the locality which remained undamaged by the earthquake, and is well worth a visit by travellers interested in archaeology. Leaving Baijnath the road ascends for nearly three miles and, on the crest of the hill, at Ghatta, crosses the Mandi district (Himachal Pradesh) border.

Jogindernagar, the next town of importance, came into existence with the construction of the Government Hydro-Electric scheme. The dak-bungalow is above the motor road, at the lower end of the bazaar, and is clean, comfortable and well equipped. Nearly a mile beyond the bazaar, below the main road, are the generating station, workshops, offices, bungalows and staff-quarters of the Hydro-Electric undertaking in a neat and well-laid out settlement. Energy is derived from the waters of the river Uhl, at the opposite side of the range, where a large reservoir has been built. Water is conducted, by means of a pressure tunnel, through the mountain and later, by large penstock pipes, in a drop of 1800 feet, to drive the generating plant in the power house. A haulage way for transporting supplies to and from the headworks at Brot crosses the range and, far up on the side of the mountain winch camps, from which haulage trucks are controlled, can be seen.

From Jogindernagar the road ascends steeply, passing Harabagh and Guma, to Ghatasni, the highest point (nearly 6,000 feet) on the way to Kulu. It then descends in a series of curves to Urla and continues its ever-winding course past Drang towards Mandi town. A few miles beyond Drang the first glimpse of the Beas is obtained and the road gradually descends to almost river level. At the entrance to Mandi town the river is crossed by way of the Victoria suspension bridge beyond which a well-kept thoroughfare leads to the Chauta Bazaar and Post-office—a usual halting place for incoming and outgoing buses—near which is located, at the corner of the Square, a petrol storage tank and filling station. The Damdama Palace, which dates back to 1625 A.D., faces out over the Square. Almost adjoining the Damdama is the *Nia Mahal*, parts of which are now utilized as a Secretariat and provide office accommodation for a number of important officials. The centre of the Square comprises a large masonry tank, built in the reign of Raja Sidh Sen, who ruled Mandi for forty-one years and is said to have lived for a hundred years. Of giant-like stature, he is reputed to have been a valiant warrior and to have added large slices of adjacent territory to his own kingdom. According to the "History of the Punjab Hill States" by Drs. Hutchison and Vogel, it was during the reign of Sidh Sen that Prithi Pal, Raja of Bangahal—who is said to have intrigued with the Raja of Suket against Mandi—was murdered:

"His body was burned, but his head was buried in front of the (Damdama) Palace on the spot now marked by a pillar in the middle of the tank, on which a light is kept burning day and night."

In place of this pillar an impressive temple-like edifice, in typical Mandi architecture, and surmounted by a clock tower, has been constructed, and adds considerably to the appearance of the old tank which, in recent years, has been repaired, and renovated.

After leaving the Square the road to Kulu turns sharp left and crosses the Suketi, a tributary of the Beas. Above the Suketi bridge, in an enclosed plot of land on the left bank of the stream, are the memorial pillars of the Mandi Rajas and their families. These stone pillars, locally known as *barselas*, contain inscriptions which record, from 1637 A.D. down to a recent period, the dates of the death of each Raja and of the accession of his successor. Some of the pillars are over six feet high and are covered with figures representing the successive Rajas and of their women who became *sati* with them.

The combined dak-bungalow and rest-house at Mandi is delightfully situated on a hillock overlooking the quaint old town and almost immediately above a large *maidan* which, under the Raja's regime, served as a parade ground for troops but now affords a commodious play and sports ground for the youth of the capital. It is advisable to inform the *khansamah*, of the dak-bungalow in advance, if rooms and food are required and for what number of persons. The altitude at Mandi is under 2,500 feet so it can be fairly warm during the summer. But the nights, generally, are pleasant, especially if sleeping out on the broad *verandahs* of the dak-bungalow.

For tourists with a day to spare the holy lake at Riwalsar is worth a visit. By bridle path Riwalsar is about 12 miles from Mandi town but the distance by motor road is 21 miles. Natural phenomena of floating islands, on which the spirits of saints are believed to reside, provide a magnetic attraction to the people of several races. Hindus, Buddhists and Sikhs regard Riwalsar with deep veneration and the lake is visited annually by many thousands of pilgrims from upper India. Hindus look upon Riwalsar as the abode of Lomasa Rishi; the Buddhist connection is through Padma Sambhava; while Sikhs revere it for the sake of Guru Nanak. Temple, Gonpa, and Gurdwara have been erected by their respective communities. Among Buddhists, Mandi is known as Zahor and it was from Zahor, about the eighth century A.D., that Padma Sambhava, a zealous teacher and missionary, left for Tibet to preach the doctrine of

'The Enlightened'. Buddhists from Lahaul, Ladakh, Spiti and Tibet make special pilgrimage to this sacred shrine during the month of *Phagun* (February-March).

Between Mandi and Pandoh, a distance of 13 miles, the road winds in and out of many small ravines and, at the latter place, recrosses the Beas. Pandoh is a favourable centre for masheer fishing and many good fish have been taken from above and below the suspension bridge which carries the road across the river. A tributary of the Beas joins the main river just above the bridge and holds numerous smaller masheer which afford good sport on light tackle. To the right of the motor road and just above it is a commodious and comfortable P.W.D. rest-house which forms a convenient headquarters for fishing in this locality. Permission to occupy the rest-house should be obtained from the Sub-Divisional Officer, P.W.D., Kulu. In addition to Pandoh, good masheer fishing is available in the Suketi river at Mandi and in the Beas above Mandi town. Permits for fishing in these waters should be obtained from the Mandi authorities.

Towering cliffs, rising almost perpendicular from the bed of the Beas, flank both sides of the gorge between Pandoh and Aut. Blasted through solid overhanging rock, jutting out over built-up galleries; carved across slipping, shale-strewn hillside, the motor road follows the course of the river but at varying heights above it. During summer, when rain and melting snow convert numerous tiny mountain streams into torrents, all converging on the parent river, the narrow boundaries of this rocky gorge confine a tremendous volume of water which, viewed from the road high up and almost leaning over the tumultuous and heaving flood, affords an impressive and awe-inspiring spectacle.

Owing to the narrowness of the road through the Mandi gorge, Aut forms the principal crossing station for up and down traffic and a short halt is usually necessitated. It can be tolerably pleasant on fine days, but at other periods is a cheerless uninteresting spot, subject to cold penetrating breezes from both mountain and river, and where a warm wrap or pullover will frequently be appreciated. From Aut the gorge gradually widens and its rocky margins merge into sloping hillside and terraced fields, while the road, no longer constricted to a confined space occasionally loses proximity with the river. Nearing Bajaura, nine miles beyond Aut, the Mandi boundary is crossed and the road enters Kulu territory. Bajaura is a straggling village comprising wayside shops, a Post office, and a Civil rest-house. A further nine miles, passing through the villages of Bhuntar and Shamsi, the ascent of several steepish slopes, and the road bisects a picturesque, deodar-fringed *maidan* with the Kulu Hospital, Tahsil and other Government offices on the right and several

residences, including Civil and Forest rest-houses and the dak-bungalow on the left.

After leaving the *maidan* the motor road crosses the Sarvari river and runs through the narrow Sarvari bazar down to Akhara, the main trading centre of Kulu. Sultanpur, the original name of this capital of the Sub-division, is located on a plateau between and overlooking the Beas and Sarvari rivers. To the left of the motor road and leading up to this plateau, an old-fashioned bazaar lines both sides of a flagged stairway at the head of which, a little way from the bazaar, is the residence of the Rai of Rupi—a descendent of the original rulers of Kulu.

From Kulu (Sultanpur) to the head of the Valley is about 24 miles. Six miles out of Kulu, high up on the left of the road, are the extensive Bundrole orchards. Further along are Aramgarh, Raison and Dobhi estates. Then comes Katrain, the centre and widest part of the Valley. Towering above Katrain, on the opposite bank of the river, is Naggar. A few miles beyond Katrain the road assumes a steeper incline and rises sharply as it nears Manali, at which point motor transport terminates. From Manali an important pack-transport route carries on over the Rohtang and Baralacha Passes to Lahaul, Ladakh, Zangskar, Tibat and other remote countries in central Asia.

SIMLA MANDI ROAD

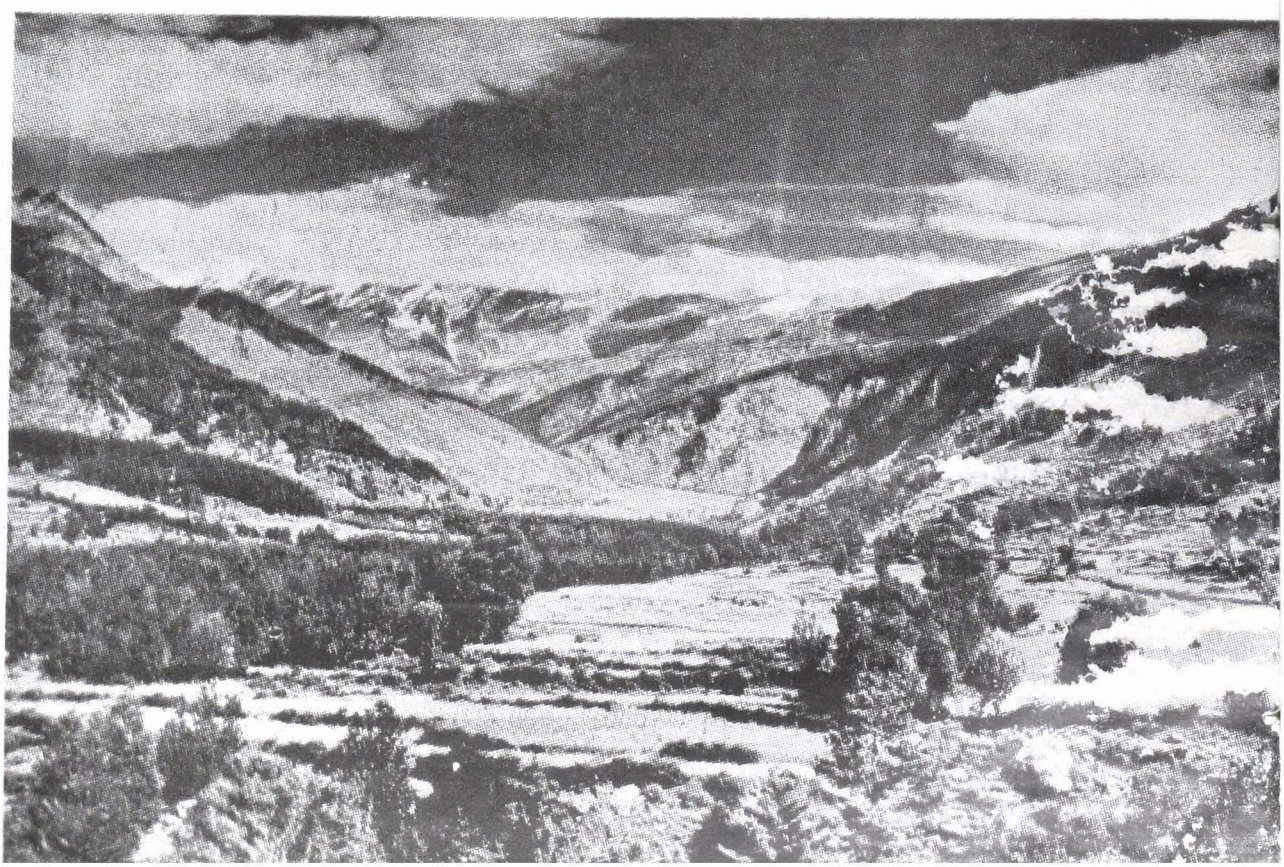
The Simla Mandi road leads to Kulu *via* Bilaspur and Mandi. The distance from Simla to Mandi along the newly constructed road is 101 miles.

The journey from Simla to Mandi can be made by jeep or by station wagon all the way. If a jeep is available, the journey can be performed within 6 hours. Regular buses of Himachal Government Transport also ply on this route.

Except during the rainy season the road is motorable throughout the year. For the facility of travellers, Rest-houses exist at Namol (42 miles from Simla), Bilaspur (56 miles), Dahar (73 miles), Sundernagar (85 miles) and at Mandi. All the Rest-houses are furnished and crockery, cutlery and cooking utensils are available. Chowkidar-cum-cook are also provided in all these Rest-houses.

On the way to Mandi, Dhami, the capital of the old Dhami State is three miles away from the main Road. The road to Dhami bifurcates from mile 16th from Simla. Further on, a road bifurcates towards the left from miles 23rd which leads to Arki, five miles from the main road.

Near the Rohtang Pass.



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CHAPTER III

KULU TO SIMLA

A "JEEPABLE" ROAD between Aut (Kulu-Mandi motor road) and Luhri (Simla hills) has been constructed. This amenity has undoubtedly appreciated by travellers to whom time is too precious to waste on walking or riding when more rapid motor transport is available. But to such as can afford the time the route between Aut and Luhri—in either direction—still affords scope for a delightful trek. The road traverses a tract of land between the Beas and Sutlej rivers crossing, in its track, the Jalori range which forms the watershed for these river basins. It offers a wonderful variety of scenery and, at certain seasons of the year, possibilities of sport—fishing in the spring and summer; small game shooting during winter months. Comfortable rest-houses are located at convenient distances *en route*. To many, the real joy of trekking lies in the knowledge that they are outside the realm of motor traffic. Their aversion in this regard is not likely—not in the near future at all events—to be greatly disturbed by excessive motor traffic over this road, the peace and solitude of which provide one of the main joys of trekking in this area.

Mules or pack ponies together with any riding ponies required should be arranged for beforehand and should be in readiness at Banjar for loading and moving off. The morning bus service from Kulu is timed to reach Aut about 9 A.M. and the evening service about 4–30 P.M. Travellers by the morning service can reach Banjar, 15 miles away, the same day, but the summer heat at this low altitude can be trying on a mid-day trek. If time is no object the evening service will probably prove more comfortable. Aut to Larji, where the first rest-house on the Simla road is located, is a little over two miles and this short stretch is a pleasant evening walk. On the following morning an early start can be made from Larji and the march to Banjar completed in comparative coolness and comfort.

At Aut the road to Simla turns left, down towards the Beas river, which is spanned by a suspension bridge. For a mile or more it

runs parallel with the motor road on the opposite bank, then turns left towards Larji. Nearing Larji another bridge carries it over the lower end of the Sainj river; it then turns sharp right, through the village, to the Civil Rest House which is pleasantly located above the junction of the Sainj and Tirthan rivers. Potatoes, atta and other local commodities are usually available in the small bazaar. There is nothing of any particular interest at Larji itself, but during the months of March, April and October, while the Sainj river is running clear, some good fly fishing is obtainable, especially two or three miles upstream.

From Larji to Banjar the road is wide and well-kept. It ascends nearly two thousand feet in the twelve-mile march and, for most of the way, runs alongside the river Tirthan. The first five miles are in Kulu territory; it then crosses to the left bank and for six miles runs through part of Mandi (Himachal). Near Manglaur, eight miles upstream, the road again crosses to the right bank and so continues to below Banjar where it returns to the left bank before ascending the hill to the P.W.D. Rest house. Scenery along the route is not particularly impressive. The hills look bare—mostly grassland interspersed here and there with rocky slopes and projections—but tiny hamlets occupy many sheltered nooks high above the road, their small terraced fields perilously carved from the steep hillsides.

The Banjar mountain, near the foot of which the village of that name nestles, dominates the lower end of the Tirthan valley. At certain seasons of the year, especially in a fading afternoon light, the mountain appears to be enveloped in a haze of blue which tends to soften all harsh outline and to etherealize distinctive landmarks, one of which is a group of temple buildings on the breast of the hill above Banjar village. [Many years ago, when the boundary line of Kulu and Mandi was under delimitation, a locally famous image was transferred from Manglaur, a village close to the boundary to its present resting place in the temple at village Chehni above Banjar.] The P.W.D. Rest-house is a substantial and commodious bungalow, well away from Banjar town—a glorified village which prides itself as being the capital of Saraj and a sub-tehsil of the Kulu Sub-division. Local food products are available in the bazaar.

Except for occasional muddy spates caused by sudden heavy rainfall the Tirthan is usually clear enough for fly fishing throughout the season, and good sport with rod and line can be obtained at many places where the stream runs adjacent to the road, especially between the fourth and ninth miles and also just below the bridge at Banjar.

Banjar to Shoja is eight miles and Shoja to Khanag seven miles. Shoja is situated at an altitude of 8,800 feet on the Kulu side of the

Jalori Pass and Khanag at 8,300 feet on the opposite side. If an early start is made these two stages can be accomplished in a day, but here again, if time is no object, it is worth while spending a night at each place. (An alternative even to the latter itinerary can, if conformable with inclination , be followed. At Jibhi, five miles beyond Banjar, is a beautifully situated Forest Rest-house and a day's halt in its pleasant surroundings can be one of the joys of this trek. Permission to occupy the Jibhi Rest-house may be obtained from the Divisional Forest Officer, Saraj Division, Kulu). The march from Banjar to Shoja involves an ascent of nearly 4,000 feet in nine miles. About half-a-mile from the Rest-house the road runs along the main street of Banjar village where a piped water supply, with tap standards set at regular intervals, provides a labour-saving amenity which might, with advantage, be emulated by many other villages in the Sub-division. The Veterinary Hospital and the Civil Dispensary are on the outskirts of the village and after passing their usually well-kept and tidy compounds the road winds upward towards patches of woodland, but early-morning freshness makes light of the gradually increasing gradient. The little Jibhi stream, a tributary of the Tirthan, flows alongside parts of the road and its clear sparkling water, rippling over submerged stones and tumbling down the hill in miniature cascades, adds zest to the first part of the day's march. After five miles, a wide open glade near Jibhi provides a verdant setting for a short halt and some refreshment on the upward journey. The road is good throughout, but in places the soft saturated earth of the hillsides is inclined to slip and probably creates a certain amount of trouble during the rainy season.

Shoja village is passed on the way up to the Civil Rest-house. More noticeable here than perhaps elsewhere in Saraj is the peculiar style of architecture of many of the older houses. The upper story of these old-fashioned dwellings appears to be merely an openwork frame; so designed for the storage of hay during winter months. The Rest-house at Shoja is a comfortable bungalow and is located in a setting of marvellous scenic surroundings. During the appropriate season excellent small-game shooting is available within easy distance of Shoja. Actually, from Jibhi to the crest of the Jalori Pass and on the wooded slopes of the Khanag side, monal, kalij and other species of pheasant are fairly plentiful.

Shoja to the top of the pass is not a difficult ascent. Steep, but a good rideable road bordered, in early summer by occasional clumps of purple iris and other flowers. In sheltered ravines near the head of the pass, even in July, shallow snow drifts may still be in evidence. North, towards Kulu and Lahaul, several far-flung snow-crowned ranges, visible beyond the intervening trees, afford frequent excuse for looking backward. There may be other distractions, however, not so pleasant! Sometimes below and

sometimes above Shoja, usually between eight and ten thousand feet, a cleggish type of horsefly can be very troublesome during the months of May and June. Not only are they intensely irritating to riding and pack animals, but they also attack riders and pedestrians, especially the unprotected skin surface between shorts and stockings. A drop of iodine on the bite is a soothing palliative.

If time is no consideration, it is worthwhile to halt at Shoja for a day and go to Raghupur Gahr and Dugha Thach (a grassy blank). Raghupur Gahr is an old historic fort which now lies in ruin. From this height of about 11,000 ft. the panorama is even more striking than at Jalori pass and with a favourable sun, the glass-panes in Simla can clearly be seen reflecting the sun. At night lights of Simla are also visible. During the months of August and September Dugha Thach is full of a multitude of beautiful flowers, with which the gardens of not even the richest man could compete in grace and beauty.

Irrespective of any desire for a rest after the rather stiff climb, the view from the top of this 10,000 ft. Pass is ample justification (on a fine day) for half-an-hour's halt. North, south, east and west —bounding the horizon in almost every direction—are mountains and more mountains of varying degrees of altitude, appearance and formation; pine-covered slopes and ridges, bleak and precipitous rocky heights, remote inaccessible peaks wrapped in eternal snow.

After the ascent of the Shoja side of the Jalori Pass and a surfeit of mountain scenery from its open crest, the winding, tree-sheltered path downhill affords a pleasant change. Seemingly a short distance beyond the Sutlej, on the opposite mountain, Narkanda can sometimes be seen through gaps in the forest greenery. Khanag, the next halting place, is not so charmingly situated as Shoja on the Kulu side of the Pass. A lonesome bungalow, apparently in beautiful surroundings is some distance from the village which lies, almost hidden, in the forest below. But it is a comfortable refuge after a double stage from Banjar. Supplies, even local produce, are seldom available either at Shoja or Khanag. Above the rest house, 2½ miles away, is a beautiful lake on the top of a hillock. A bridle road leads to Takrasi and Paneo; two beauty spots in the area and provided with decent forest Rest-houses.

The next stage, Khanag to Ani, is barely ten miles and with the exception of about half-a-mile before reaching Ani is downhill most of the way, a descent of over 4,000 feet. The first three miles are rather steep but the remainder is easy going and a pleasant walk, chiefly through open forest on the upper slopes, but merging on to unshaded gravel lower down. During early summer an enjoyable feature of this part of the journey is provided by the variety of gaily

New type hof houses—Manali

plumaged birds flitting in and out of trees which border the roadside. Even the Rest-house compound at Ani is a play-ground for the silver-tailed paradise flycatcher and its cinnamon-coloured mate, the golden oriole, crested hoopoe, bulbul, and other less ornamental species of the feathered tribes, whose antics on lawn, hedge and tree, interspersed with occasional bursts of melodious trilling, afford pleasureable entertainment to tired travellers, lounging at ease on the Rest-house verandah. Tall, compact cypress and branchy eucalyptus trees create a picturesque setting for this comfortable and well-furnished bungalow.

Years ago the Salvation Army owned a big estate at Ani on which endeavour was made to develop a fruit-growing industry. It was chiefly planted out with citrus trees. There was little local demand for this type of fruit however and, as the cost of transport to the nearest rail head was prohibitive, the scheme was eventually abandoned. The estate is now in the possession of the Rai of Shangari. Milk, eggs, fowls, potatoes, atta, and sometimes fresh vegetables, are available in the local bazaar.

Ani to Luhri, a small village adjacent to the bridge over the Sutlej is a longer walk of twelve miles. The first part of the journey, in the early morning, can be very pleasant, but as the sun moves upward in a clear sky and the traveller downward in altitude, the atmosphere is apt to become increasingly tepid. The Ani stream, which rises on the Jalori range, flows down the valley and joins the Sutlej. For several miles the road is aligned high above the river and, in places, the sheer drop from roadside to river bed inclines travellers marching towards Luhri to keep to the left of the road. The last mile or two down to the Sutlej is rough and not infrequently subject to landslides.

The Ani river holds a lot of small mahsheer but the difficulty of getting down the cliffside to likely-looking pools, then clambering back to the road, makes fishing scarcely worth while. Near its junction with the Sutlej, bigger fish are found and the path to the river is not quite so formidable. Despite the uncomfortable heat at the foot of the valley an hour or two with rod and line, especially on a good fishing day, is a pleasant break, and is likely to provide a welcome addition to ordinary "trek fare."

Nearing the junction of the rivers the road to Luhri turns left and for the remaining four miles is along the right bank of the Sutlej—a bigger and more turbulent river than the Beas in Kulu. The close proximity of the rushing snow-fed torrent and occasional patches of shade afforded by wayside trees help to mitigate the heat at this altitude, but the suspension bridge at Luhri is usually a welcome sign of the end of a long walk. Not quite the end! After crossing the bridge the road winds up to the dak-bungalow, about three hundred feet above the river and tiny village.

There is nothing prepossessing about Luhri and the dak-bungalow is probably the least comfortable of all the staging bungalows *en route* to Simla. After the exhilarating freshness of pine-scented heights on the Jalori and the comfort of cypress-shaded Ani, the viscid heat and general discomfort of Luhri are, in contrast, apt to be considerably enhanced. The sullen roar of the swollen river is continuous and there is little pleasureable attraction in its swirling volumes of dirty-grey water. Towards evening a cool breeze usually counteracts the oppressive atmosphere and later, especially under a full moon,the river's daylight turbidity is completely transformed. Dinner on the verandah and beds out in the open tend towards a comfortable night.

"Does the road wind uphill all the way?
Yes, to the very end." (*Christina Rosetti*)!

Apt question and answer for the trek from Luhri to Narkanda, an ascent of nearly 7,000 feet . Little regret need be entertained in making a very early start from the depressive, fly-stricken environment of Luhri and if servants and pack pony attendants can be induced to co-operate, the march should commence at daybreak. Chota hazri by lamplight; sandwiches or biscuits and a flask of tea for the road; loading of pack ponies and departure from the bungalow compound as the stars are fading, are conditions which make for comfort on this particular stage of the journey.

For the first few miles the road is a succession of zig-zags across the breast of the mountain above Luhri at the end of which, after rounding a bend, a short level stretch creates a deceptive feeling of relief that the toughest part of the climb is over. A small cluster of houses and a roadside temple, with some intricate carving above the doorway, marks the commencement of a second series of zig-zags which lead onward and upward to Kumarsen, the old capital of the small State of that name. The Raja's palace is an imposing building surmounted by large domes at each end, and with a Mongolian-like structure in the middle. In the vicinity of the palace are some well-built compact looking bungalows and a State Rest-house. (There is a "short cut" up through Kumarsen which is supposed to reduce the distance by well over a mile, but it is not to be recommended, especially on the upward journey). Above Kumarsen, on rather a steep section of the road, the small village of Ghumana is passed and beyond which pungent pinewood shade affords welcome relief from long stretches of bare sun-drenched hillside. In the vicinity of the 8,000 foot altitude horse-flies again cause considerable annoyance to man and beast. In place of the zig-zag road formation of the lower slopes the upper section winds around hillocks and outlying buttresses till, eventually, it emerges from the forest into the Narkanda bazaar above which, on an eminence overlooking the village, is the commodious and comfortable

A street scene in Kulu

Rest-house—the end of a long wearisome climb. There is also a motor-road between Luhri and Narkanda (26 miles).

At an altitude of about 9,000 feet Narkanda is a seemingly prosperous village with well-stocked bazaar and is an important junction on the Hindustan-Tibet Road which, from this point, runs north-east towards Nirth, Rampur-Bashahr, Wangtu Bridge and Chini. Kotgarh, with its quaint little church, lies along the route. Famed through the medium of Kipling's "Kim" for the mission school at which the 'Woman of Shamlegh' received her Christian education and made music on a 'pianno' it is plainly visible across the valley. In recent years Kotgarh has become famous for its orchard produce, apples especially, which find a voracious market in Simla, fifty miles away.

Regular bus services now ply between Narkanda and Simla, but to those who desire to continue the trek over the remaining 40 miles a brief description of the route is added.

Narkanda to Mathiana is eleven miles and a descent in altitude of a thousand feet. After the steep ups and downs and varied conditions of road surfaces between Aut and Narkanda, to step out on to a wide and carefully-tended road, well adapted for motor traffic, is a decided contrast, but whether the change is agreeable or otherwise depends entirely upon individual preference.

Between Narkanda and Simla, the contour of the hills along which the road is laid is entirely different to that previously traversed. The zig-zags and hairpin bends of the Jalori Pass and steep ascent to Narkanda are succeeded by long half-moon curves across deep ravines where the actual distance to visible landmarks on a further stretch of road is fantastically deceptive. Four or five miles out from Narkanda, sloping up from the roadside, is the Kandiali orchard estate where cherries, apples, pears and other fruits are grown. Years ago, a notice at the entrance to this orchard advertising, in early summer, "Fresh Ripe Cherries" usually provided a worthwhile excuse for a short halt and a satisfying snack of this succulent fruit. The Dak-bungalow at Matiana is comfortable and although some good views are obtainable across the valley, the surroundings are not so interesting as at Narkanda.

Theog, the next stage, is eleven miles away, with a difference in altitude of only 300 feet. A few miles of the road are through fairly dense pine forest the shade and scent of which on sunny summer days is more than welcome. Similar to the route between Narkanda and Matiana intervening ravines, into which the road curves deeply, are apt to create deceptive mileage distances. From one or two points on this stage Wildflower Hall and Mashobra can be seen.

Phagoo is only six miles beyond Theog and at the same altitude. So after a few hours' rest and a meal at Theog the journey can, without

much discomfort to trekker or hardship to pack animals, be continued. The first few furlongs are tree-shaded but for the remainder of the journey the road is flanked by acres and acres of potato fields—a favourite form of cultivation in this district—the produce of which is readily marketed throughout northern India.

The last stage, Phagoo to Simla, is twelve miles. From Phagoo to Kufri the road is fairly level. It then descends, through Kufri bazaar, to another level stretch which ends at "Wildflower Hall", at one time a residence of the late Lord Kitchener when he was Commander-in-Chief in India. From this point it drops right down into Simla, passing to the left of Mashobra and Naldera and through the tunnel at Sanjauli. The remainder of the route is so well-known that further description would be superfluous.

An alternative and longer route from Banjar to Narkanda *via* Bashleo pass and Rampur is also available. Although the first convenient stage on this bridle road for those who start from Banjar would be Bathad, a distance of 11 miles, those who take this route are recommended that instead of Banjar they should make their first halt at Bandal, which is five miles from Banjar. Here a neat and cosy Forest Rest-house is tucked away on a hill side and is fitted with all conveniences including a small library of books and old periodicals. For those interested in fishing and shooting, this is an ideal spot, as trout is available easily in the clear pool at Goshaini about a mile from the Rest-house and where Tirthan river is met by Plachan Khad, and game is plentiful in the surrounding forests. From Bandal to Bathad is a gentle climb, but from there onwards to Bashleo pass there is a back-breaking climb of 5,000 ft. in 5 miles. The altitude of Bashleo pass is 10,750 ft. From the pass there is a steep descent to Sarahan, a distance of 3 miles. The Civil Rest-house at Sarahan has a beautiful situation on the crest of a hill bordering on a long and narrow *Maidan* on one side of which passes the road with tall stately Poplar trees. The Maidan could be used with advantage for winter sports such as Ice-skating. For those interested in mountaineering and shooting of game of Thar and Ghoral, it is recommended that they should follow Sarahan-Tharla-Smatan bridle road. With a base at Smatan or Dima-Jan, where forest wood-cabins exist conveniently, shooting camps in Girchi forests and Danda forests could be arranged with advantage. For mountaineering, climbing of 17,182 ft. Sirikand Mahadev peak has great possibilities. This peak has not only a mythological background and religious sentiments attached with it being a one time abode of 'Shiva Jee', but also affords on clear day a beautiful view of the panorama. On its way there is a lovely lake of Nainsar at about 15,000' hedged with peaks of perpetual snow. From Sarahan to Arsu, is a pleasant walk of 8 miles. At Arsu there is a small P.W.D. Rest-house situated some 100 yards above the main road. Arsu to Rampur Bushahr is another 8 miles, from where bus service direct for Simla is available.

The Caretaker relaxes

CHAPTER IV

FROM KULU *via* THE BHUBU PASS

THE MANDI-KULU MOTOR road was opened to traffic about 1926. Prior to its construction, the main roads into Kulu were by way of the Bhubu and Dulchi Passes. During summer the route mainly used lay over the Bhubu; it was the shortest; but when the Bhubu became snowbound, as it usually did in winter, the Dulchi carried all the traffic. The Mandi (Himachal Pradesh) end of the path over the Bhubu commences from Ghatasni (between Joginder-nagar and Urla) where it branches off from the motor road.

The route from Kulu to Jogindernagar, *via* the Bhubu Pass, is divided into the following stages: Kulu (Sultanpur) to Karaon, 8 miles; Karaon to Sil Bhadwani, 12 miles; Sil Bhadwani to Jhatingri, 12 miles; Jhatingri to Jogindernagar, 11 miles.

Karaon is in the Kulu Sub-division and a permit for the occupation of the Karaon Rest-house should be obtained from the Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu. Necessary permits for rest-houses and dak-bungalows in Mandi should be obtained from the Himachal Pradesh offices in Mandi city. With the exception of chowkidars no servants or sweepers are available. The spacious Rest-house at Jhatingri and the smaller Rest-houses at Bhadwani and Karaon are not frequented by travellers to the same extent as they were when the Bhubu route was the principal highway to and from Kulu, and it is advisable, to give at least seven days' notice when applying for an occupation permit. Jogindernagar is near the motor road and a permit is not necessary for casual occupation of this up-to-date bungalow. A post-card in advance, addressed to the khan-samah in charge will, however, facilitate preparations for reception and ensure comfortable service in regard to the supply of food and baths.

If it is desired to end the trek at Ghatasni, the junction of the Pass route and the motor road, instead of at Jogindernagar, seats should be reserved in advance (from Mandi city) on one of the down bus services.

Kulu to Karaon, the first stage, is a short but fascinating up-ward march through beautiful scenery. Leaving the Dak-bungalow

the road crosses the upper end of the Kulu *maidan*, passes the Government High School and Post Office, and winds along the hillside on the right bank of the Sarvarri river. The lower end of the Sarvarri valley is comparatively open and heavily cultivated; rice lands on the lower levels where water is available; wheat, maize and various other crops on steep, tiered hillsides. For the first two miles, the path is wide enough for a small motor car; it then crosses a tiny tributary of the Sarvarri and assumes a steeper gradient. Short cuts, at still steeper inclines, frequently branch off and these well-worn paths—in comparison with the apparently neglected and overgrown appearance of the main road—give a fair indication of local preference for direct point-to-point, and the elimination of any superfluous mileage. On the hillside opposite the road is the compact and prosperous looking village of Dughi Lag where, set amid the dull greys and browns of ordinary Kulu architecture, a large white-washed house dominates its immediate surroundings and forms a conspicuous landmark on this shelf of the mountain.

At the fourth mile the road crosses the chief tributary of the Sarvarri, a stream which drains the Dughi Lag valley and is almost as large as the parent river; it then ascends sharply to a small plateau where built-up mounds of stone with flat surfaces provide comfortable seating accommodation and an ideal spot for a short halt, rest and refreshment. Still clinging to the right bank of the river the path meanders in and out of forest glades in which chestnut and walnut predominate ; small ravines and other sheltered spots, both above and below, afford frequent and fascinating glimpses of colourful plant life, especially in the autumn when crimson, scarlet and a variety of browns, buffs and yellows run riot over the hillsides. Nearing Karaon the road rises well above the bed of the river and overlooks a series of watermills, necessary adjuncts of every Kulu village where sufficient water is available for driving the old-fashioned millstones. The Rest-house, at the eighth mile, is at an altitude of 6,400 feet and from its wide verandah, especially at sunrise and sunset in clear weather, some grand views are obtainable of the whole mountain range at the head of the Sarvarri valley. Firewood, milk, eggs, fowls, and potatoes can occasionally be purchased, but prices of such commodities have risen, in recent years, to almost profiteering proportions.

From Karaon to the top of the pass is a steady and fairly steep ascent of $4\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Sections of the lower portion of the road are somewhat rough and stony, but it is rideable the whole distance. After leaving Karaon the path winds and angles in easy gradients through masses of lush vegetation to which the sun seldom penetrates; banks and bowers of fern, varying in size and shades of green from delicate and feathery light maiden-hair to the coarser and darker fronds of thick-set bracken, create fairy-like woodland glades which

add considerably to the enjoyment of this upward march. Of the larger forest flora walnut and chestnut are still mainly in evidence, but these gradually merge into open pine forest which continues to within a furlong of the crest. Muleteers and pack transporters over this route seldom diverge from the main road when halting for the night and the litter of their camps—stale grass, animal droppings, blackened stones used for the support of cooking utensils, chunks of half-burnt firewood and even hard-driven tethering pegs—are left to cumber the highway and are found at all sheltered spots, especially near running water or wayside springs. Standing trees, with burnt-out hollow trunks, are also recurring features on the Kulu side of the mountain. Nearing the head of the pass the ravine narrows and the pine-needle strewn zig-zags become shorter and more acute. Looking back across the valley, the Parbatti *aiguilles* and more distant lofty peaks are occasionally glimpsed through a break in the timber line.

Other well-known passes like the Hamta Chandra Khanni and Jalori have fairly wide, open summits, but the crest of the Bhubu is merely a gap between perpendicular rocks, with little more space than is necessary for the passage of a laden-pack animal. The rocky floor, which forms the road, is worn almost smooth by countless feet that have trod this narrow path. Towards Kulu town the view is restricted, a vista of tree tops and bare hillside, but further down the valley and beyond the lower hills on the opposite side of the Beas, ranges of snowy pinnacles reach toward the sky and close the horizon. On most days, a cold breeze blows up the ravine and travellers, generally, are not inclined to linger for any length of time on the shady side of the summit. On the Mandi side of the gap, probably erected by superstitious travellers to propitiate the god of the mountain, a mound of stones has been set up on which numerous remnants of cloth and paper prayer flags flutter in the breeze. These sacred flags, many of which portray the figure of a white horse, are printed in the monasteries of Lahaul and Ladakh and are deemed, by the Buddhist population of these countries, particularly efficacious in warding off evil.

The view from the Mandi side is entirely different to that overlooking Kulu. Beyond the boulder-strewn foreground of the Bhubu mountain, fold on fold of low, scrub-covered hills, many of them cultivated to their rounded summits, create a pleasing pastoral effect in comparison with the giant timber and more rugged landscape just left behind. A small river, which has its source near the head of the Pass, a minute trickle at its starting point, gradually increases in size with the addition of feeder streams from numerous ravines and , on a sunny day, is a winding, silver streak dwindling to a point in the far distance. The Forest Rest-house at Bhadwani is clearly visible and appears to be only a few short miles away. In a straight line it may be, but the intervening road is anything but straight

or smooth. For about 3½ miles it zig-zags abruptly down the steep and stony side of the mountain, where occasional belts of sparse woodland, chiefly oak, chestnut, sycamore and rhododendron, provide welcome respite from the glare of the sun. Intersecting the zig-zags and in an almost straight line up and down, is the dak-runners' path of the old days when, despite arduous climbs, inclement weather and rough roads, the dak to Kulu was carried and delivered at its destination much more punctually and regularly than it is under the present system of motor transport. Exactly a mile below the crest of the pass, in a shady nook by the roadside, is a spring of refreshingly cold, clear water; a favourite resting place of local pedestrians, most of whom still use the dak-runners' path. Towards the foot of the mountain the road slightly improves and is not so steeply graded as the upper section. The remaining few miles to Bhadwani can be rather wearisome, after the exertion of ascending and descending the pass, especially on a bright sunny day. The path cuts deep into intervening ravines and winds round steep buttresses before the bungalow finally comes into line of vision across the last bend and at the head of an upward slope.

Situated on a grassy mound above the level of the road, the Sil Bhadwani Rest-house is an attractive halting place; an ideal retreat for lovers of lonely places and seekers after absolute quiet. Almost flush with the road, a row of empty stables, apparently unused in recent years, give an indication of the traffic that, in pre-motor days, leisurely traversed this fascinating road.

The Bubhu end of the Rest-house compound affords the best view-point for scenic effect. Looking backward over the day's march, the pine-crowned ridge of the Bhubu mountain stands out in relief, the pass a narrow cleft in the rocky wall. In the immediate foreground a jumble of small hills, some wooded, others bare, provide homely touches of intimate charm.

Winding in and out of gentle glens luxuriant with variegated foliage, and crossing forest-clad slopes of ever-changing loveliness, the road to Jhatingri is a pleasant and fairly easy stage. Immediately after leaving Sil Bhadwani the first five miles are along a comparatively level stretch of winding hillside; the next three downhill to the river Uhl; the remaining four from the Uhl to the top of the hill on which the bungalow is located. The outstanding feature of the first part of the journey is the illusive nature of the road. Narrow ravines, across which a continuation of the road can be seen seemingly a short distance away create a false impression of distance. The actual path dips deep into the hillside before crossing to the opposite side of the ravine and the point which appeared so close at hand may, in actual road distance, be a mile or more away. Gnarled, stunted

oak, rhododendron and other varieties of evergreen trees and shrubs line both sides of the path. In open spaces, below the level of the road, varying scenes of rural repose and leisurely action greet the eye: occasional little farmsteads, their roofs adorned with golden corn-cobs, green tobacoo leaf, or orange-coloured marrows and pumpkins in accordance with the respective seasons for such produce; a flock of sheep grazing on the hillside or following the steps or calls of an easy-going shepherd seeking greater profusion of pasture; big clumsy buffaloes lazily meandering along the main road or diverging footpaths.

With the exception of several minor diversions where landslide or flood has swept away bits of the original highway, the road is good. Built under a shady *peepul* tree by the side of the road, a stone platform marks the termination of the level section; from this point the path descends by easy gradients, down to the river Uhl. The upper end affords some pleasing views of Jhatingri hill on the opposite side of the valley. The lower portion of the road, especially the last mile down to the river, is extremely rough and rocky. The Uhl is spanned by a bridge built high above the ordinary water-level and, on a sunny day, few travellers can resist the inclination to indulge in a short halt to watch the fish in a deep shelving pool immediately below. Otter abound in the locality and are occasionlly seen disporting themselves, or hunting for food, in the clear water. During summer the heat at this altitude can be rather oppressive, but by the bank of the river are lots of shady nooks which afford comfortable resting places. With a Mandi fishing license, the rest interval can be combined with a little diversion, but owing to the steepness of both banks, especially above the bridge, several likely trout pools are not easily accessible.

The four-mile climb to Jhatingri is not extremely arduous nor the least interesting stretch of the journey. The first mile is over a rutted, rough and stony path, but it gradually improves and parts of the shadowy forest, higher up, are decidedly attractive. Again the road is deceptive. What appears to the traveller to be the last bend beyond which the bungalow is located is only the outlying buttress of a deep ravine. At the top of the hill the path converges with a wider and more pretentious road which connects Jhatingri with the main motor road at Ghatasni, it then runs through the remnants of a tiny bazaar and crosses a small *maidan* to the bungalow.

The Rest-house at Jhatingri has been enlarged by the addition of a glazed verandah, or rather a series of sun parlours, from which broad stone steps descend to ground level. This gives it a kind of back to front appearance, but constitutes a definite improvement

on the original typical structure. In its picturesque setting near the summit of a forest-clad mountain at a bracing altitude of over 6,000 feet and a motor road to the door, it could, for lovers of the wild, provide a popular week-end resort. With the exception of potatoes and atta, provisions are not easily obtainable, either at Sil Bhadwani or Jhatingri.

About a hundred yards beyond the Dak-bungalow, at a higher elevation, is a summer residence of H. H. the Rajah of Mandi. Built on the crest of the hill it commands marvellous views in every direction, especially on clear autumn evenings when flamboyant sunsets, coppery in the west, clothe the surrounding mountains with diaphanous mantles of rose or gold or orange.

Jhatingri down to the main road at Ghatasni is a short journey of about 2½ miles chiefly through open forest. The original bridle-path has been converted into a motor road—a broad highway after the miles of rock-ribbed and boulder-strewn track previously traversed. Ghatasni, where the main motor road is encountered is on top of a ridge, and from this point to Jogindernagar is downhill most of the way. The road passes through the village of Guma and its one straggling street of little shops. From one or other of these tiny stores most local produce is obtainable.

Half-a-mile further along, above the road, are the Guma salt quarries and towards the foot of the Guma hill is a small *nala* down which, during the monsoon, heavy freshets frequently create damage to the motor road. Beyond the nala the road is comparatively level until it reaches the ridge overlooking Jogindernagar where another long descent begins and where, to the left of the road, a footpath takes off and leads almost straight down the Shanon *nala* to the Hydro-Electric settlement and thence to the village. It is more direct than the main road, but is not recommended as an easier route. The Dak-bungalow, a clean and comfortable halting place, is located on a small hill well above the bazaar. Within easy distance of the plains and connected by a good road, all-the-year pleasant climate, plentiful water supply, electric current and room for expansion, Jogindernagar, or the slope above, might easily be converted into an attractive hill station.

To make a round trip from Kulu, back to Kulu *via* the Dulchi Pass, the route, after Jhatingri, would be through Urla, Drang, Kataula and Bajaura, and instead of turning right towards Jogindernagar from the top of Ghatasni ridge, the traveller could turn left towards Mandi city and drop down to Urla. Jhatingri to Urla, by the main road, is about six miles, but a shorter route cuts across the angle and traverses the hillside, then descends sharply to the motor road about half-a-mile short of Urla village. This path is *not*

rideable, nor could it be described as a particularly easy route, especially the last mile down the side of mountain where it is rough, narrow and steep—more like a goat track than a footpath for pedestrians. It is, however, neither difficult nor dangerous and for trekkers who prefer to avoid main roads, provides a shorter route. The Rest-house at Urla, slightly above the main road, was a recognised staging bungalow in earlier days, but is now seldom used by travellers; it is under the care of a chowkidar and no other servants or sweeper are available. Local produce, milk, eggs, atta, potatoes, salt, etc., can usually be obtained from the small bazaar nearby.

Urla to Drang, by the motor road, is 12 miles,—a pleasant early-morning walk on a fine day—but, being a main road over which regular bus services are available, it scarcely calls for description in this small volume. Trekkers wishing to avoid the motor road can, however, take an alternative route direct from Jhatingri to Drang, *via* the Goghar Dhar. This road, for about a mile, is the same as the short route to Urla but, instead of turning down towards Urla, it continues straight up the forested ridge, through Goghar Dhar, and then descends sharply to Drang. The distance, roughly, is about 14 miles,—six or seven of which are along a good footpath, but the latter half of the journey is not so easy and in several places the path is narrow, uneven, steep and unfit for pack transport, so riding and pack ponies should be sent around by the main road. (The Dulchi route from Drang to Kulu is described in Chapter Five).

A Gaddi woman in her traditional attire.

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CHAPTER V

DRANG TO KULU *via* THE DULCHI PASS

THE DULCHI ROUTE branches off the motor road at Drang, curves over a wide ridge above the salt quarry and drops down to the Uhl river at Kamand Bridge from where it gradually ascends to Kataula and then, at a much steeper angle, crosses the pass and descends to Bajaura at the lower end of Kulu Valley. Another road from Mandi City joins the Drang route at the far side of the first ridge, near where it commences the descent into the Uhl valley.

Travelling towards Mandi the Rest-house at Drang is located on top of a hillock, to the left of and above the motor road, not very far from the Police Station. It is the usual type of two-suite bungalow—two main rooms, dressing rooms and bathrooms. Permits for the occupation of this, as well as the next Rest-house at Kataula, should be obtained from the Forest Department, Mandi City, Himachal Pradesh. Both bungalows are in charge of chowkidars and no sweepers or other servants are available. Atta, potatoes, and other local produce are usually obtainable in the small bazaar at the foot of the hill near the entrance to the Drang salt quarries.

Leaving the Rest-house the road to Kataula swerves slightly left and, at a gentle incline, gradually traverses the hillside, keeping to the left of the quarry. After crossing some bare, grey mounds of sandy refuse it turns half right and winds up the hill at the back of the salt workings. Garden patches of semi-tropical vegetation and a wayside well mark the entrance to the little village of Drang-Nagrota. Evidently of more than passing importance is the *Lachmi Narain* temple, an austere looking building at the foot of the village, round which the life of the little community appears to revolve. In the early morning stillness the resonant, re-echoing clang of the temple gong dominates all other sound in the vicinity. Beyond the village the road again winds gradually towards the top of the ridge and, from occasional vantage points, affords some marvellous views of the quarry workings, almost immediately below, and of the multi-coloured, iridescent cliffs from which the salt is extracted. The distance from Drang to the top of the ridge, by the main Road, is about 3½ miles, but

a footpath of the usual steep variety, which takes off from the foot of the hill near Drang village and goes almost vertically up the ravine, provides an alternative shorter route for the young and energetic.

Three to four miles of fairly level, but winding road, at the top of the ridge provides, perhaps, the most fascinating stretch of the whole journey. A cloudless morning in early spring or late autumn; the exhilarating freshness of bracing mountain air; a panoramic view from above, of the surrounding country as it gradually unfolds around each successive bend of the road, tend vividly towards that "top of the world" feeling. Ahead, in the distance, a cloud of blue smoke, concentrated from numerous wood fires, hangs almost motionless over Mandi town; in the bed of the valley, far below, the softly flowing Beas glitters silver-blue in the morning sunshine; while on every side are hills of all shapes and sizes, their contours so indistinct that it is difficult to say where one leaves off and another begins. The scenic splendour of the Beas valley—its blue river and green banks, forested slopes and bare hillsides, cosy hamlets and lonely farmsteads fades out of the picture as the road swerves left towards the Uhl watershed. For a short distance, the area of vision is more or less restricted to nearby grassy mounds and shallow ravines, where numerous sheep and cattle appear to find sustenance, but even such commonplace features of this high range have a simple beauty of their own. Nearing the further side of the ridge and across a valley to the right, the road from Mandi city threads its upward way along a wooded slope, gradually converging with the road from Drang. They meet on top of the hill almost over-looking the Uhl river and from this point down to Kamand Bridge, which spans the Uhl, is a sharp descent of about 2½ miles. The road continues to be good all the way down to the bridge and is shaded, in places, by patches of sparse woodland. Below the bridge in an open pool—inky deep on one side and shelving to a sandy beach on the other—numerous fish can usually be seen in clear water, but due, perhaps to its remote locality and the difficulty of obtaining supplies, this reach of the Uhl river is seldom visited by anglers. A daily license for fishing can be obtained from the Mandi authorities and during the season—March to October,—the pools above and below the bridge might afford some decent sport with rod and line.

From Kamand Bridge to Kataula the road, generally, follows the line of a tributary of the Uhl; a mild ascent for most of the way. Kataula appears to be a thriving little village and the little Rest-house, now almost deserted by travellers, was at one time a favourite halting place on the way to and from Kulu. The chowkidar will probably be able to produce firewood, if necessary, while atta and potatoes are usually obtainable from village shops.

Kataula to Bajaura is a long march. The official Gazetteer

gives the distance as 16 miles about ten of which, measured and marked, are from the top of the pass down into Bajaura. Roadside milestones do not exist on the Mandi side so perhaps the alleged distance of six miles from Kataula to the head of the pass is mere guess work. Judging from the time it takes to cover this stretch of road by pedestrians and pack ponies it would appear to be nearer eight miles. Leaving Kataula the road ascends very slightly for the first mile or so, but shortly after crossing a small bridge which spans a stream running down from the Dulchi, it branches sharp left and the angle of ascent rapidly becomes more acute. Strangers to the route might easily miss this turning as the path traversed from Kataula misleadingly carries straight on and has every appearance of being the main road. The climb up the pass is comparatively monotonous, especially the lower portion. Views are mainly restricted to the deep ravine up which the road winds and zig-zags and its grass-clothed hillsides provide little variation of scenery. Just as well, perhaps; as this steep, uneven, boulder-strewn path demands concentrated attention of man and beast. Higher up matters improve. The outlook broadens; the angle of ascent is less steep; the road surface becomes more amenable to comfortable travel; while for a mile or more before the summit of the hill is reached, thick patches of dense woodland provide welcome variety from the bare hillsides of the lower slopes. Way-side trees are chiefly oak and rhododendron, interspersed with frequent clumps of fern and other species of undergrowth which afford cover and protection for numerous pheasant, chiefly *kalij*, as well as other game birds. In the appropriate season and with Mandi and Kulu small game licenses, both sides of the Dulchi should afford some very good sport. Near the head of the pass at Kandhi, is a small Rest-house belonging to the Mandi Forest Department. After the type of a range officer's hut in the Kulu Forest Division it is comfortable and convenient for sportsmen shooting in the nearby forests, and also for travellers wishing to break the long journey from Kataula to Bajaura and *vice-versa*. Permits for occupation of the Rest-house at Kandhi should be obtained from the Mandi Forest Department.

A small house on the left of the road, built in the shelter of an adjacent cliff, marks the crest of the Mandi side. The Dulchi ridge is wooded on both sides and the well-trodden path through the wide gap which constitutes the pass, is merely a clearing in the forest. Although the Dulchi is below 7,000 feet, it is frequently, even in summer, quite cold in the gap and, after a hot climb in either direction, a woollen jersey or wrap will prove comforting and afford protection against chills, especially if a wayside halt is made for rest and refreshment. The long march down to Bajaura can be full of interest, especially the first few miles through beautiful open forest. The road is well graded and rideable the whole distance. As on

the Mandi side of the mountain the upper woodland is alive with small game and it is not unusual to see *kalij* pheasant strutting across the path or flying out from roadside coverts and gliding down and across the nala. Like most bridle paths in these mountains the road occasionally curves deep into intervening ravines, or twists around outlying projections, or is cut, in zig-zag fashions, across the hillside, while the usual "short-cuts", made by local pedestrians, take off at every convenient angle. The most favoured of these direct paths on the Bajaura side of the Dulchi is well to the right of the main road, almost straight down the wide deep ravine. It is supposed to reduce the distance by over two miles. Below the forest line the main bridle path is usually dry and dusty, except during the monsoon period when bits of it are occasionally washed away. Probably due to excessive grazing and consequent erosion, the ravine above Bajaura is subject to very heavy floods during the rains. A number of tiny streams which seep down from various parts of the watershed, mere trickles for the greater part of the year, rapidly develop into savage little spates which, uniting in the main bed of the ravine, sweep impetuously towards an outlet on low-lying ground. In their torrential rush down the valley the floods cause a lot of damage and, not inferquently, have carried away that section of the motor road which happens to form a causeway across the path of the torrent. Nearing Bajaura signs are not wanting of the devastation created by such floods: huge water-worn and rounded boulders, piled precariously; uprooted tree trunks, their bare limbs scarred and pitted by contact with rock and stone in the mad downward rush; and the crazy pattern of the grooved and scoured river bed stretching full across the mouth of the wide ravine. The last mile or so towards the Rest-house is a gentle slope, the road only slightly above the bed of the river. On the left is a large orchard and garden, the Garh estate, once the property and winter residence of the late Colonel Rennick. At the lower end of this estate the path from the Dulchi joins the motor road and the Rest-house lies to the right, a little way above the road.

In pre-motor days, when the Dulchi route was one of the main highways into Kulu Valley, Bajaura was a convenient halting stage and the dak bungalow and *serai* essential shelters for travellers and traders. Its importance in that respect is now a thing of the past. The bungalow is reduced to the status of a Rest-house and, except by officials travelling on duty, is seldom occupied, while the once thronged *serai* and camping grounds, centres of bustling activity, are almost deserted. It is, however, a pleasant and peaceful spot, and the bungalow spacious, clean and well-furnished, provides a comfortable haven of rest after the long trek from Kataula. Applications for permission to occupy this Rest-house should be addressed to the Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu.

Kulu Valley is an important fruit growing region in the Punjab

In the nearby village is a post office, and a few shops where items of local produce are obtainable. To anyone interested in archaeology the most important feature of Bajaura is the Basheshar Mahadev temple at Hat, less than half-a-mile, across the fields, from the Rest-house. This pyramidal temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, is probably the oldest shrine in Kulu and is embellished with wonderful carvings in stone, some of which, unfortunately, have been mutilated. In form it is not dissimilar to the famous old temple at Baijnath, but, unlike the latter has no main porch. Both temples withstood the stress and strain of the big 1905 earthquake, although the one at Bajaura had suffered badly in a previous upheaval of which there is no record. The structure, of which the whole of the exterior is richly carved, is only 13 feet square and the walls are so thick that the inner sanctum is reduced to about $8\frac{1}{2}$ by $7\frac{1}{4}$ feet. On each of the four sides of the temple is a shallow porch, or recess, in which are carved images, on slabs, about 5 feet in height. On the north Durga is represented slaying the two Asura kings and an animal-shaped demon; on the south the image of Ganesh, the god of good-luck, with an elephant head, has been broken at the top which slightly detracts from the perfection of this ancient piece of sculpture; the recess on the east, which contains the doorway, has, on the right and left sides, figures representing the rivers Ganges and Jumna; while on the west the image of Vishnu is, perhaps, the best example of this unknown artist's marvellous ability. This temple is now a protected monument.

A little below Bajaura , on the opposite bank of the river and near the junction of the Hurla stream with the Beas, is the site of an ancient capital of Kulu named Makaraha (locally known as Makarsa). According to Mr. G.C.L. Howell, who took a keen interest in the identification of Makaraha:

> "Bahadur Singh (1532–1559 A.D.) and his descendants used to like to live there and to imagine they were descended from the great kings who originally built the town. Unfortunately, some British official, with unpardonable iconoclasm, used most of the beautiful stone carvings of Makaraha to build the bridge over the Beas at Dalasni (a few miles below Bajaura) which was washed away; as well as some other bridges. But enough remains to show that the place was founded by some civilised dynasty which had attained to a very high order of art. It seems probable that one highly-advanced civilisation was responsible for the beautiful carvings of old Makaraha; of Hat, in its immediate neighbourhood near Bajaura; and of Nast, near Jagatsukh."

Bajaura to Kulu along the motor road is nine miles. To the left of the road, through and beyond the village, are the Garh and

other orchards; to the right, low-lying arable land slopes down to the Beas. Between the second and third miles is the thriving village of Bhuntar, preceded, between the road and the river, by a long level stretch of meadow which has served as a landing ground for small aeroplanes. The Duff-Dunbar bridge, which carries traffic to Bhuin and the Parbatti Valley, spans the river at the end of Bhuntar village. Mahul Khad lies three miles beyond Bhuntar where again the motor road and the bridges which span several culverts are frequently subject to damage by flood water from the hills above. Between two and-one-and-a-half miles from Kulu, on clear days, some wonderful views are obtainable of Lahaul mountains, including the Sonepani glacier, almost opposite the Rohtang Pass, and the Gyephang peaks.

CHAPTER VI

SAINJ VALLEY

IN COMPARISON WITH upper Kulu, the Sainj valley provides a different type of scenery and surroundings. The altitude at the mouth of the Sainj is just over 3,000 feet and, during summer, this area can be uncomfortably warm. Rainfall is heavier than in Kulu proper and trees, shrubs and flowers more tropical in nature and appearance.

The little village of Larji, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the main motor road at Aut, is the starting point for a trip up the Sainj. Larji is situated between, and just above , the convergence of the Tirthan and Sainj rivers, a short distance above the point where these combined streams enter the Beas. Permission to occupy the Civil Rest-house, on the outskirts of the village, should be obtained from the Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu. Atta, potatoes, and other local produce are usually available from the nearby bazaar. Above Sainj village, nine miles up the Sainj valley, is a Forest Rest-house and applications for permits for the use of this bungalow as well as others in the Saraj Forest Division should be addressed to the Divisional Forest Officer, Saraj Division, Kulu. Milk, atta, potatoes and other local supplies are easily obtainable in the small bazaar.

The road to Sainj runs along the left bank of the river. It was wrecked by earthquake in 1905 and re-opened in 1918 after extensive repair and partial realignment. For three or four miles above Larji it is mainly adjacent to the river and fairly level, but for the latter half of the journey lies across the breast of the mountain, well above the river, and is frequently flanked by patches of forest which afford welcome shade on sunny days. Though not a particularly good road it is rideable the whole way. During the rainy season the outer edge, at certain places, is inclined to be crumbly; where this is evident—with a sheer drop below the road—riders are advised to keep to the solid side.

At the lower end, shortly after leaving Larji, stretches of green sward are interspersed with patches of semi-tropical vegetation; areca palm, cactus and a variety of other plants and shrubs not found in upper Kulu, border the road. These gradually give place to eroded hillside—channelled and ridged, and bare of any vegetation

save clumps of scaggy cactus—across which the rough, shale strewn path is edged with boulders. After about a mile of barren sun-drenched hillside, the path again enters a shaded woodland area.

On the opposite bank steep grassy hills, clothed in green from foot to crest, rise abruptly from the river bed. Where the ground is sufficiently level for cultivation tiny hamlets are tucked away in sheltered nooks and between three and four miles above Larji , where a cantilever bridge spans the river, is a large village.

About a mile beyond this bridge, the road ascends sharply and then again descends to the river before finally winding up to higher levels which are maintained all the way to Sainj. Tropical vegetation gradually gives place to trees and plants more alpine in character and, in the dim distance, occasional glimpses of pine-clad ranges may be obtained. Shaded in places, but sun-steeped on stretches of bare hillside, the road continues on an upward grade. About two miles from Sainj and adjacent to small village (Shalwara) by the roadside, is a welcome spring of really cold water. Beyond this the road crosses a tiny stream and ascends the steepest hill of the nine-mile trek at the top of which is a length of comparatively level path and, eventually, after rounding a wide bend, the Forest Rest-house can be seen on the far side of an intervening ravine. There are two roads to choose from. One leads down to Sainj village, by the edge of the river, from which it ascends steeply to the Rest-house; another, much shorter, bearing to the right, provides a pleasant and easier approach. It winds across the ravine then turns left, up a slight slope, right into the Rest-house compound.

Like most Forest Rest-houses the bungalow is clean, comfortable, and well protected from flies, which are troublesome pests throughout the whole district. It also contains an interesting little collection of books and old periodicals—useful supplementaries for a wet day spent indoors. With the exception of the Range Officer's house and office it is well away from other human habitation and provides an ideal environment in which to spend days of perfect peace and undisturbed repose. The view from the Rest-house compound is mainly confined to the opposite side of the valley, but a little higher on the Panihar Road, the range of vision is much more extensive, especially of the dense forest region toward the head of the valley and the higher ranges beyond. Though only about 2,000 feet above Larji the atmosphere at Sainj is entirely different and, even in summer, early mornings can be quite chilly. There is a chaukidar cum cook who is available for ministering to the needs of the visitors. A Civil dispensary and branch Post-office are located at Sainj village.

The most suitable months for this short trek are from early March to the end of April then again during September, October and

November. If undertaken in the hotter months it is advisable to leave Larji very early in the morning so as to escape the oppressive heat, after sunrise, at the lower end of the valley. Also, for those not accustomed to long walks over indifferent roads, a riding pony adds considerably to the comfort of the journey. Nine miles does not sound very far, but the Sainj valley miles, especially on the upward journey, appear unduly long ones! For the return journey back to Larji the evening is preferable.

To those with artistic temperament, a visit to the Deohri plateau, which looks like a beautiful amphitheatre surrounded by the hills clad with graceful trees of Deodar and Fir, can bring an un-ending joy. This place is hardly two miles from Sainj Rest-house on Sainj—Shangarh bridle road. A little further on the road, there is a shallow lake, another beautiful picnic spot with rows of trees arising one above the other giving a charming effect.

For those who are more adventurous and keen for a beautiful trek through the dense forests, a trek to Shangarh and beyond is recommended. At Shangarh there is a very comfortable Forest Wood Cabin. The Situation is ideal for those who are in search for quiet and natural beauty and a climb to grassy blanks immediately behind Shangarh could reveal an unlimited scope of scenery. Shangarh is situated about 8½ miles away from Sainj. Beyond Shangarh, there is a lovely walk to Lapah all through dense forest. Lapah has a little forest hut. From here starts a 11 miles Forest Inspection path to Maraur all along the Sainj river revealing beautiful falls and landscapes hitherto unseen by ordinary visitors. For those intersted in shooting Blue sheep (Miatu) Thahr and Ghoral, this is an ideal tract. A comfortable forest hut at Maraur is soon to be constructed. To the tough trekker, who is also a keen shikari, it is real good fun to cross over from this valley into Rolla Valley and thence to Bandal on Banjar Rampur bridle road.

From Shangarh also one could cross over the hills to a village Shajao, in Tirthan Valley hardly six or seven miles from Banjar. This village Shajao commands a beautiful view.

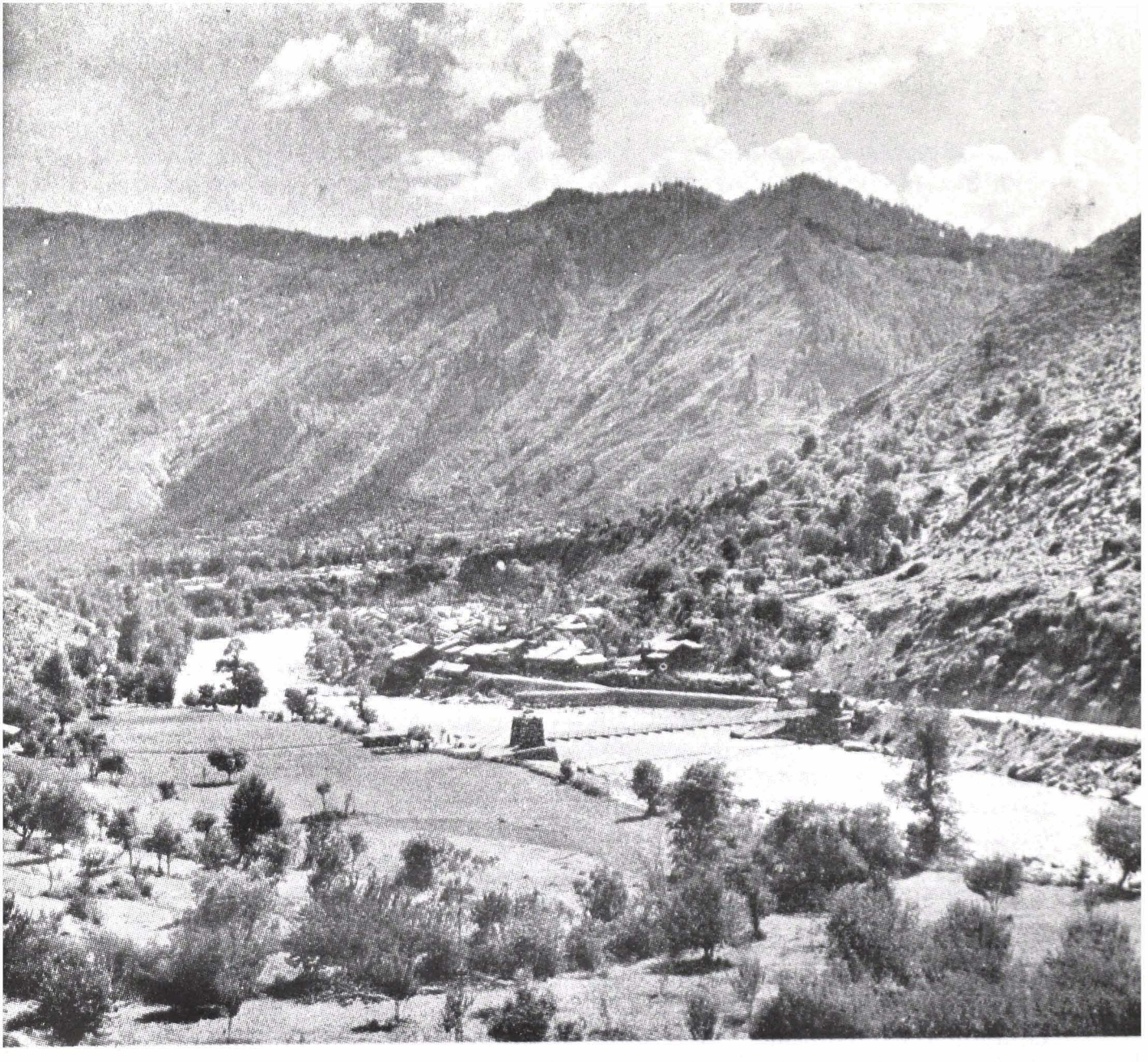
There are stage contractors at all halting places like Larji, Sainj, Shangarh, and Banjar, whose job is to arrange for transport and victuals.

The Sainj is a fairly big fast flowing river which has its main source on a high mountain near the Spiti boundary, from where it flows almost due west until it joins the Tirthan, below Larji. Flanking its upper reaches are extensive areas of deodar forest which, lower down the valley, gradually merge into scrub jungle. The lower reaches of the river—from several miles above Sainj village to within a couple of miles of Larji—are well stocked with brown trout. Some of the best fishing water, and the easiest of approach from the

Larji-Sainj road, is between two and four-and-a-half miles from Larji. Beyond the fifth mile, until near Sainj village, it is difficult to scramble down the steep bank to likely looking pools or runs, and even more difficult to clamber back to the road. One particularly good stretch is three miles upstream from Larji where a bridge spans the river. Cross the bridge and fish the opposite bank, both up and downstream, for a few hundred yards. Several pools in the immediate vicinity of Sainj village also afford good sport and from which on a good fishing day the licensed daily quota of trout are easily available. The Sainj river is usually clear enough for fly fishing during the first six weeks or two months of the season after which it becomes a raging torrent of snow-broth and does not clear again until early October.

To anyone interested in the local flora, or in butterfly collections, the Sainj valley should provide a happy and prolific hunting ground. Small game shooting also provides good sport and *kalij* pheasant, especially, are plentiful. During October, when both fishing and shooting are in season, and when the Sainj river is again clear enough for fly fishing, a combination of the two sports makes a visit to this particular locality well worth while. One slight drawback to shooting with dogs is the prevalence of leeches in roadside springs and small pools of water; they rapidly infest the dogs' nostrils when drinking and it may take several weeks to get rid of them again.

If a more extended trek than the mere journey to Sainj and back is contemplated there is ample scope for it up this valley. Two routes are available from Sainj: one, *via* Panihar to Banjar then back to Larji comprises three stages of 10,12 and 12 miles respectively. The two stages between Sainj and Banjar are over rough country, but the path, in recent years, has been considerably improved. A Saraj Division Forest Rest-house at Panihar and a P.W.D. Rest-house at Banjar afford comfortable lodging at the end of each day's journey. Permission to occupy the latter should be obtained from the Sub-Divisional Officer, P.W.D., Kulu. Ordinary supplies such as eggs, milk, potatoes and atta are available at Banjar, but nothing at Panihar. A second route is *via* Bhalan and Garsa to Bhuin, 7 miles below Kulu. These are three short stages of 8, 6 and 9 miles respectively. This path has also been improved and, in good weather, is practicable for riding and pack ponies. After crossing the river by the Sainj bridge it turns left downstream, then, leaving the river it obliquely ascends the hillside towards Bhalan (7,500 feet); then drops again to 4,500 feet at Garsa and still further to Bhuin. At Bhalan, Garsa and Bhuin are Forest Rest-houses, but Bhalan is in the Saraj Division while Garsa and Bhuin are in the Kulu Division and applications for permits to the two latter should be addressed to the Divisional Forest Officer, Kulu Division, Kulu.



River Beas as it flows through the Happy Valley

CHAPTER VII

PARBATTI VALLEY (RUPI)

THE PARBATTI VALLEY, from Bhuin to Pulga, is about 30 miles in length and, for trekking, is divided into three stages of 13, 5 and 12 miles respectively. The altitude at Bhuin is 3,700 and at Pulga, 7,500 feet. The road is comfortably graded, the steepest bits being just beyond Manikarn where, in a series of zig-zags, it rises well above the river and, again, the last two or three miles up to Pulga village. Rupi is separated from Spiti by very high mountains of the mid-Himalayan range, the only connecting link being a rather difficult pass at the head of the Parbatti river. This river, from which the valley takes its name, rises on the Kulu-Spiti border, almost opposite the source of the Pin river which flows into Spiti. The Parbatti drains a large area and, on its higher reaches and at Manikarn, is a surging turbulent torrent. Fed by many tributaries it carries a greater volume of water than the Beas at the confluence of the two rivers, near Bhuin.

The scenery of the upper Parbatti valley and the several valleys and nalas which diverge from it is, generally, on a wilder and more impressive scale than that of the Beas valley. Mountains, rising steeply from the valley, assume bolder shapes and a more imposing appearance than those which overlook the Beas. Dense pine forests, clinging to steep hillside, separate narrow cultivated belts from flower strewn *thaches* running almost up to the snow line. Above and beyond is wind-swept barrenness of storm-gored ridge, naked rock and snow-crowned peak.

Forest Rest-houses are located at Bhuin, Jari, Kasol and Pulga. Applications for permission to occupy these bungalows should be addressed to the Divisional Forest Officer, Kulu Division, Kulu. As they are in frequent use by Forest and other departmental officers travelling on duty, applications should be submitted well in advance of dates proposed for the trek so that, if the bungalows are already booked, alternative dates can be selected. They are all reasonably well furnished and contain a certain amount of crockery, cutlery and cooking utensils, as well as lamps for the main rooms. With the exception of Bhuin, where a sweeper may be obtained, cooks, bearers and sweepers are not available at any of

the Rest-houses. Milk, eggs, poultry, potatoes, onions, atta, etc. can be obtained at Bhuin and, to a lesser extent, at Jari and Manikarn. At other stages higher up the valley, milk can sometimes be purchased, but very little other produce. Arrangements for pack and riding ponies can usually be made both at Kulu and Bhuntar and, either loaded at Kulu, or be in readiness at Bhuntar, where the baggage will be transferred from car or bus.

Bhuntar village sits astride the motor road six miles below Kulu and is the taking-off point for the Parbatti valley. At the lower end of the village street the road turns left towards the river and the Duff-Dunbar bridge. This suspension bridge owes its inception to the generosity of Mr. Duff-Dunbar of Caithness, forest officer and planter in Kulu over seventy years ago, who spent half-a-lakh of rupees on its original construction. It was, however, completely wrecked in the big earthquake of 1905 and after local efforts to raise the heavy cables from the river bed had proved unsuccessful, was eventually reconstructed by a company of Sappers and Miners. After crossing the bridge the road turns left through part of Bhuin village, then half right, away from the river, up to the Rest-house, which is nearly a mile from the bridge.

Surrounded by a garden of flowers, shrubs and greenery, the commodious bungalow at Bhuin is one of the most comfortable Forest Rest-houses in the Kulu Division. During summer it is rather warm at this altitude, but the nights are not unpleasant. The confluence of the Beas and Parbatti rivers—a heaving volume of leaden-grey water during July and August—is not far distant from the Rest-house, and this 'Meeting of the Waters' is well worth an evening visit. Above the junction of the two rivers, on the head of a projecting bluff, is the site of one of the most striking temples in the whole of this temple-strewn district—Bijli Mahadev. From a distance the most conspicuous adjunct to this temple is the tall (60 feet) staff which is supposed to attract special blessings from the skies in the shape of lightning, and from which the temple derives its name. The image of Lord Shiva in this temple is also said to have a miraculous affinity for lightning and is struck by lightning flash at least once a year when the image is broken into pieces. When this happens the pujari collects the broken parts, fits them into place, and covers them with satu and butter. These congeal and hold the pieces firmly together until another flash again disrupts the image. Despite the exposed locality Bijli Mahadev withstood the stress of stormy elements over a long period of years, but a few years ago its massive woodwork and beautifully carved deodar verandah and uprights were seriously damaged by a disastrous fire.

The first stage, Bhuin to Jari, is 13 miles. During summer it can be an uncomfortably hot march and, if only for this reason,

it is advisable to leave Bhuin very early in the morning and to complete the greater part of the journey before the sun becomes too powerful. For about a mile, after leaving the bungalow, the road is over flat country and passes a series of *kuhls* (water channels); it then turns partly to the right and follows the course of the river. The rise in altitude between Bhuin and Jari only averages 100 feet per mile, but includes several sharp ascents where the road has had to be aligned well above the river. For a bridle path—it does not aspire to anything higher—the road is good, although it runs a gamut of surface material—loose earth, sand, pebbles and bare rock, with occasional stretches of green sward. Leafy branches of wild fig and walnut, especially in the vicinity of hamlets, provide irregular patches of deep shade and, in early summer, the roadsides are gaily decorated with the scarlet blossom of wild pomegranate. About half way, between the sixth and seventh mile, is a pleasant halting place in the shade of a narrow belt of alder trees which run right down to the river. In its own unpretentious and pastoral style the scenery at the lower end of the valley is interesting, but nearing Jari it merges into a different type—more precipitous and pointed. Rounding occasional bends on the road, which bring them into line of vision to the north, some striking views of a cluster of *aiguilles*, their needle points sharply outlined against the sky, are obtainable and, to anyone so interested, offer some stiff problems in the art of rock climbing.

Jari village nestles on a hillside shelf well above the Parbatti and almost opposite the mouth of the Malana glen, from which the Malana tributary hurls its torrential waters into the parent river. The Forest Rest-house is located below the village and faces out across the valley. It is clean and comfortable and a welcome resting place after the 13-mile march.

Jari to Kasol is an easy walk of five miles,with a rise in altitude of only 300 feet, so there is no necessity to hurry away in the early morning. Many parts of the road are lined with trees and, with a gentle breeze swaying overhanging foliage and the sun smiling through at dancing shadows on the ground, almost every yard of this short march can be of exquisite and undiluted enjoyment. Leaving the Rest-house the path winds down to the bank of the river and continues, for some distance, alongside the foam-flecked water and passing, in its course towards Kasol, extensive areas of wire-enclosed forest. In their respective seasons, a variety of wild flowers adorn both sides of the path, their fragrant beauty frequently tempting the passer-by to wayside dalliance. A bridge spans the little Kasol river, another, but less turbulent tributary of the Parbatti. Just beyond the bridge is the Kasol Rest-house, charmingly situated on an open space which slopes down to a broad expanse of clean white sand at the edge of the main river. North across the river, are limestone gorge and jungle-clothed hillside over which, by way

of Rashol village and the Rashol pass, a steep rocky path connects with the Malana glen. East, towards Pulga and Tosh Nal, is a mountain range of rugged grandeur—a dense huddle of rocky peaks of varied shape and size. South is the Kasol nala, a wild, deep-forested ravine reaching up to pine-crowned ridge and locally famed as a prolific cover for small game. In both fishing and shooting seasons, especially the latter, Kasol would make a first-rate halting place, with every prospect of some really good sport.

Kasol to Pulga is rather a stiff march of twelve miles and a climb of nearly 2,000 feet, so an early start is again indicated. The road as far as Manikarn, two miles away, is fairly level and, before reaching that village, crosses to the right bank by means of a cantilever bridge built high above the river which, at this point, is confined to a narrow, deep, rock-lined gorge. Massive boulders break the mad rush of the uproarious torrent, creating clouds of spray and forming, in the bright sunlight, iridescent rainbows of sparkling brilliance. Like Bashisht, near Manali, Manikarn advertises its nearness by the sickly smell of sulphur and the cloud of steamy vapour which envelops the small cluster of houses. Snuggling under the hillside the village provides nothing of outstanding interest. Several years ago it suffered rather badly from the effects of a fire which destroyed a number of buildings, some of which have not been rebuilt.

Manikarn is, however, famed for its hot springs. Probably the most important—and most useful—is the one on the river bank at the entrance to the village which is always in great activity and is said to rise and fall with the increase and decline of river water. Rocks surrounding the spring are uncomfortably hot, while the temperature of the water is above boiling point. Rice, if placed in a muslin bag or tied up in cloth and thrown into the pool will, without further trouble soon be fit for eating and, although the atmosphere has a distinct sulphurous smell, rice cooked in the pool is quite palatable and not unpleasant to the taste. The water from these springs is supposed to be beneficial to sufferers from rheumatism and similar ailments. Whether consequent upon the supposed healing properties of the hot springs, or for religious reasons, Manikarn is a favourite resort of pilgrims from many parts of upper India. Resident priests possess some old manuscript sheets (*Kulantapitha Mahatmya*) relating to ancient sacred lore of Kulu, but from an architectural point of view, the temples over which these priests preside, offer no particular inducement for a detailed inspection.

The *Kulantapitha Mahatmya* claims to be part of the Brahmanda Purana. Dr. Hiranand Shastri (Archeological Survey Report 1907–08) gives the following quotation from it :

"Kulantapitha lies to the north-east of Jalandhara and south of Hemakuta mountain. It is 10 *yojanas* (about 90 miles) in length and 3 *yojanas* (about 27 miles) in width. The sacred place of Vyasa lies to its north and the Bandhana mountain to its south. The river Bias flows to its west and the Pasupati (Siva) lies to the east. The deity presiding over the valley is *Savari*. Indrakila is the principal hill. The *Samgama* or confluence of the Bias and Parbatti rivers is the chief sacred place. It was in this land that Siva, in the guise of a *Savara* fought with Arjuna."

Manikarn to Pulga is nine and a half miles of up-and-down road--chiefly up. Just beyond Manikarn, where the road zig-zags, it is rough and stony,but not difficult for pack or riding animals. Three or four miles outside Manikarn is the small village of Uchieh near which, on both banks of the river, are the forsaken workings of old silver mines. A century or more ago Waziri Rupi (the Silver Valley) was locally famous for its output of silver but, according to local tradition, the secret formulae for extracting the silver from ore was lost after which, owing to excessive working costs, the mines were abandoned. The legend is, in effect, as follows :

"During the reign of Raja Jit Singh (1816–41) the keepers of the State archives, Hukmu and Gehru of the Bunhan family, for some reason or other fell under suspicion and were called upon to appear before the ruler at Sultanpur. Before leaving their respective houses they gave instructions to their wives that if the Raja vented his displeasure upon them they were to destroy the State documents. In his fit of anger the Raja had them beheaded. He then sent messengers to secure the papers, but it was too late. The wives had already carried out the mandates of their lords and masters and not only were the chronicles of State destroyed, but with them the secret method of extracting silver from ore."

Efforts have since been made to re-open the mines, but costs of extraction, refining and transport have always been too high to make it worth while.

Pulga is on the left bank of the river and almost a thousand feet above it. After crossing the bridge the road winds steadily up the hillside amid a wealth of luxuriant greenery and of constantly changing beauty till it reaches the shadowy gloom of scented pine. Though almost enshrouded by giant deodar there are numerous patches of cultivation on level bits of cleared land. The seemingly ancient village of Pulga is neither clean nor prepossessing—a jumble of rather dilapidated houses, fodder stacks and manure heaps—but the Forest Bungalow, sanitarily located above and beyond

the village, is in a delightful setting. The site has been carved out of dense deodar forest, so much so that more trees had to be chopped down in order to provide a view across the valley. The restful solitude of the Pulga Rest-house and its immediate environment afford a sylvan and peaceful retreat for body and mind.

For the ordinary tourist, Pulga is usually the end of the road up the Parbatti, but to the more adventurous there is still the "land beyond" which affords exceptional facilities for climbing and sight-seeing. The road--or path—actually carries on towards the head of the river and crosses the watershed into Spiti by the Pin-Parbatti Pass. The Tos Nal, which branches off from the main Parbatti valley a few miles north-east of Pulga is well worth exploration by those who favour the wilder aspects of natural scenery and are prepared to camp out. For the less energetic, however, a visit to the hot springs at Khirganga, about six miles beyond Pulga, affords a pleasant outing ; not perhaps from any beneficial results that might accrue from a bath in the spring water, but mainly for the scenic effects *en-route*. A new forest road now makes the Khirganga hot spring much more easily accessible.

If time and circumstances permit, the return journey may be varied and slightly prolonged by trekking from Jari, *via* Borsu, to Kulu (Sultanpur), or even on to Naggar. Jari to Borsu is a fairly stiff march of 13 miles; Borsu to Kulu about 10 miles; or Borsu to Naggar, *via* Tandla, 16 miles. Permits for the occupation of the Forest Rest-house and of the Forest hut at Tandla should be obtained in advance from the Divisional Forest Officer, Kulu.

↑ The wealth of the Gaddis

↓ A bird's eyeview of Kulu. In the foreground are seen attractively laid out fields.

CHAPTER VIII

BARAGARH-KATRAIN

BARAGARH MOUNTAIN, 10,000 feet, overlooks and dominates Katrain. Actually it is an escarpment at the end of a spur thrown off by the Bara Bangahal range and divides the Phojal and Sajoin nalas.

To the people of Katrain and neighbouring villages it is a convenient back-ground and provides certain amenities in the shape of slates and building stone from its lower slopes and timber from its forested areas higher up, as well as grazing space for cattle and sheep. Its sunny eastern slope shelters at least four hamlets of which Tarashi, built on a central ridge, is the largest. Many of these mountain-side hamlets, mostly located at an altitude of between eight and nine thousand feet, are survivals of an earlier epoch in the history of Kulu when it was safer to live on a strategic defensible eminence than in the more accessible valleys. Another very ancient legend in connection with the location of these high altitude hamlets and villages is, in effect, as follows :

Thousands of years ago, before the river Beas cut its present deep chasm through the Mandi-Larji Gorge, providing thereby an adequate water outlet, a chain of lakes existed in what is now upper Kulu, and that many of the old mountainside hamlets and villages were established along the edges of these lakes.

Baragarh's main claim to importance in the annals of Kulu may be said to centre in the ruins of an old fort erected on its summit. No authentic date is available as to the approximate period of its original construction, but it is known to have been under occupation of Suket troops in the 15th century. The ruins of this fort are on the southern end of the mountain and when it was in use as a military outpost it must have commanded a large area of the surrounding country including the routes from Bara Bangahal and Chhota Bangahal which enter Kulu *via* the Phojal and Shirrar nalas, as well as the main road alongside the Beas, both up and down the valley.

The summit of Baragarh is not difficult to attain, especially by the young and energetic, or even by the still hardy but not so

young enthusiast. It involves no real rock climbing and the last few hundred yards, a steep gradient over a foothold of slippery grass, is the hardest part of the journey. A visit to the old fort and back to Katrain can be accomplished comfortably in eight or nine hours. The easiest route takes off the main road and crosses the fields just north of Katrain village—towards the village of Bashkola. This is followed by a climb up the steep side of a ravine, then along a narrow footpath which leads to Tarashi village. At the lower end of the ravine the path is rough and strewn with boulders but towards the head of the first sharp ascent where it enters the shade of the pines, stones and boulders give place to a smoother path over clayey soil. During the rainy season and when overlaid with pine needles the steeper portions of this path should be trod warily, especially on the downward journey. After leaving the shelter of the ravine the path crosses the breast of the hill towards Tarashi; though narrow, and in several sections deeply furrowed, it is comparatively easy. Above Tarashi, the path inclines slightly to the right but after a few hundred yards again verges half left and eventually emerges from the forest near a spring and open water hole. Near Tarashi, cattle paths in different directions are apt to confuse strangers and it is generally advisable to obtain information from an inhabitant of the village as to the exact route to be followed.

Above the timber line, several narrow sheep tracks zig-zag across the steep *thach* which comprises the upper breast of the mountain, but they all tend towards the summit. The last stretch of three to four hundred feet is a stiff climb. It is not impossible to go straight up to the hump on which the fort was erected, but an easier way lies to the immediate right of a large rock near the centre of the ridge, then across the ridge and bear left along the back of it, coming up to the fort from the opposite side of the mountain.

The actual remains of the fort do not call for much comment. Bits of dressed stone walls are still standing and some rain-water collecting tanks still traceable, but the main evidence of the faded glory of this mountain-top stronghold are the jumbled heaps of broken masonry and slate, gradually being overwhelmed by prickly thorn and dense jungle. Inside the broken walls of the fort, but more recently constructed, is a small temple in which the *devi* of a nearby village is housed. A notice board in front of this sanctuary, if still readable, prohibits the entrance of "Christians, Muslims and Shoes." To the north of the fort is a pyramid of stones erected by the Government of India Survey Department which denotes a trigonometrical station.

But if there is nothing of outstanding interest in the ruins of the fort, the view from the site on which it was built lavishly compensates for all the energy exerted in reaching the summit of Baragarh

mountain. On a clear day it commands a marvellous panoramic view of the surrounding country. East and north-east are the local giants, Deo-Tibba and Gyephang. Above Naggar the Chandra-Khanni Pass is plainly visible, and to the left of the Chandra-Khanni, higher up the valley, the approaches to the Hamta and Rohtang Passes can be traced. Elsewhere in this book brief descriptions have been given of the wonderful views obtainable from higher altitudes than that of the summit of Baragarh. But there is a substantial difference in the outlook. Views from the crests of high passes like the Rohtang, Hamta and Chandra-Khanni are mainly of surrounding high ranges, mountain massifs and snowy wastes; the configuration of nearby slopes obliterate to a great extent the vision of valleys immediately below. From Baragarh, however, the valley of Kulu is laid out for inspection : a gorgeous carpet of nature's most lavish pattern; a patchwork of browns, yellows, greens and other colours in accordance with the season of the year, and enhanced by an irregular but brilliant silver streak when the Beas glistens in the sunshine. Cultivated fields and orchards, sparsely interspersed with hamlets and detached dwellings, line the banks of the river and mount upward, in terraces, to the fringes of dense pine forest. Above and beyond the timbered hillsides and ridges, stretching for countless miles towards distant horizons, are ranges of barren rock and snow-capped peaks, providing a superb background to the warmer colours of sheltered valleys and wooded hills. Many believe that man is nearer God's heart on a high mountain or in a garden ; Baragarh provides this proximity in double measure. The mountain top and its far-flung distant vision; immediately below one of nature's most luxuriant gardens.

It is not stated in any history of Kulu by whom the Baragarh Fort was erected but from the remains of the once-solid walls its construction must have been a strenuous task. During Keral Pal's reign (about 400 A.D.) Kulu was invaded by the Raja of Suket who conquered part of the country. He granted the land between Siunsa Nala (north of Katrain) and Bajaura, on the right bank of the Beas, to a local petty chief named Rana Bhosal who was married to a Suket princess.They resided at the fortified palace of Garh Dhek which occupied a prominent position on the headland below Baragraon village. Rana Bhosal's capital was at Sangor, opposite Naggar, and his chief defensive post, according to local legend, was the huge stone fort of Baragarh.

Local legends also indicate that Rana Bhosal was notorious for his stupidity and foolishness and the following proverb in connection with his reign is still current in Kulu :

"Bara pethe, athara dani,
Bhosal Rana sar na jane,"

(Twelve pumpkins, eighteen tax gatherers ;
Bhosal Rana knows nothing of Government.)

History also records that the Rana had a Wazir named Tita Mohanta who fell in love with the Rani, but his advances were repelled. He therefore persuaded Rana Bhosal to sacrifice the Rani in order to make a new *kuhl* (watercourse) successful. The Rana's son, Tika Ghungru, appealed to his uncle, the Rajah of Suket, who came with an army and captured both the Rana and his Wazir. The latter he had flayed alive, sprinkled with red pepper, and cut into small pieces which were besmeared on the leaves of trees. The Rana he could not kill, so dressed him in a kilt woven from hemp, decorated him with a necklace of dried cowdung, and had him pelted with cowdung all the way to the boundary. Suket then assumed direct rule over Baragarh until it was annexed by Rajah Sidh Singh after 1500 A.D.

After Rana Bhosal's expulsion Baragarh seems to have remained in the possession of Suket and was manned by a Suket state garrison. Raja Sidh Singh, however, made strenuous efforts to regain full control of this part of the valley, but as many strongholds were too powerful to be attacked openly he, after the manner of the times, resorted to treachery, and the eventual downfall of Baragarh Fort has been described as follows :

"In Baragarh lived a woman whom Sidh Singh had gained to his cause and who promised to give a signal when favourable opportunity offered for an assault on the fort. One day most of the fort's garrison went down to Hurang Kothi to attend a 'jatra' and the woman then waved a red petticoat, the signal agreed upon. This was seen from Sidh Singh's headquarters in Naggar and the Raja marched in by the Sajoin Nala and captured the fort. The first thing he did, after taking possession, was to order the woman who had given the signal to be thrown down the precipice above which the fort was erected."

CHAPTER IX

NAGGAR

NAGGAR, on the left bank of the Beas and about a thousand feet above the river, is delightfully situated on a wooded slope and commands extensive views, especially of the north and west of the valley. It is 13 miles from Kulu (Sultanpur), 5 miles from Raison and 2 from Katrain. The nearest point to which cars can run is Naggar Bridge which spans the Beas below Katrain village. The direct road down to the bridge, from the village, is not in its present condition, adapted to motor traffic, but a passable road to the bridge is available *via* Patli-kuhl, nearly a mile beyond Katrain where it turns sharp right and cuts across the *bihal*. Cars can be parked near the bridge. After crossing the river the main path turns right, runs alongside a water channel and converges with the old bridle path almost opposite the Trout Hatchery. The road up the hill is rather steep in places, but a pleasant shady walk or ride under ordinary climatic conditions. A jeepable road from Raison to Naggar is under construction.

Less than two furlongs from the bridge on the Naggar side of the Beas is a Government Trout Farm (Hatchery) which is well worth a visit by anyone interested in trout culture. The officer in charge, when at headquarters, will always extend a welcome to visitors and will point out to them interesting features of breeding and rearing trout for restocking the Beas and its tributaries.

Almost from the gate of the trout farm the ascent of Naggar hill commences and for nearly a mile, through a well-wooded ravine, the road rises steeply. Near the top of the slope and partly surrounded by a trim and prolific garden is a Forest Rest-house. From this point two roads lead to Naggar. The lower road, which passes the Rest-house, is along a fairly level stretch until it reaches the bottom of the village; it then turns right, up into a small bazaar, passes the Post office and arrives at the lower end of Naggar Castle. The higher road branches off to the right just before reaching the Forest bungalow and, still on an upward slope, connects with another road at a higher level; then, turning left, it crosses the breast of the hill and leads to the upper side of the Castle. The latter route, which is partly through fragrant pine forest, is preferable on

a hot day. Before reaching the Castle, in an enclosure on the left and below the level of the road, is a collection of up-right stone slabs which, according to Kulu history, are memorial stones of dead rulers. These stones are ornamented with crude carvings of the chiefs of Kulu, and their wives and concubines are portrayed either beside or below them. One Raja is mounted on a horse and holds a sword in his hand. History records that these stones were placed in position after the death of each Raja and that the female figures are effigies of wives and mistresses who performed *sati* after the demise of their ruler. The custom of erecting these carved memorial stones (*barselas*) was not confined to the Rajas of Kulu. A similar custom prevailed in Mandi and Suket and probably in other hill states. In Mandi the carvings are more elaborate and some of them bear inscriptions recording the date of the death of the ruler and the accession of his son or heir.

Naggar succeeded Nast (Jagatsukh) as the capital of Kulu. It was founded by Visudh Pal and continued as the headquarters of the State until the capital was transferred to Sultanpur by Jagat Singh, probably about 1660 A.D.

Naggar Castle is built on a steep eminence overlooking the valley and dominates the village and surrounding countryside. According to the Kulu Gazetteer it is supposed to have been erected during the reign of Raja Sidh Singh with stone brought from Baragarh Fort on the opposite side of the valley. Considering the distance between the two places and the labour involved in conveying huge stones down one mountain and partly up another this seems barely credible. A more feasible legend is to the effect that a long chain of local labourers passed the stones from hand to hand from the ruins of Ghar Dhek, Rana Bhosal's fortified palace on the bluff below the present village of Baragraon, to the site of the Castle at Naggar. Credence is lent to the latter possibility by the facts that Ghar Dhek is much nearer Naggar than is Baragarh Fort; that there are now very few remains of any building stone or ruins of any description at Ghar Dhek to show that it was ever a king's palace, much less a town; while Baragarh Fort could practically be re-erected from the huge mounds of stone still lying inside and outside its tumbledown walls.

The Castle building is largely constructed of dressed stones and is heavily timber bonded. Its huge beams are now age-worn and weather-beaten, but despite its size and clumsy top-heavy appearance it must have been skilfully erected, being one of the few large buildings which survived the disastrous earthquake of 1905 when so many towns and villages in Kangra and Kulu were razed to the ground. Originally the property of the Kulu ruling family it was purchased by Major Hay who, in addition to carrying out extensive

Temple of Hidimba—Manali

repairs, converted the interior of this medieval stronghold into a residence after the European style. Major Hay later resold the property to Government and for many years it has served the purpose of a Civil Rest house as well as an official office and Court. On the upper level the Castle comprises two large courtyards, several residential rooms and a kitchen. The north and west sides of this upper storey are open verandahs from which splendid views, both up and down the valley, are obtainable. The view of the Ghyepan peak in Lahoul from this vantage point is one of the finest in Kulu. In the upper courtyard of the Castle is a tiny temple—a small square structure which contains "Jagti Pat", a slab of stone about five or six feet square which is said to have been brought from near Bashisht and deposited here by wild bees. Both temple and stone, even to the present day, are objects of veneration to the people of Kulu. Many other legends in connection with Naggar Castle, retold to successive generations by inhabitants of the district are still current and are generally accepted as authentic happenings. On the lawn below the Castle is a small stone figure which is supposed to be the remains of a Kulu Rani. The legend in connection there-with is quoted below :

> "The Rani was under suspicion of having a lover in hiding in or near the Castle and, in order to prove her innocence, flung herself from the high balcony, but before her body touched the ground it turned into stone."

This stone is still pointed out as proof of the incident. Probably another variation of the same story is to the effect that :

> "During an exhibition of wrestling on the lawn below the Castle at which the ruler, his ranis and court looked down upon from the upper balcony, the Raja turned to his favourite Rani and asked her whom she considered to be the most handsome man at the gathering. Expecting, perhaps, that she would expatiate on his own particular bearing and charm. But she singled out one of the wrestlers and praised his athletic figure and handsome features. The Raja's jealousy was immediately roused and in his rage he gave orders for the wrestler to be beheaded, which sentence was carried out on the spot. The Rani was so shocked at his cruelty that she rushed round the balcony to where it overhangs the cliff and flung herself over."

Her spirit is still supposed to haunt that particular stretch of the verandah and the bed-room leading on to it.

The importance of Naggar must have deteriorated rapidly after the transfer of the capital of Kulu to Sultanpur (Kulu). Now

it is little more than a straggling village, dominated by a grim, old, so-called Castle, once the main stronghold of rulers of the country. Historical and pious reminders of its past importance may, however, still be deduced from the number and variety of temples which adorn the village and its environment. At the foot of the small bazaar, below the Castle, is the Gaurishanker temple of Shiva—a charming example of the architecture and carving of its particular period—now a "protected monument". A little higher, almost opposite the front of the Castle, is the Vishnu temple of Chatterbhuj (god with four arms), a rather squat-looking edifice with very little adornment. Higher still, in the upper part of the village, is the pagoda-shaped temple of Tripura Sundari Devi. Throughout the district only four of these pyramidal wooden-roofed structures are now in existence, the most historic and important being the celebrated Dhungri, at Manali. Other temples of this type are to be found in Nepal and China. Highest of all, on a small ridge above Naggar, is the Krishna temple of Murli Dhar. In a small clearing of the forest, not far from the ruins of "Thawa" (remnant of a previous civilization in the history of Naggar), this temple is probably the oldest of its type in this part of Kulu, as well as one of the richest, paying land revenue of some hundreds of rupees a year.

In association with the Tripura Sundari Devi Temple an important *mela* is held every year at Naggar and is largely patronised by the local population from all parts of the valley. Two level patches of green lawn near the temple afford dancing space and, sloping up from them, is a natural amphitheatre which provides grand-stand accommodation and a park-like parade for the gaily-dressed, silver bedecked feminine element. The women of Kulu seldom join in the dancing at *melas*, but love to watch their menfolk slowly gyrating to the weird music of temple bands.

Other temples in and around Naggar are the small temples of Mushara, Jhiri and Bhutanti. Mushara, of which the goddess Kailashan is the presiding deity, is located in rice fields below the village. The Jhiri temple, near the cave of that name, is sheltered by a clump of pine trees. A legend in connection with this little temple is to the following effect.

> "Originally a temple of the Naths it was appropriated by a *Bairagi* whose magic was obviously of a higher order and more powerful than that of the Nath whom he ousted from his position as guardian of the temple. At this period, a tunnel, commencing from the present cave-like entrance, was said to go right through the range of mountains and into the Parbatti valley, and the Bairagi, Phuwariji, used to traverse this tunnel every morning in order to bathe in the hot springs at Manikarn".

This tunnel is supposed to have been destroyed during the big earthquake of 1905. The Bhutanti temple, said to have been founded by a monk from far-away Bhutan, is probably a relic of the period when the Naggar side of Kulu valley was raided by Tibetans and was held in bondage by, Piti Thakurs or Tibetan war lords.

Above the Castle, on the road leading to the Hall estate, is a rural dispensary to which is attached a small hospital, under the charge of a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. To the right of and slightly higher than the road is Osborne House. It was built by the late General Osborne to whom a memorial stone still stands in the garden. It is Government property and was, originally, the summer residence of the Sub-Divisional Officer. Further along the same road, on the ridge overlooking the Chhaki Nala, is the Hall estate. The beautiful house which gives its name to the estate was built by the late Colonel Rennick, but is now in the possession of the de Roerich family. The late Professor de Roerich (he died in December 1947) was an illustrious artist of international repute and one of his sons has also gained world-wide fame as a painter.

In the village near the Castle is a circular shaped *Serai*, erected as a memorial to the late King Edward VII; a school; and a post office. To the south of the Castle is a small P.W.D. Rest-house and below can be seen the Central Vegetable Breeding Station and floriculture farm.

Several good forest roads above Naggar provide pleasant woodland walks from which wonderful views of the mountains overlooking the Sajoin and Phojal Nalas are obtainable. One such road takes off from the nala above the Forest Rest-house and gradually ascends, in a southerly direction, to the little village of Tila-Sharni. From this village a narrower, but perfectly good forest path, descends more sharply and in zig-zags towards one of the main roads. Another pleasant and interesting walk is along the path which turns sharp right near the Hall and ascends, passing other buildings on the Hall estate, to the village of Chijogi. Another road—one which overlooks the Chhaki Nala and from which an entirely different viewpoint is afforded—tends toward the little villages of Rumsu and Sharn.

CHAPTER X

CHANDRA-KHANNI PASS AND MALANA

WITHIN A DISTANCE of less than 16 miles from Katrain, and connected with it by a comparatively good footpath which crosses the intervening ridge at an altitude of under 12,000 feet, is the isolated valley of Malana. This valley, or glen, is inhabited by a race of people with entirely separate traditions and language to the remainder of Kulu. Situated in a mountain fastness, accessible only during that period of the year when the mountain ridges by which it is enclosed are free from impassable snow, it comprises a small conservative community of probably less than 500 people, steeped in superstition and still performing ceremonial rites and practices of an aboriginal ancestry. In addition to the Chandra-Khanni Pass route the other feasible paths by which Malana can be reached are from the Parbatti valley ; one of which is from Manikarn and over the Rashol Pass, (10,500 feet) and another from Jari, along the Malana river. There is actually, another track into the glen from the Kulu side, but it is by way of a precipitous gorge which involves some rock climbing and is seldom used, even by the sure-footed local inhabitants.

The Chandra-Khanni Pass lies east of Katrain on the range which divides Kulu proper from the Malana glen. From Katrain to the top of the pass and back can be accomplished, by stout walkers, in a long day, but it is a strenuous trek. If, however, Malana is to be included in the itinerary, three days should be allotted for the journey and a tent, with camping equipment and provisions, will be necessary. A very early start from Katrain is recommended; it allows for a longer halt during the heat of the day and for more leisurely sight-seeing *en-route*. (As an alternative to Katrain a night might be spent at the Civil Rest-house, Naggar Castle. This obviates a steep two-mile climb, Katrain to Naggar, in the early morning, and conserves a certain amount of energy for the remainder of the trek.)

The road from Katrain to Naggar has been described in a previous chapter. After passing Naggar Castle the Chandra-Khanni route continues up to the Hall Estate and, skirting the Hall, branches to the right, inclining towards the Chhaki Nala. After rounding

Smiling Paddy fields

the bend near the Hall, it continues for some little distance through the orchard which forms part of the estate and then traverses fairly open forest. In its undulating course towards Pulin (or Puling), the last village on the Kulu side of the Chandra-Khanni it passes the small hamlet of Sharn and surrounding area of cultivated land. From Naggar to Puling, *via* Sharn, the road is good and at a gentle incline. It is not absolutely necessary to go into Puling village, even by this route, as one road to the Pass branches off to the right, up a steep incline, about a furlong or more before the village is reached. From this point—where the path branches off the Puling road—the real climbing begins. An alternative and slightly shorter route is *via* the village of Rumsu. This path takes off to the right about half way between Naggar and Sharn. Both roads eventually come out on the Nandu-ki-Thali *thach* above the forest.

Several hundred feet above Puling is a delightful spot for a short halt and refreshment— a level clearing at the lower edge of the forest—with a spring of good drinking water close at hand. From June onwards a number of encampments are usually to be found on this plateau. They are occupied, chiefly, by Bashahri families who spend some months of the summer collecting medicinal and other herbs in the locality which evidently provides a fruitful source of supply. Wild gentian (*karru*) and aconite (*patish*) are the most sought-after plants and roots. A short distance above this plateau the path enters real forest and a stiff climb ensues until it emerges on to a large *thach*, or clearing, above the timberline. In spring, after the snow has melted and well on into the summer, this *thach* (Nandu-ki-Thali) is carpeted with a rich abundance of wild flowers—anemone, ranunculus, potentilla and many other varieties of flowering plant life. When dry, the road through the forest affords a pleasant walk, despite the steep incline, but during the rainy season it is slippery and treacherous. Coming down, especially, if falls are to be avoided, more than usual care is necessary. From the open space outside the forest a marvellous view of Kulu Valley is obtainable—the foreground a fascinating picture of verdant loveliness in a surrounding setting of wild and rugged grandeur. Out on the *thach* the road inclines upward and to the left, past a low open-fronted stone shelter, and towards a cleft—or gap—plainly visible on the hillside. Passing through this gap the path descends sharply for a few yards, then for a couple of miles or more and at an easy incline, traverses the breast of the mountain towards the head of the pass. Flanking the path numerous clumps of rhododendron, when in bloom, and other varieties of flowering shrubs, which grow profusely at this altitude, add largely to the enjoyment of a walk across these upland pastures.

Monal pheasant are fairly plentiful along the upper edge of the forest and afford good sport during early winter before snow

renders the *thach* practically inaccessible. It is not easy shooting. Right and left of the path tangled and sprawling rhododendren roots as well as dense and thorny undergrowth make progress difficult and necessitate careful placing of the feet and handling of a gun. Not so very long ago the same area was a favourite haunt of red bear, but in recent years herds of buffalo have been grazed on these *thaches* and shooting of both large and small game has, in consequence, deteriorated.

Approaching the plateau at the head of the pass it has, from a distance, the appearance of a well-populated graveyard, complete with headstones. But on closer inspection the upright stones turn out to be slabs of rock erected by travellers to appease the presiding deity of the mountain. Nearly all high passes in and beyond Kulu have their mythological deities and the Chandra-Khanni is no exception. More herb collectors are usually encamped below the path and it is probably from one of their tents that a man or men rush ahead of visitors and are prepared to set up stones on their behalf. It is difficult to imagine where else they can spring from, but offer them anything less than a rupee for their trouble and they look rather hurt.

One of the legends in connection with the Chandra-Khanni is to the effect that when Jamlu (the presiding deity of Malana and a god of great power and importance in Kulu) came from Hamta to Malana with his wife Narol, they carried a casket containing all the other gods of Kulu. On top of the pass they opened the casket and a very strong breeze blew the gods all over Kulu Valley to their present abodes.

At the top of the ridge, which extends for some distance, it is advisable to rest awhile before commencing the return journey to Katrain or tackling the descent to Malana; also to take in the wonderful and expansive panorama of near and distant, but well defined, mountain ranges. A particularly striking view of Deo Tibba (nearly 20,000 feet) which overlooks the Malana glen as well as of other snow-crowned giants on the Spiti border is obtainable. From the crest of the pass it is possible to see down into the glen, but the actual villages are not within range of vision. The valley's lap appears to be almost perpendicularly below the pass and anyone not accustomed to the practicability of carving a road out of steep mountainside might well be apprehensive of such a possibility. The path is certainly steep, but not more than ordinarily dangerous. It descends, in sharp zig-zag formation, down a precipitous gully flanked by well-wooded cliffs, and seems to get steeper and steeper until it suddenly emerges on to cultivated fields above Malana village, more than 3,000 feet below the head of the pass. Under some big trees, between the two villages, is a pleasant

camping ground and if baggage coolies and servants have gone ahead they will probably have selected this particular site.

Malana comprises two villages about a hundred yards apart. The village in which the temple buildings are located is sacred and no one wearing leather boots or shoes is allowed within its precincts, but if the leather footwear is substituted by locally made rope shoes (*pullas*), permission to view the temple surroundings may be granted. An addition to the actual temple is the *deota's* treasury (*bhandar*) which is believed to contain fabulous wealth, the accumulation of centuries, as well as a large collection of gold and silver statuary, including an image of Emperor Akbar the Great. There is also a large refectory where people of the village dine together during certain festivals; a room for the temple musicians; and another small building in which, in early spring, barley is forced, so that young blanched shoots may be available for offering to the god at an important festival in *Phagun* (February-March). None of the buildings are particularly striking, not even the main temple. It is roughly decorated by some carving on the outside woodwork and on the door, but, considering the local importance of this *deota* a much more imposing edifice might have been expected. Neither village would win a prize for cleanliness. The dwelling houses are not so well finished nor their surroundings so neat and tidy as is the general rule on the Kulu side of the Chandra-Khanni.

Local tradition represents Jamlu as a kind of demon or spirit. He is supposed to have come from Spiti to Hamta, and that Gyephang Lha, the god who inhabits the lofty peak of that name in Lahaul, is his elder brother. Also that Pars Ram, who established the locally famous temple of *Devi* Ambika of Nirmand, in Saraj, is his son. Jamlu has other temples and granaries in Kulu, Rupi and Saraj, but his central abode is Malana where he is paramount and owns all the land under cultivation and where all the cultivators are his tenants. There is no image of him in any of his temples, consequently he has no *rath* like other gods of Kulu. In comparison with other *deotas* he holds a somewhat independent position, not exactly hostile to Raghunathji (the principal god of Kulu) but he does not, like other Kulu *deotas*, show his open allegiance during the Dussehra festival. His representative, usually the *kardar* of his main temple at Malana, comes into Kulu for Raghunathji's big festival, but remains on the left bank of the Beas at a place named Dobhi, almost opposite the Dhalpur *Maidan*, where the fair is held. The house he occupies for the period of the fair—an open-fronted structure with walls on three sides is the property of Jamlu, and from this point he can watch proceedings on the opposite bank of the river. As one powerful god to another he pays the usual subscription (*tirhara*) to Raghunathji.

At intervals of every few years (the actual interval depending upon the will of the god, declared by his mouthpiece, the *gur*), on the first day of *Bhadon*, a very large fair is held at Malana at which special ceremonies, including the *kaika*, is performed. This weird ceremony of *kaika* is, perhaps, a modern survival of and the nearest approach to the traditional tales of human sacrifice still current in some out-of-the-way mountainous regions. The *Nar* (a special caste) is obtained from Manikarn and takes upon himself the evil deeds of the community. He is then assumed to be dead and is placed upon a bier and paraded round the assemblage. Finally, as at other similar ceremonies at Shirrar, near Raison, and at Nirmand, in outer Saraj, he is brought to life again. A woman from the same village is also consecrated to the god and, though not denied cohabitation with men of her choice, she remains unmarried.

The Emperor Akbar's connection with this remote and almost inaccessible glen may be founded on a sub-stratum of fact. Briefly, the story is as follows :

> "A *sadhu* on a visit to Malana, received two pice from the treasury attached to Jamlu's temple. Eventually, after reaching Delhi, these pice were confiscated by official tax gatherers, as poll tax, and deposited in the Emperor's treasury. Shortly afterwards, Akbar became afflicted with leprosy and was informed by Brahman advisers that an insult had been offered to Jamlu and that the pice must be restored if he wished to recover. A search of the treasury being made the two pice were found, miraculously stuck together, and Akbar was told to take them to Malana. A compromise was, however, effected by the Emperor sending the pice and, in addition, a golden image of himself and images of his horses and elephants in gold and silver. On receipt of these tokens of conciliation the wrath of Jamlu was appeased and the Emperor recovered from his leprosy."

A ceremony in commemmoration of this event is held every year at Malana in *Phagun*, when the images are removed from the treasure house and taken to a grove above the village—the spot at which Jamlu received the homage of the Emperor. According to Mr. Young, however, who was present at this ceremony in 1911, it is actually Akbar who is worshipped, though originally (by proxy) he was a *suppliant* at the shrine of Jamlu. (A detailed and very interesting account of "Malana and the Akbar-Jamlu legend", compiled by W.M. Young, Esq., I.C.S., was published thirty odd years ago in the "Journal of the Punjab Historical Society" volume IV., No. 2, pages 98 to 111).

Prevailing custom ordained that the inhabitants of the two villages of Malana intermarry, so the whole population must be

more or less related to each other. In recent years, probably to counteract the deterioration resulting from continued inbreeding, a few marriages with inhabitants of Rashol and other villages, outside their own particular clan, have been contracted. The people of Malana seldom appear in Kulu courts. Never, if they can avoid it. They have primitive methods of settling their own differences to their own satisfaction. Beyond the collection of land revenue by the *Negi* of Naggar the isolation and independence of the little glen is rarely disturbed, and the peculiar tribal organization characteristic to these lonely and almost inaccessible mountain villages indicate that they have retained their remote isolation over many hundreds of years.

The language of the glen, called Kanashi, is entirely different to the Pahari of Kulu, and is a mixture of aboriginal Mundari and Tibetan. On this subject Mr. Howell, at one time Assistant Commissioner in Kulu, writes :

> "The people of this kothi (Kanaur) were too accessible to retain their language, but Malana—no doubt an offshoot of the aboriginal race, crossed as it was by Tibetans—retained the old Tibeto-Munda dialect, as the Lahaulas and Kanauris of Bashahr did beyond the main ranges. Malana thus became an advanced post of the retreating aboriginals, gradually dropping connection with all its neighbours as the Aryan tide rolled up the Parbatti till, finally, it retained relationship only with Rashol".

A day is quite sufficient to take in the whole of Malana. The temple buildings and the surroundings of the two villages do not invite lengthy or detailed inspection, but compensation, to a large extent, is provided by the natural scenery, especially the view from the ridge behind the top village. For the return journey another early start is recommended in order to get out of the glen in the cool of the morning, otherwise the climb up the precipitous hillside can be distinctly trying. After the top of the pass is reached it is a comfortable walk back to Katrain. On the way down, providing a reliable guide is available, a different route to that of the upward journey might be followed. From the *thach* below the crest of the ridge several paths lead down to Naggar, each of which provides a different line of vision and a variation of scenic effects.

If a prolongation of the trek beyond Malana is contemplated the journey can be continued into the Parbatti valley by way of the Rashol Pass to Manikarn, or down the bank of the Malana river to Jari. Both routes are rough and difficult. Either Manikarn or Jari can be reached in a day's march from Malana. (A description of the Parbatti route is given in another chapter).

A village in Sylvan Settings

CHAPTER XI

JAGATSUKH

JAGATSUKH is on the left bank of the Beas and the road from Naggar to Manali runs through the village. It is about eight miles from Naggar and four from Manali. The easiest route is from Manali. Cross the bridge which spans the Beas and take the road to the right, back towards Naggar. This road is quite good for walking or riding, but has not been adapted for motor traffic.

For visitors residing down the Valley with no car at their disposal the bus service is convenient. Travel by the morning bus to Manali which is timed to reach its destination about 10-30 a.m. and alight at the Post Office, which is only a short distance from Manali bridge. The walk down the left bank of the Beas provides an entirely different perspective to that of the upward journey on the opposite side. The road runs well above the river and branches away from it into more open country and cultivated areas. Before reaching Jagatsukh the village of Shooru, near the entrance to the Hamta nala, is passed, at which is located the ancient and historical temple of *Devi* Sharvali. Two or three hours might conveniently be spent in Jagatsukh for sight-seeing and a picnic lunch, then return to Manali in time to catch the evening bus which leaves about 4 p.m., in accordance with seasonal timings.

Jagatsukh, and the nearby village of Gojra, are both prosperous-looking hamlets. Appearances may be deceptive, but to the ordinary wayfarer the commodious, heavily timber-bonded houses (mostly embellished on the outside with agricultural implements), numerous cattle, stacks of fodder and firewood, plentiful supply of clear running water, and hundreds of acres of cultivated land sloping down towards the river, give them an appearance of well-being and prosperity far in advance of many other villages in less arable parts of the valley.

Jagatsukh, the original name of which was Nast, was the ancient capital of Kulu State. Here the earliest Rajas ruled for twelve generations till, in the reign of Visudh Pal, the capital was transferred to Naggar. Raja Behangamani Pal, the founder of the State, is said to have been one of eight brothers and to have come from Hardwar, on the Ganges. He first went to Manikarn where

he attacked and overcame some of the petty chiefs in the Parbatti valley. He, in turn, must have been overcome, as he is next heard of as a fugitive at Nast. Many legends of Kulu are associated with Behangamani, one of which is given below :

"While a fugitive at Nast he lay asleep on a boulder by the side of the road and a passing Pandit observed on him the signs of noble birth and high descent. (The stone on which Behangamani was sleeping is still shown on the road near Jagatsukh, but in this connection there is another legend to the effect that a stone, *Jagti Pat*, was carried away by wild bees and deposited at Naggar where it can still be seen, enclosed in a tiny temple in the courtyard of the Castle). On the Pandit enquiring into his lineage, Behangamani told him he was a zamindar. But the Pandit was not decieved and requested a true answer, at the same time assuring the self-styled zamindar that he would eventually become ruler of the country. Behangamani then admitted his royal descent and begged the Pandit not to disclose his secret. This the Pandit promised and assured the future ruler that his star was on the ascendant and that no one would have the power to kill him.

"Shortly afterwards a *jatra* (religious fair) called *Chachohli* was held at Bhanara, a village near Jagatsukh, and on the road to this fair Behangamani was accosted by an old woman who said she was unable to walk any further and asked him to take her on his back. He acceded to her request and promised also to carry her on the return journey. When they had almost reached their destination she dismounted and told Behangamani to get up on her back, and by this he knew he was in the company of a goddess. The goddess was Harimba (Hirma *Devi*), an aboriginal deity whose temple is the Dhungri, at Manali. She said to him, 'I have given you my blessing, and you will become king of the country,' and told him to go to the Sharvali temple in Shooru village, near Jagatsukh, and there the goddess would appear to him. Behangamani then went to the fair, the goddess accompanying him, and on his return to Jagatsukh the people hailed him with the salutation of 'Jaidea', accorded only to a royal personage. The people of the district, who were subjects of Ranas and Thakurs, were at the time suffering from many exactions of these petty chiefs, so Behangamani led a revolt against them. Many were killed in the struggle, but he was eventually established as the Raja of the State."

A very similar story to the above is told in connection with Raja Sidh Singh, who reigned about 1500 A.D. As related in volume II of the "History of the Punjab Hill States" by Drs. J. Hutchison and J. Ph. Vogel, it is as follows:

"On arriving in Kulu from Mayapuri, Sidh Pal, as he was then called, is said to have taken up his abode in the village of Hat, near Bajaura. Seeing the shrine of Bijli Mahadeo on the opposite hill, he enquired whose it was and was told that anyone taking water from the *sangam*, the junction of the Beas and Parbatti rivers, and pouring it over the god would receive the reward of his pious deed. Sidh Pal resolved on doing this, and having carried out his intention he slept in the temple for the night. Then the god appeared to him in a dream and told him to go to Jagatsukh where he would receive the promised reward. On arriving there he stayed in the house of a potter. In the morning as he was sitting with his knees crossed a Brahman entered and saw the *Padami*, or sign of royalty, on the sole of his foot. The Brahman then said 'You will obtain rule and a goddess will meet you.' Sidh Pal replied, 'Do not say so to anyone or the Ranas will kill me.' The Brahman repeated his words and asked a grant of land, which was promised if the prediction came true.

"Sidh Pal then went to the *jatra* or fair at Jagatsukh and on the way he fell in with the goddess Harimba, in the guise of an old woman carrying a kilta (basket) on her back. Being of a kindly disposition he offered to carry the kilta, and taking it from her put it on his own back. They then proceeded on their way to the fair. At last they reached a big stone, and making him put the kilta on the ground, Harimba took Sidh Pal on her shoulder and raised herself 32 *kos* high. She then asked him how far he could see and he replied that in one direction he could see to Dalasni, in another to Chorot plain, and in a third to Kale Kanaur. On receiving this answer, she said, 'You will acquire as much land as you can see' and then disappeared. Sidh Pal then went on to the fair and was hailed with 'Jaidea' by all present, that is, he was at once recognized as Raja.

"Fearing the anger of the Ranas he concealed himself in the house of a Brahman and thus escaped. At night the Brahman's wife came out to milk the cow, and there being no one to hold the calf, Sidh Pal came out from the place of concealment and did so. While thus engaged a lion entered the place, which he killed, and from that circumstance his sirname was changed from Pal to Singh. Soon afterward the people assembled and elected him as Raja and he then entered on the conquest of the country from the Ranas and Thakurs who refused to acknowledge his rule."

(The *Chachohli Jatra* is still held every year and Harimba (Hirma *Devi*) attends, at least, every alternate year. The remains of an old fort are still traceable on a spur above Jagatsukh which,

according to local history, was held by one of the Piti Thakurs, a Tibetan officer who was anything but popular in the district.

Some ancient temples still exist in Jagatsukh. Solicitude for historical records or monuments is not a perceptible trait of the inhabitants of Kulu, but thanks to the Archeological Department of the Government of India one of them is still in a fair state of preservation. They are now "protected monuments". In his book "Kooloo, Lahaul and Spiti", published as a Punjab Government Record in 1874, Captain Harcourt, Assistant Commissioner, Kulu (1869-71), gives the following interesting account of one of them :

> "I may, however, allude to the Juggutsookh temple which has some good carvings and statues in the interior, and it is on the outer portal of this building that a sentence is recorded which would apparently point to the name of the sovereign in whose reign it was built. The inscription, although engraved on very hard stone, is almost illegible, and it was only after pencilling over the outline and taking a careful copy on paper from the original, that I was enabled to place the characters before those who could decipher the writing which, as far as I can gather, has never yet been read off. The sentence runs as follows: 'Sirree Maharajah Oodhun Pal sundaye, Davee Kalee Moorut hai'. Now Oodhun Pal was the eighty-third in descent from, and the seventy-fifth successor to, the throne of Behungamunee, and seems to have ruled in Kooloo only two before Sidh Singh whose date of accession is quoted as A.D. 1321 (no reliance can be placed on the correctness of this date); so in all probability this temple was erected somewhere to the close of the thirteenth century. Outside are the remains of several small pyramidal stone temples arranged in rude order; but these may have been placed in position by worshippers who preferred to honour the oldest shrine, and who brought to it, as ornaments, the fragments of buildings erected by those who had the power of adoption of a new creed".

As an instance of tree worship in Kulu there was, until recently near the bungalow which was once the residence of General Cunningham, an old tree almost covered with nails, many of them crooked, driven in by sufferers from pain, and which were supposed to confer alleviation. *Gaddis* (shepherds) are also known to tender sacrifices before certain trees to propitiate arboreal gods which have the power to ensure protection of their flocks.

Living at Jagatsukh is a Mahant who specialises in anti-rabic treatment. His methods differ considerably from those of Kasauli and other similar famous institutions, but his reputation is firmly established in the minds of the villagers of Kulu. A branch Post-office and a school are located in the village.

CHAPTER XII

HAMTA PASS

THIS is another excursion for which tents and camp equipment are necessary. It is too far from Manali to ascend the pass and return the same day and there are no intervening Rest-houses at which a night's shelter can be obtained. Though somewhat off the beaten track the Hamta, which is about a thousand feet higher than the Rohtang, is a more enterprising trek and can be more enjoyable when undertaken in dry weather. The road over the Rohtang—a main trade route into Lahaul and Ladakh—is kept in good repair by the Public Works Department, but the path over the Hamta, commercially much less important, does not receive so much care and attention. It is a direct route into Spiti and is invariably used by Spiti people travelling to and from Kulu, also by *gaddis* taking their flocks into the upper parts of the Chandra valley for grazing, but these periodic and nomadic travellers pay little heed to road conditions.

Like the Rohtang, and subject to weather conditions, the Hamta is usually open for traffic from the middle or end of May until October, and sometimes for a month or more later. Despite the uneven and variable types of road surface it is, in good weather, passable for pack animals, but is neither a pleasant nor comfortable trek during the rainy season. Irrespective of restricted visibility on account of low-lying cloud, the actual path, like that of the Chandra-Khanni Pass is, in parts, comprised largely of *chickni-mitti* and is very slippery. Even the sharpest of hobnails make little difference, as the sole of the boot or shoe gets clogged up with sticky clay. Fine weather and a dry path are, therefore, two main essentials for an enjoyable trip. It was on his way down this mountain path, in 1912, that General Bruce met with an accident. He slipped on the treacherous clay and dislocated his shoulder which considerably hampered his further climbing efforts during that particular period of leave. Incidentally, General Bruce mentions, in effect, that Jamlu, the powerful *deota* of Malana, who had previously warned him, was really responsible for the accident. He was evidently taking revenge for not having been adequately propitiated by the climbers who had the temerity to invade these sanctuaries of the gods. (Jamlu and Gyephang Lha, his brother, are old nature deities of two prominent peaks of the district).

The actual road up the Hamta nala takes off from near Prini village, on the left bank of the Beas, about two-and-a-half miles below Manali. From Manali, cross the bridge over the main river and turn right towards Naggar; continue along this road and cross the bridge which spans the Alaini (or Hamta) river. A little beyond the bridge and partly round the bend, a footpath takes off to the left and ascends towards Prini. From the opposite direction Jagatsukh, a village on the Naggar-Manali road, provides a good starting point for the journey. No Rest-house is available at Jagatsukh. The official Gazetteer gives the distance from Jagatsukh to Chhika, the first camping ground up the Hamta nala, as nine miles, but in the late Colonel Tyacke's book "In quest of Game" it is shown as eleven miles. Over the steep bits of the upward trek the latter estimate is usually more in keeping with the climber's frame of mind. The road passes both Prini and Hamta villages and runs along the left bank of the Alaini river until, just below Chhika, it crosses to the opposite bank.

About the end of the 15th or beginning of the 16th century the higher reaches of the left bank of the Beas, especially the approaches to the Hamta and Chandra-Khanni Passes, were under Tibetan rule and several forts at the upper end of the Valley were commanded by Tibetan officers, called 'Piti Thakurs' by the Kulu people. 'Piti Thakur' means Spiti Lord; there were a number of rulers in succession bearing this title). The most renowned of these Thakurs, whose fort was on a spur above Jagatsukh, the remains of which are still traceable, used to worship at an old temple at Prini, but, notwithstanding his presumed devoutness he was not, according to local tradition, averse to performing human sacrifice nor drinking human milk. His lieutenants in the Chhaki nala and elsewhere in the neighbourhood had similar propensities. This old temple is the only one in Kulu in which Spiti men worship and make their offerings, and are allowed to enter the temple precincts fully shod; all other races have to remove their shoes. When inspired, the local priest at this shrine speaks a language which he claims to be Tibetan, but which is actually Kanashi-Malana dialect.

Upward from Prini is a fairly steep ascent of nearly 2,000 feet to Hamta village along a road of seemingly endless winding. Parts of this path provide pleasant enough walking in dry weather, but the boulder-strewn stretch near Hamta is somewhat trying. About half-a-mile beyond Hamta an open glade with a stream of clear cold water—appropriately named "Thanda-Pani"—is a tempting place for rest and refreshment and affords some magnificient views of snowy peaks on the Kulu-Lahaul border. A short distance above Thanda-Pani the nala proper is entered and the remaining few miles to Chhika comprise an enjoyable walk on a path of easy

gradients—an agreeable change after the comparatively stiff climb between Prini and Hamta villages. The path meanders through shady forest of well-grown walnut, pine and other highland species, interspersed with open grassy slopes swept bare of trees by winter avalanche and, occasionally, over more recent avalanche debris, crossing in its course a small stream which rises on the slopes of Deo-tibba until, eventually, after recrossing the Alaini river by a footbridge for pedestrians and a ford for ponies, Chhika is reached. Situated on a long grassy bank, sloping down from the cliffs above and on the right of a little stream from the Khri nala which runs into the Alaini, Chhika is an ideal location for the end of the day's march. Camping grounds, generally, are selected with regard to adjacent facilities of fodder and water for pack animals and, not infrequently, are located at most uninteresting places. But the great overhanging rocks and picturesque settings of Chhika cannot be relegated to this class. The impressive grandeur of immediate surroundings; the nearness of the Tokru-shakru peaks which dominate the upper end of the Kulu Valley as seen from Katrain; the wonderful colouring of rock and mountainside; the deep purple of early-morning shade and the golden glories of sunset on near and distant snow-clad heights, constitute a halting place that will live in memory after many other scenic splendours of Kulu have been forgotten. Actually, from Hamta upwards, especially in the early part of the year, the diverse shapes and greens of forest flora, flower-studded banks and glades, and the unstinted variety of typical alpine scenery cannot be excelled throughout the whole of the district. It can be fairly cold under canvas at Chhika and a couple of extra blankets will be appreciated. In order to lessen the fatigue of climbing on the following day camp can, if desired, be made at Balu-ka-Ghera or Chumji, higher up the mountain, but the scenery from these alternative camping grounds is not comparable with the magnificence of the lower camp.

From Chhika to the top of the pass is a long and rather wearisome march. It is not a difficult walk nor is the ascent particularly steep, except for the last few hundred yards. The mountain scenery, with occasional glimpses of Deo-tibba and Girwa kothi, two prominent peaks to the south-east, is almost overwhelming by the proximity of rugged splendour, but to those who prefer a more sylvan environment it is not so interesting as the slopes below Chhika. A mile or so beyond Chhika is Balu-ka-Ghera (sand bay) where the valley flattens out and branches into two parts. The nala on the left is known locally as Pataori and to the right is the main Hamta nala.

The view from the crest of the pass is, to a certain extent, restricted by immediate surroundings. But looking backward towards the Solung nala in Kulu or across the Chandra valley into

Lahaul, distant and massive mountains dominate the landscape, their serrated peaks silhouetted against the deep blue horizon. Below are bare and precipitous hog-backed ridges, buttressed by dark and forbidding cliffs; a dense huddle of mountain, glacier, perpendicular crag and dreary waste of barren country. The crest of the Hamta differs, in one main respect, from that of the Rohtang; it is not so frequently subject to furious gales and blizzards which, in bad weather, constitute a real danger on the latter.

The return journey to camp is less tiresome than the upward climb despite occasional stretches of rough and rocky road, while the different angle of vision provides many interesting features previously unnoticed. Instead of trying to rush back to Manali or Jagatsukh the same day, another evening and another morning in the beautiful surroundings of Chhika will not be wasted. The gorgeous views at sunset and at sunrise will not pall with repetition, while an extra day in the exhilarating freshness and purity of the atmosphere at this altitude cannot help but prove beneficial to general health and vitality.

Providing time and provisions are available for a more extended trek the excursion up the Hamta can be prolonged by the actual crossing of the pass; descending into the Chandra valley and camping for a night at Chhatru; walking down the bank of the Chandra river to Khoksar; then ascending the Rohtang from the Lahaul side and so back to Manali. The descent from the crest of the Hamta into the Chandra valley is rather abrupt and the road crosses two snow beds over which, especially for pack and riding ponies, care may be necessary, but they are not dangerous in fine weather. Camp can be pitched at Chhatru and, on the following day, the march continued down the Chandra river to Khoksar. A new road has been constructed along the left bank of the Chandra river and the difficulties of travel over the old route practically eliminated. On fine days the trek along this boulder and shale-strewn valley, with a swift mountain torrent on one flank and precipitous rock on the other, can be rather thrilling.

Supplies for the whole journey must be taken; little, if anything, is available *en-route*. There is a Rest-house at Khoksar, also some good camping sites if tent life is still preferred. Old Khoksar, higher up the river, is now practically deserted except, perhaps, for a few months in the summer when one or two families may, for the sake of grazing, occupy what remains of the tiny village. Forty or more years ago this part of the Chandra valley afforded wonderful sport. "Black and White", July 1904, published extracts of letters from an officer shooting in the district two of which are quoted below :

Kokum (Koksar) Dak-bungalow,
Lahoul.

"I got here yesterday after a trying, but interesting trip. You may imagine I arrived in a pretty bad state as I had not had a bath for 29 days, and often it was impossible to wash owing to the cold and to the necessity of having a thick coating of vaseline on your face. The little I saw of Tibet was all snow. We had to cross a Pass 18,600 feet high and were all knocked over with mountain sickness. Breathing positively hurt, I had great sport, however, getting six burrel and seven ibex, two of the latter with 40" horns."

Purana Kokum (Koksar).

"This place (Purana Koksar) is renowned for a colony of bears which have done much havoc among the flocks, and recently killed two shepherds who came to their rescue. I had my milk goat taken close to my tent, so lay up for Mr. Bruin. As it was getting dusk a herd of ibex appeared, about five hundred yards off, followed by an enormous red bear. As there were some fine heads among the ibex I was doubtful which to go for, but the bear settled it by frightening the ibex and off they went. The bear, however, came straight on towards me, evidently wishing for another go at the goats. I let him get within fifty yards then let drive, getting him in the chest. He never moved . He measured 6'-5", quite one of the biggest of his kind. After shooting the bear I went after the ibex and after a stiff stalk got within shot. I got four with six cartridges—not a bad evening's work."

New Khoksar, which is now the highest all-the-year-round inhabited village in the Chandra valley, comprises a fairly big group of houses, huddled together like most villages in Lahaul. The most noticeable features about both old and new Khoksars are their desolate environment and the deadly cold breezes so frequently prevalent.

The Rohtang pass route has been fully described in another chapter.

CHAPTER XIII

MANALI AND BASHISHT

SITUATED near the head of the Valley, Manali (6,000 feet) is the terminus of the motor road and the real starting point of an ancient trade route which crosses the Rohtang and Baralacha passes and runs, *via* Lahaul and Ladakh to Kashmir, while divergent paths connect with Spiti, Zangskar, Rupshu, Tibet and other remote countries in Central Asia.

According to Cunningham in his "Journal of a trip through Kooloo" the spur on the left bank of the Beas, at some distant period, extended right across the valley, pent up the river and created a large lake, the bottom of which now forms the alluvial flat of Manali. This is quite conceivable. Pine-clad mountains gradually close in on both banks of the Beas until they almost meet and, nestling in their shade as though carved out of primeval forest, is the scattered hamlet which comprises this picturesque summer resort. For a lavish display of natural scenery Manali is one of the principal show places of Kulu. North, south and west is an ostentation of pinnacles and ridges which, in fine weather, stand out in bold relief against the skyline. Deep, purplish crevices, overhung by scarped cliffs, reach down toward the valleys. Silver streaks of water, glistening in clear sunlight, cascade over perpendicular heights. Lofty *thaches*, from which the snow has melted, form vivid green patches of grassland, their clarity enhanced by darker surroundings. At a lower elevation and in every direction the eyes may wander, serried battalions of evergreen pine flank the sides of sheltered ravines and ascend, in irregular formations, towards rock-crowned crests. Where cultivation is feasible on the steep hillsides, tiny terraced fields in varying shades of green and brown, create effective splashes of colour which, together with trim orchards blending into the woodland by which they are fringed, provide restful alleviation from a surfeit of rugged grandeur.

In contrast with its scenic investment the actual entrance to Manali—which comprises, on one side of the road, an irregular line of dingy houses and shops and on the other, at a corner near the Post-office, of a collection of similar mean, dilapidated and fly-stricken structures—is rather an eyesore. Several buildings of more

imposing architecture and better construction have been erected in recent years, but instead of distracting from they appear to emphasise the squalidity of the remainder. As the main gate-way to a land of such sylvan charm considerable embellishment is necessary to make it worthy of its environment. The original name of this particular area was Dana. Later it became Duff-Dunbar and the present Post-office, up to a few years ago, was officially designated Duff-Dunbar Post-office, named, presumably, after one of the original European residents of Manali whose house, on the hillside, is still known as "Duff-Dunbar". This part of Manali is entirely separate from the original village of that name which is located beyond the Manalsu river, higher up the valley, and the inhabitants of which prefer to retain their separate entities.

Passenger buses invariably halt near the Post and Telegraph Office. A little way beyond this office is the Civil Rest-house where tea or a light meal can usually be obtained. If accommodation for the night is required permit should be applied for in advance to the Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu. Further along and on the right of the path is the Forest Rest-house in an appropriate setting of lofty deodar. Perhaps still more appropriate is the well-kept nursery of young trees in an enclosure in front of the bungalow.

Beyond the Forest Rest-house, on both right and left of the main road, are the estates of Banon brothers. Their father, the late Captain Banon, selected this site for an orchard many years ago and his selection has been amply justified. The motor road actually terminates at Sunshine Orchard and the residence of Major H.M. Banon. Facing the Civil Rest-house, away up on the mountainside, is the Shan estate, its whitewashed buildings conspicuous against surrounding greenery. The road leading to the Shan estate passes Duff-Dunbar house, summer residence of the late Mr. Makay. The Lady Willingdon Hospital, about a hundred yards from the Rest-house, is under the control of the Canadian Mission, district headquarters of which are at Palampur, in the Kangra District. Lady Willingdon was keenly interested in this little hospital and made a special journey from Delhi, by air, er to perform the opening ceremony. It is well staffed and equipped and is a blessing to the inhabitants of the upper part of Kulu Valley. On the opposite side of the river, about half-a-mile beyond Manali, are more orchard estates on which have been erected several residential houses.

Prior to 1500 A.D. Ranas and Thakurs held both banks of the Beas above Jagatsukh and the name of a powerful chief Jhinna Rana, last of a long line of these Tibetan rulers, still survives in local tradition. His strongholds were at Mandankot and Manali. The lower part of the valley, at this period, was ruled by Raja Sidh Singh

This is how the hill women carry their children up and down the vales

A Kulu Belle

who, unsuccessful in overcoming Jhinna Rana by force, resorted to guile to gain his ends, and bribed a groom, of koli caste, to slay his master. A very interesting account of the incident is given in the "History of the Punjab Hill States" by Drs. Hutchison and Vogel. One of the traditions still surviving about Jhinna Rana is to the effect that there are secret caves where his treasures were stored and that a secret passage led to them from Mandankot. Many years ago a local man was supposed to have found the passage and entered the caves, which were full of treasure. Unable to do so by himself he went to call others to help him remove the hoard, but, on returning, failed to find the passage. Later, his mind became affected, due, it is believed, to the evil influence of the *jogins* (spirits) of the caves.

Another interesting incident relating to Tibetan occupation of Manali is related by Mr. G.C.L. Howell, I.C.S., one time Assistant Commissioner of Kulu, in the "Journal of the Punjab Historical Society". It is as follows :

> "More than 20 years ago a monk came with credentials from Lhasa addressed to the late Thakur Hari Chand of Lahoul and he also had in his possession an ancient map of Manali and of an old Bhuddist monastery which once stood there. He stated that the monks who occupied it had been driven out of the valley in a hurry, but had hidden their library in a cave, which they had closed by concealing the mouth with a pile of logs and sealing it with a curse, calculated to deter the boldest Kulu man from interfering with the logs. When the monk reached Manali he went straight to the pile of logs in front of the Manali temple, and was at once confronted with the curse, making it impossible for him to touch them. The mystery thus remains unsolved."

To the ordinary sightseer Manali has many attractions, but the chief centre of interest, historically and archeologically, is undoubtedly the Dhungri temple, dedicated to the goddess Harimba (or Hirma *Devi*). According to an inscription on the doorway at the east side of this temple it was founded in S. 29 (corresponding to 1553 A.D.) by Raja Bahadur Singh, son of Raja Sidh Singh. There is also a mask of Hirma *Devi* in the temple, an inscription on which fixes the reign of a previous ruler, Udhran Pal, S. 94 (1418 A.D.) No doubt exists that the original temple was founded several hundred years ago, but its pagoda-shaped roofs, formed of thick deodar shingles, must have been renewed from time to time. These square roofs are in tiers of diminishing sizes above which is a kind of circular wooden cone, which is again surmounted by a brass ball and trident. Whether the latter has any religious signification or is purely ornamental it is difficult to ascertain from present

worshippers at this shrine. The temple rises about eighty feet from the ground, but is somewhat out of perpendicular and, from an architectural point of view, is of clumsy construction. Verandahs occupy three sides of the building. The doorway faces east and this side is extensively decorated by carved woodwork—elephants, tigers, birds, etc. According to present-day standards the carving would not rate very high, but if there is any truth attached to the following legend it must originally have been considered a masterpiece. Briefly, the story goes that :

> "The then reigning sovereign of Kulu, in order to prevent the duplication of this wonderful work on the Dhungri temple, cut off the carver's right hand. Not to be outdone, however, the artist continued practise with his left hand and, at Triloknath, near the Chamba-Lahoul border, executed even a finer piece of work. But he was again unlucky. The ruler of that part of the country, determined that this latest example of the artist's skill should not be surpassed, cut off his head."

Erected on a small clearing of dense forest and in an eerie setting of giant deodars (reputed to be over a thousand years old) the Dhungri temple has every appearance of being able to substantiate the numerous legends woven around it and its presiding deity, Harimba, that have gained currency through the centuries. Dimly visible in the gloomy interior, as seen from the open doorway, half hidden boulders strew the ground and, above a large sloping-surfaced stone in the centre, a sinister looking rope hangs down from the roof. To the present day the sombre precincts of this ancient edifice are occasionally utilised for incarcerating refractory *deota* in times of drought or famine in order to induce in them a change of mind toward better weather conditions; or perhaps to make special intercession to Harimba who, like *Devi* Phugni of the Sarvari valley, is supposed to grant rain. Despite the malignant reputation which has probably been wrongfully adduced to the Dhungri, it is held in great veneration throughout and even beyond the confines of Kulu and very few inhabitants of the district go to Manali without paying their respects to its presiding deity.

Harimba (Hirma *Devi*) is believed to have conferred the country on Behangamani Pal, one of the original rulers, and still retains a maternal interest in the ruling families—Rupi and Sangri—who, to this day, are said to call her "grandmother". Within the boundaries of Harimba's jagir her officers were all powerful, even in the face of royal prerogative, and anyone fleeing from the anger of the Raja was accorded sanctuary if he succeeded in winning his way to Okhiragolu, Harimba's border, about two miles below Manali. She appears to have been worshipped from a very remote period and her worship is still attended by the occasional sacrifice

of animals—buffaloes, sheep and goats—chiefly as a propitiatory measure for the amelioration of epidemics; also on accession to the *gaddi* by the head of the ruling families. She invariably attends the big fair at Sultanpur during Dussehra to pay her respects to Raghunathji, but has the privilege of habitually going late. The opening day procession across the *maidan* can only begin after *Devi* Hirma's arrival, and her presence is necessary for the arrangement of the programme of subsequent ceremonies.

Bashisht (or Vashisht), a little village located on the left bank of the Beas, but well above the river and about two miles beyond Manali, is renowned for its hot spring, and is well worth a visit. The ordinary route crosses the Beas by the Manali bridge, then along the main road towards the Rohtang pass. A more pleasant way, however, is a path through the forest on the Manali side of the river and crossing, higher up, by a foot bridge. Two or three furlongs beyond this foot bridge the road to Bashisht village branches off to the right. *[*A signpost marked Vashisht is (or was) nailed to a tree almost opposite the point where this path leaves the main road*]*. The path inclines upward and across the hillside, the steepest bit comprising a rough stone stairway. The village lies just over the ridge and is not visible during the short climb, but if the breeze happens to be blowing down the valley the sulphur-tainted atmosphere usually indicates the near presence of the hot spring.

The official Gazetteer*, which contains a very good illustration of one of the Bashisht bathing pools, devotes only a few lines to descriptive matter in which it is stated that the temperature of the water, in summer months, reaches 132.8 degrees Fahr., but that no particular advantage is likely to accrue from bathing in it. Evidently this is not the popular opinion or it would not attract such a large number of visitors who firmly believe in the healing propensities of the water. The late General Bruce, of Everest fame, in his book "Kulu and Lahaul" states :

> "There is no doubt about the soothing effect of the sulphur waters of Bashisht.... I really enjoyed some benefit from the hot sulphur waters. Would that all natural curative waters were so easily obtained."

Water from the principal spring gushes out from the ground into a small stone basin, or tank, and is led into a regular walled bathing pool with stone floors, about 20 feet square and 3 feet deep. A raised platform runs along each of the four sides, and, for the convenience of bathers, steps lead down into the tank. A second pool also enclosed, which takes the overflow from the first pool,

*1917 edition.

is also largely used by pilgrims to the shrine of Vashishta. Local *deotas* from many parts of Kulu Valley are occasionally taken in procession to Bashisht for a bathe in its soothing waters. In the courtyard, through which entrance to the main bathing pool is obtained, is a stone and wood temple dedicated to Vashishta Muni, from whom the village gets its name. From the doorway of this temple can be seen the dim outline of an image of the god, carved in black stone. His silver eyes gleam brightly in the dark interior and the mystic effect thus produced may have some bearing on the reverential awe with which he is regarded, and add conviction to the belief that he possesses miraculous powers of healing.

Above the hot spring and bathing pools is a series of steps leading up to the stone temple of Ram Chunder, said to have been built in the reign of Raja Jagat Singh about 1650. It is worth more than a passing glance while in the vicinity.

Water from the hot spring, after passing through the bathing tanks, finds its way into an open drain and stagnates in little pools by the roadside. When the mud of the drain and pools is churned up by roving cattle, or even by children , the odour is not exactly agreeable, and detracts somewhat from what, otherwise, is an enjoyable excursion.

CHAPTER XIV

ROHTANG PASS

NUMEROUS mountain passes lead in and out of Kulu, but the one most popular with trekking parties is the Rohtang, about 13,400 feet above sea level. It is easily the most convenient route for a trek to higher altitudes and, throughout the whole distance from Manali, provides a charming variety of scenery. Excursions to other passes at the head of the Valley usually involve transportation of tents and camping equipment, but for the Rohtang trek comfortable Rest-houses are conveniently located. Moreover, being a main trade route from Amritsar, Hoshiarpur and other cities of the plains to Lahaul, Ladakh and to far-away countries in Central Asia, the road carries a lot of pack-pony traffic and, as far as the border of Ladakh, is maintained by the Public Works Department. This route has probably been in existence for many centuries, but the building of the actual road, more or less on its present alignment, was completed in 1870-1 by Mr. Theodore, District Engineer of Kulu at that period.

Manali, the end of the motor road, is the starting point for the Rohtang trek and all arrangements for coolies, pack and riding animals should be made there with the local contractor. If the itinerary includes a night to be spent at Manali on either upward or downward journeys, permission to occupy the Rest-house should be obtained from the Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu. Permission to occupy a room or rooms at the Kothi Rest-house should also be obtained beforehand. Both the Rest-houses are furnished with crockery, cutlery, lamps, etc. The man in charge of the Manali Rest-house is able to provide meals, and at Kothi a cook-chowkidar is in attendance.

The road over the Rohtang opens for traffic about the middle of May, but the actual date from which it can be crossed with safety is dictated by weather conditions in the early part of the season. For weeks prior to its opening the upper end of Kulu Valley teems with activity. Sheep and shepherds on their way to the rich pastures of Lahaul, Laden pack animals, driven by Mongolian-featured men and women, slowly wending their way towards the wind-swept plains of Ladakh and to other countries far beyond

the range of the ordinary tourist. Above Manali every available camping ground is dotted with tents and neatly-stacked packs, while numerous pack animals roam the vicinity in search of food. Grazing grounds in this neck of the valley are narrowly restricted and there is frequent congestion of upward traffic till it debouches from the defile above Rahla and can expand on the lower *thaches* of the mountain. At this early period of the year these Alpine pastures, from which the snow has melted, are carpeted with a variety of flowers among which, on the Rohtang, purple iris and primula predominate.

The first stage of the journey, Manali to Kothi, is 7 miles only and, during summer, when it remains light until about 8 p.m., is a pleasant evening walk. The road crosses the bridge at Manali and turns left up the valley. For about four miles, to the junction of the Rikki Beas and Beas Kund, it is comparatively level. It then turns right, the upward slope becomes more pronounced and, towards the top of a sharp ascent, is cut through solid rock under over-hanging cliff. Below Kothi, for more than a mile, the Rikhi Beas flows through a deep gorge, almost a subterranean passage, a hundred feet or more in depth, and the cliffs which flank both sides of this canyon afford a favourite haunt for blue rock pigeon. Before reaching the Rest-house the river is recrossed by a wooden bridge, high above the torrent. The site of this bridge provides an interesting historical episode in the early annals of Kulu :

> "During the reign of Nard Pal, 40th ruler in the genealogical roll of Kulu chiefs—about 850 A.D.—Chamba and Kulu were at war and the Chamba forces (the Gaddi army) had advanced as far as Mandankot, a village near the foot of the Rohtang Pass, where the Chamba Raja had built a fort. A peace treaty was eventually concluded, but the Kulu people were not satisfied and wanted to get rid of the invaders. A social gathering was arranged to which all the Chamba soldiers were invited. The place selected for the feast, which was to be at night, was at Kothi village on the left bank of the Beas. The river at this point flows through a deep gorge which was spanned by two beams, set apart, and cross planks. Just before the feast was due to commence two Kulu men removed the planks from the beams and replaced them with long grass. When the Chamba men arrived in the darkness each man, in trying to cross, fell into the gorge and many were drowned before the deceit was discovered by the drummers going down, when the sound of their drums ceased. Those who remained on the right bank turned and fled, but a large part of the Chamba force was destroyed."

The Kothi Rest-house is picturesquely situated on a ridge overlooking the narrow valley. Originally there were two Rest-houses

in the locality—one at Kothi and another, two miles further along, at Rahla. The latter, situated at the actual foot of the pass, was in a better location for casual trekkers, but comprised only two small rooms and out-houses which were insufficient to meet the demands of travellers on this route. The Rest-house at Kothi has been enlarged and considerably improved. Milk, fowls, eggs and potatoes are generally available from the local contractor, but if there is a rush of visitors these supplies are quickly exhausted. To be on the safe side it is wise to carry some tinned provisions.

Kothi to the crest of the pass and back is between 16 and 17 miles and, weather permitting, an early start is strongly recommended. Getting out of a warm bed while the stars are still visible and dressing and breakfasting by lamplight is not an enjoyable prelude to a day's trek, but this seeming discomfort in the early morning is more than compensated later in the day, especially for pedestrians. Even at an altitude of over 10,000 feet, the heat of the sun can be very trying and a combination of blazing sunshine and strenuous climbing is not exactly conducive to comfort. Other reasons for getting away at daybreak are : (*a*) during the early hours surrounding heights are usually free from cloud and better and wider views are obtainable ; the clear atmosphere also affords greater scope for photography. (b) In early summer and late autumn, after about 11 a.m. or midday, the crest of the pass is occasionally subject to severe blizzards and snowstorms, accompanied by a deadly cold breeze. It was in such a storm, in 1862, that 72 coolies, returning from bridge work in Lahaul, lost their lives. The sky was cloudless when they left Khoksar, but when they reached the top of the pass a furious gale and blinding snowstorm suddenly developed and drove the snow over them in great drifts. Several managed to escape by keeping their heads to the wind and lying on the ground, extricating themselves from the snow after the storm had passed, but these few were accustomed to the vagaries of storms at high altitudes. Even in the summer of 1939 the pass claimed its quota of victims, again from a party of men coming into Kulu from Lahaul. They also were caught in a blizzard near the top of the pass and several lost their lives before they could win to the safety of shelter.

Leaving Kothi the road is comparatively level as far as Rahla, but shortly ofter passing the Rahla bungalow the real ascent commences. From this point, despite the zig-zag pattern of the road, the gradient, for several miles, is definitely steep; more so if the main road is deserted by the allurement of easy-looking short cuts. Although it calls for no spectacular feat of mountaineering the ascent of the Rohtang, especially by those unaccustomed to walking at high altitudes, is not easy. This particular trek is all too frequently marred by a mistaken idea that, providing the road is fairly good,

a walk of 16 or 17 miles in a long day is not a difficult task. Local inhabitants think nothing of it; neither would a trained mountaineer; but to a visitor straight up from the plains, even though accustomed to long distance walking on level roads, the altitude and the rarified atmosphere occasionally create annoying and embarrassing palpitation and shortness of breath. Foot slogging up the pass may also add much to a personal sense of achievement, yet a riding pony—if only used occasionally or when necessary to relieve tired leg muscles—can make all the difference between comfortable well-being and acute discomfort.

A few hundred yards beyond the Rahla bungalow, near the stone steps which constitute a "short-cut" up the lower slopes of the Rohtang is (or was until recently) the abode, under a couple of large stones, of a family of sacred snakes. These snakes are regularly fed with milk, ghee, gur, etc., by nomads habitually using this route. If the snakes are seen in the company of lizards, which they do not appear to molest, the omen is supposed to be much more propitious than if they are alone. Many local temples are dedicated to Nags, aboriginal snake gods (the presiding spirits of numerous springs and rivers), but whether the tending of these snakes near Rahla has any distant relation to the ancient cult of serpent worship it is difficult to ascertain. Nag worship is definitely the most ancient form of religion in these mountains and the following legend, quoted from the "Kulu Gazetteer" is interesting in this connection:

> "The Nags are descended from Basu Nag, the father of all Nags, whose temple is at Kamharti in Kothi Naggar, with others in many of the Himalayan districts. The story of the birth of the 'eighteen' (the number eighteen is commonly used to mean a great number) Kulu Nags is told as follows—One day, at Ghushal village, north of Manali, a beautiful woman was on the roof of her house when she was carried off by Basu Nag. He kept her in concealment (after the usual Kulu manner) until one day, when the Nag was asleep with his head on her lap, she remembered that it was the 3rd of Asuj and that there would be a dance and a fair at Ghushal and that the old folks would be there, so she wept and her tears woke up Basu Nag. He told her not to worry, but if she wanted to go home he would place her there at once, but she would give birth to eighteen Nags, whom she must feed daily with milk,and burn incense to them. She agreed to this proposal and things turned out as the Nag had said. She stayed at home and gave birth to the Nags and attended to them as directed, keeping them in an earthenware pot. But her daughter-in-law (there is some hiatus here in the story) was inquisitive, and when her mother-in-law was away, went with milk

and a spoonful of incense to the mysterious pot. When the Nags popped out to get at the milk, she took fright and dropped all she had in her hands and the Nags escaped, but many were burnt by the fire. Dhumal Nag of Halan (Baragarh) is said to have broken the lid of the pot. Pahl Nag of Prini had his arm burnt; Jalsa Nag of Jalsa (Baragraon) became deaf; the Ghushali Nag was blinded and never left the village; Shargan Nag of Bhanara (Jagatsukh) had his head singed; Kali Nag of Raison and Harkandhi was blackened by the fire. This latter deity has a temple at Shirrar and keeps up a perpetual feud with Narain; when his festival takes place at Shirrar (near Raison) he has a great battle with Narain on the ranges between the Beas and the Sarvari, and in the morning the hill tops and the grove at Gramang are strewn with iron arrows. The cause of the quarrel is said to be the rudeness of Narain to Kali Nag whom he found at his place at Jana in Kothi Naggar. Narain shot the Nag, as an arrow, from his bow across the Beas valley, and he fell at Shirrar. Kali Nag is also said to have run off with Narain's sister—but that is another story."

After many windings and, in the earlier part of the season, the crossing of a snow bridge which spans a sheltered ravine, the road gradually ascends toward the top of the pass. The upper slopes are not quite so steep as the lower part of the mountain, but owing to the more rarified atmosphere walking becomes increasingly difficult. The crest of the Rohtang is over half-a-mile across, but in comparison with the widespread panorama afforded by the Hamta and Chandra-khanni passes, views from the Rohtang are somewhat circumscribed owing to cliffs on either side of the gap. Looking into Lahaul the scenery is entirely different to that on the Kulu side of the ridge and the transition from one region to another is distinctly impressive. In place of pine-clad hills, sheltered valleys, cultivated tracts, and an infinite variety of soft warm shades and tints overlaying grassland and forest, the eye meets a range of snow-clad peaks: pinnacles, ridges and precipitous cliffs of stark rock; huge glaciers; piled moraine and deep ravines, the slopes of which are bare and treeless. Almost directly opposite, and seemingly only a few miles away, is the well-defined Sonepani glacier; slightly left are the twin peaks of the Gyephang—jagged pyramid of rock, snow-streaked and snow-crowned. The higher of these two peaks, 19,212 feet, can be seen on a clear day from the Ridge, in Simla.

The Beas river rises near the crest of the Rohtang, springing into existence from a block of mica-schist. From its source it winds in a narrow rivulet for some little distance then, fed by a large snowfield, grows in volume on its way down the mountain. By the time it reaches Rahla, above which it hurtles over a sheer drop of more than forty feet, it is a river of respectable size and gets a powerful

start on its long journey of about 350 miles. The source of the Beas is annually visited by a number of pilgrims, but it is evidently not considered quite so sacred as the source of other mighty rivers in India.

To the left of the pass and five or six hundred feet higher is the little lake of Sarkund (also called Dashair). On 20th *Bhadon* (about the 4th of September) each year, this small glacial lake is visited by numbers of people from Kulu and from other districts further afield, the general belief being that a bath in these gelid waters at daybreak on this particular day will effect a cure of all bodily complaints—real or imaginary. Traditional legends in connection with this lake are given below :

> "A beautiful daughter of Akbar the Great, born at Delhi, had a withered leg. When Akbar realised the girl's infirmity he called together his astrologers and pandits in order to try and ascertain the reason of his child being born with such blemish. After consultations and much divination the pandits informed the Emperor that in a sacred lake in the Himalayas a mare had met its death by drowning; that the mare was submerged with the exception of a left leg which was sticking up out of the water; and that, if this leg be also submerged, the child would get well. Akbar thereupon caused orders to be issued to the Governors of all his hill provinces to have a search made for this lake and the drowned mare and, when found, to place the remaining leg below water, and to inform him of the date and time of complete submergence. A search party eventually came to the Kulu Valley seeking information of all glacial lakes in the district and, in furtherance of the quest, climbed the Rohtang and visited Sarkund. Here, on 20th *Bhadon*, they found the drowned mare, partially submerged as foretold by the pandits. As instructed, they placed the remaining leg under water, noting the date and time. From the very moment the mare was completely submerged the child's withered leg commenced healing and soon became quite sound."

A variation of the above legend related to a young and beautiful Hindu princess who was afflicted with leprosy. It appears that :

> "In a previous incarnation this princess had been an esteemed mare belonging to a royal family and, when taken on pilgrimage to Dashair, was drowned in the lake and from which her body was not removed. The gods of the lake (Nags) were angry at the continued pollution, by flesh, of their sacred water and proclaimed a curse on the soul of the pony in its present

incarnation. This curse, which descended on the princess, took the form of leprosy. Her father, the King, after consultation with his wise men, was informed of the origin of the curse which was lifted immediately the remains of the mare were removed from the sacred water and the wrath of the Nags placated."

Hence the local belief in the healing properties of this little mountain lake and the annual pilgrimage thereto.

Even on the finest days it can be chilly at the top of the Rohtang and, after seeing what is to be seen, a spot of lunch, or late breakfast will be thoroughly appreciated. To eat in comfort it is necessary to get away from the cold breeze, and the lee side of a projecting rock will provide protection and comparative warmth. The downward journey will probably be accomplished in much less time than the ascent, but a different set of leg muscles are brought into action and the level stretch at the foot of the pass will usually be greeted with relief. A well-earned rest at the Kothi bungalow will be thoroughly appreciated while "the cup that cheers", followed by a steaming hot bath will go far towards alleviating the fatigue and stiffness engendered by a strenuous day.

CHAPTER XV

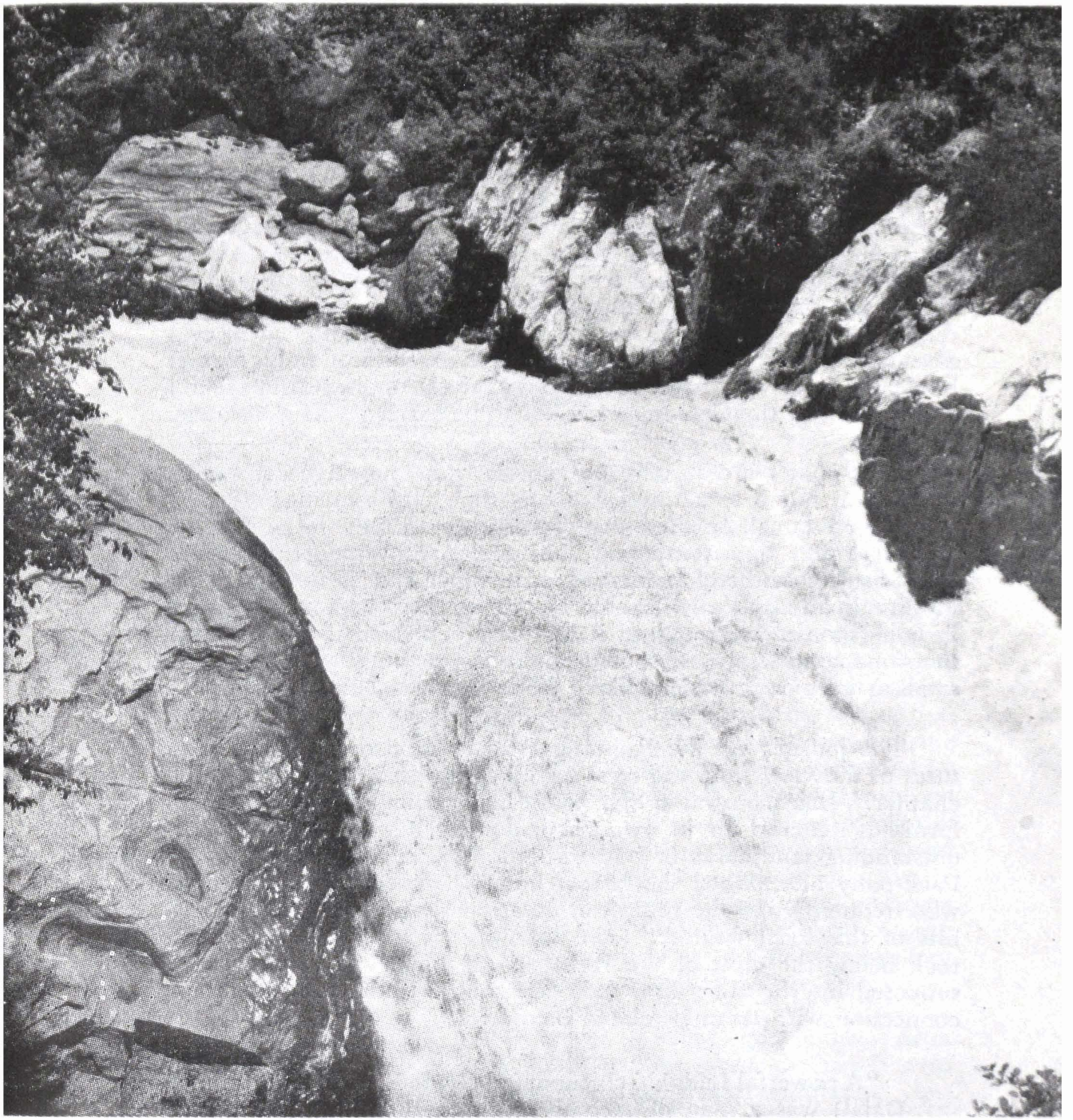
KYELANG-LAHAUL

KYELANG, the capital of Lahaul, lies several stages beyond the Rohtang Pass and a trek to this interesting and locally important little town involves a more elaborate "bandobast" than for excursions within the confines of Kulu Valley. To do the journey comfortably, spending a night at each stage and two at Kyelang, eleven days, at least, should be allotted. If time is a consideration the period can be reduced by marching double stages, Khoksar to Gandhla (16 miles) for instance, or Sissu to Kyelang (18 miles). A full day, however, should be allowed for the stage over the pass, in both directions.

The road to Lahaul over the Rohtang pass is rarely open before the end of May for safe mule traffic. The most popular time for a visit, is during raining season when there are no rains in the area. The State Government is paying special attention towards the welfare of the Lahauli people. Special emphasis has been laid down to give bette r communication facilities to them. The bridle road from Khoksar to Zingzingbar is being made jeepable and so, a link road for light vehicular traffic would soon be constrcuted from Manali to Khoksar over the Rohtang. These roads when completed, would not only prove an asset for the economic uplift of the tribal people but would go a long way to bring them in closer contact with those living in other parts of the country.

Permits for the occupation of Government Rest-houses should be applied for well in advance and applications submitted to the Sub-Divisional Officer P.W.D., Kulu, for a room or rooms at each of the following places : Kothi, Khoksar, Sissu, Gondhla and Kyelang, for both outward and return journeys, giving exact dates of arrival and departure. Rest-houses in this area have but limited accommodation, so overlapping with other parties doing the same trek should, as far as possible, be avoided. If it is intended to spend more than a day at Manali permission to occupy the Manali Rest-house should also be obtained.

After leaving Manali very little in the way of local produce is available. Milk, potatoes, atta, a few eggs and an occasional fowl, perhaps, at some of the stages, but these cannot, with certainty,



Turbulent Beas in the Upper reaches of the Kulu Valley

be relied upon and need not be taken into consideration when preparing an estimate of provisions likely to be required for the journey. Clothing and bedding are important items. The altitude at each stage beyond the Rohtang is over 10,000 feet and temperatures, especially in the early morning and late evening—also during the day if it happens to be cloudy, wet or windy—are considerably lower than at the Kulu side of the pass, so an extra jersey, a thick coat and warm underclothing are necessities rather than luxuries. So are extra blankets or other bed coverings. Lahaul, ordinarily, is not subject to heavy rainfall, but that is a contingency that cannot b e guaranteed and waterproofs, as well as small tarpaulins or ground sheets for covering bedding rolls, should not be omitted. At an altitude of over 10,000 feet it is anything but pleasant to walk in rain, sleet or snow without adequate protection; to realise that bedding rolls are similarly exposed to these elements and, on arrival at a halting place cold and wet, to find firewood not only scarce, but very expensive. Little firewood is available anywhere in Lahaul and to some of the Rest-houses it has to be carried a long distance.

Pack-ponies are usually obtainable from the stage contractor at Manali, but it sometimes happens that Government officials, who have first call on these contractors, are on tour in the district, and there may be a temporary shortage. Arrangements for pack transport should therefore be made in advance and if not available in Manali, an application should be sent to the contractor at Kulu. If riding ponies are required it will save confusion if hired from the same contractor. A coolie should also be employed to carry small articles or provisions likely to be required between stages.

The journey up the Rohtang Pass and the outstanding features of the view from the crest have been described in a previous chapter. Like many other high passes in the Himalayas the Rohtang furnishes material for its own particular legends, especially where outstanding landmarks or odd formations lend credence to them. Pack-pony attendants, shepherds, nomads, traders and travellers who frequently use the route can occasionally be induced to relate bits of this local folklore. The following is a specimen. On a rock below the crest of the Rohtang are four, rather indefinite, supposed imprints of a horse's hoofs and the traditional legend in connection with them is related below :

"A powerful Ladakhi chief named Gyafo Kissar (Kulu name, Dajal) was a man of exceptional strength and physical perfection. He possessed a wonderful horse developed to a similar degree and further endowed with the powers of flight and human speech—fit companion to such a master. Gyafo used to travel from Ladakh to Bhuntar, lower Kulu, in a single day. On

one occasion, being in a greater hurry than usual, he created the Rohtang Pass by lashing the mountain with his whip and, in crossing, so great was the weight and strength of his horse, that it left impressions of its hoofs in the granite rock. This same chieftain, while gambling with a genii at Bhuntar, lost all his possessions with the exception of his magnificent horse, but, acting on the advice of this animal, he eventually succeeded in entombing the genii in a big temple—the remains of which are still visible at Bhuntar."

High up on both sides of the mountain unobtrusive clumps of Himalayan blue poppy, as well as edelweiss, may occasionally reward the seeker of botanical specimens, but neither of these Alpine plants grow in profusion near the roadside. So keen eyesight and unwavering interest are requisite aids to their location. The abrupt descent of about four miles to Khoksar is a sharp contrast to the long winding climb on the Kulu side of the Pass. Descending into the Chandra valley the view gradually becomes more restricted, but the stark rugged grandeur of overhanging mountain, bare ridge and pitted glacier is still adequate to satisfy the ordinary individual.

Khoksar is a bleak, wind-swept spot and the small Rest-house on the left bank of the Chandra river—a welcome sight after the toil of a 13-mile trek across the Rohtang—provides comfortable shelter from the usual cheerlessness of outer surroundings. Swift, full-flowing river of dirty grey water edged by banks of dirty grey sand; greenish-brown rocks and boulders; icy cold breezes (even in the middle of summer) are the usual features of this first halting place in Lahaul. Little wonder will be entertained by visitors that it should comprise the highest all-the-year-round habitation of the Chandra valley. On the right bank of the river and connected by a good bridge, a cluster of flat-roofed houses with whitewashed walls provides the first close-up view of the architectural design of Lahauli villages. In close proximity fields of barley and *Kuth* and clumps of pollard willow give a general idea, on a small scale, of the usual cultivation of the country. Beyond the village, in a cave under the cliff, is a small monastery. As a novelty it is worth a visit, but is a poor little place in comparison with the more pretentious *gonpas* which claim attention further along the route.

Khoksar to Sissu is a short stage of about eight miles. After crossing the bridge from the Khoksar Rest-house the road runs along the right bank of the Chandra river and is undulating, but with no excessive steeps. Occasional patches of blue pine on the left bank lend a little relief to almost barren countryside and probably due to the prevailing direction of the wind nearly all the branches of these trees point down the valley while the sides of the trunks facing upstream are almost bare. Generally, the scenery

is a vista of plunging swirling river, precipitous cliff and furrowed, snow-streaked mountain . To the sportingly inclined and during the prescribed shooting season a shot gun is useful. Chikor, blue rock and snow pigeon are fairly plentiful in Lahaul and can usually be found quite close to the road. Besides affording zest to the day's trek and some attractive sport a brace or two of either chikor or pigeon provide welcome additions to the menu.

Sissu Rest-house, partially surrounded by clumps of willow, is built on rising ground at the left of the Sissu Nala. From the border of a grassy patch in front of the bungalow the hillside slopes sharply down to a small swampy plain adjoining the river on which, in September and April, wild duck and geese—on their way to and from the plains of India—are usually to be found. Bits of fishable water on this swamp hold numerous snow trout, little fish which, when caught and cooked, add a spice of variety to ordinary trek fare. Across the valley is a big waterfall, plainly visible from the lawn in front of the bungalow. Milk, eggs and fowls are sometimes obtainable from the local contractor, but are expensive in comparison with Kulu rates.

Sissu to Gondhla is an interesting walk of eight miles. The road, generally, lies well above the river and its rough surface is inches deep in dust during the long spells of dry weather. Leaving Sissu, the Chandra valley becomes more and more civilized; villages are bigger and more frequent and cultivated areas more widespread, while every bend in the road opens up new prospects of river, ridge and mountain. On the opposite bank water-word fissured rock is surmounted by jagged cliff, embroidered here and there by glistening cascades—wavering threads of silver in the sunlit distance. Higher still small glaciers taper downward from rock-strewn snow fields. As Gondhla is approached scenery to the north becomes less rugged and mountain slopes more gentle, but to the south, almost immediately opposite Gondhla, it merges into a stupendous precipice, one of the finest in the world—5,000 feet of almost sheer rock from river bed to rugged crest—a thrilling and spectacular sight.

The Rest-house at Gondhla is perched on the hillside well above the river and, like Sissu, is almost encompassed with willow. It is rather more commodious than other staging bungalows in Lahaul and has an open verandah which, despite its lack of comfortably upholstered chairs provides, on sunny days, an ideal lounge, especially at the end of a long walk in rarefied atmosphere. Facing the gigantic precipice—seamed and cracked through centuries of weathering—and separated only by a narrow valley, the view from Gondhla is one of the scenic high-lights of the trek. Terraced fields sloping down to a gloomy gorge and turbulent river beyond

which furrowed cliff and fir-crowned ridge gradually reach up to a high range where, through a convenient gap, a distant snow-crowned giant peak breaks the more or less evenly serrated skyline.

The residence of the Thakur of Gondhla, probably the most frequently photographed building in the whole of Lahaul, is worth a visit. Seven or eight stories high this striking, feudal-like edifice is built of stone and timber and topped by an overlapping structure which protrudes several feet on all four sides. Its present hospitable owner, Thakur Fateh Chand, when in residence, usually contrives to welcome visitors to his village and, by his knowledge of local surroundings, adds to the interest of the visit.

Gondhla to Kyelang is a longer, but easier march of ten miles. Leaving Gondhla, with the exception of one rather sharp short ascent, the road is mostly downhill to the confluence of the Chandra-Bhaga rivers at Tandi. From Tandi a road continues down the valley towards Triloknath, a noted place for pilgrimage in this part of the Chandra Valley. A visit to Triloknath involves a journey of 36 miles through the Pattan Valley of Lahaul, no Rest-houses are available *en route*. Upstream from the junction at Tandi is a bridge over the Chandra which leads to Ghushal village, but the road to Kyelang keeps straight on to the bridge which spans the Bhaga, also slightly above the junction of the rivers. After crossing the bridge it gradually ascends to a higher level and continues well above the Bhaga river for most of the remainder of the journey. Between Gondhla and Kyelang is a rougher but shorter route over the Rang-cha mountain. It may cut off a mile or two, but is very steep in places and the path rocky and difficult. If comfort is a consideration be well advised and stick to the main road. On a mountain above the confluence of the Chandra-Bhaga rivers is the most noted monastery in Lahaul the Guru Ghantal or Gandola *Gonpa*. Once a year, in spring, a festival called "Ghantal 'Tchacha" is held, at which all visiting Lamas and Thakurs are fed for one day. During this festival numbers of pilgrims make the circle, on foot, of Drilburi, the holy mountain, which involves a walk of about eighteen miles, and a climb and descent of several thousand feet. This monastery is not easily accessible to ordinary wayfarers with limited time at their disposal.

Kyelang, as becomes the capital of the country, boasts a Tahsil and Post-office at which, weather and other circumstances permitting, mails arrive every second day during the summer. A Radio-Telegraph office has also been installed and any telegrams for Lahaul are transmitted through Amritsar telegraph office. The Rest-house lies beyond the village and is located on rising ground nearly a thousand feet above the river. In the near distance are the usual clumps of pollard willow, cultivated largely throughout

Lahaul for use as firewood and, when nothing else is available, as fodder for cattle. On the small side for an important place like Kyelang the bungalow, though old, is warm and comfortable. Supplies of potatoes, barley, and other local produce, are obtainable in the local bazaar. Eggs are seldom available but milk, a product of the *dzo*—a cross between the Tibetan yak and Kulu cow is rich and creamy. Dried apricots from Ladakh, sometimes available in the local bazaar, make excellent fruit stew.

Nothing of outstanding interest is to be found in the village or its immediate surroundings. A few shops which sell barley, buckwheat, atta, salt, rice and cloth; a village blacksmith who, in addition to his work in iron, is usually a silversmith and jeweller. Below the village, enclosed by a compound and garden in which, during early summer, yellow roses bloom in profusion, are some superior-looking buildings which, up to a few years ago, were occupied by the Moravian Mission. This Mission was established at Kyelang in 1854, but now, whether through lack of funds or scarcity of converts, missionary enterprise has ceased. Successive missionaries throughout this long period, both by example and precept, did much valuable work in the country and their researches in folklore, customs, language and religion form a large part of the information now available on these subjects.

While at Kyelang, if time permits, a visit should be made to the Sha Shur Monastery which stands on the side of a mountain, nearly 2,000 feet above the village, and is approached by a steep, but not difficult path. On the way up and from the spur on which the monastery is built, wonderful views of snowy ranges and enormous glacial fields are obtainable; also of Karding, a one time capital of Lahaul, on the opposite side of the valley—a village probably as big as Kyelang. Some of the many interesting features of the interior of this white-washed, flag-bedecked *gonpa* are the huge barrel-like prayer drums, revolving to the touch, which line dim passages and which are rotated by lamas as they perambulate these lobbies in grave meditation; ornate paintings of saints, demons, and evil looking beasts; paintings on silk; yaks' tails; devil masks; swords; drums; cymbals and other weird-looking instruments; a Buddha of giant size, swathed in purple and white, with many attendant effigies of lesser divinities. Annually, during the month of June, a sort of miracle play is enacted by the lamas of this monastery at which most of the above properties are brought into use. At this festival senior lamas, dressed in ceremonial robes and festal red, perform dexterously upon cymbals; other lamas and novices act in pantomime, devil dancing and buffoonery, accompanied by an orchestra of drums, cymbals and trumpets. If co-incident with a trek into Lahaul this *Cham* (to give it the Lahauli name) is well worth seeing.

Buddhism has not always been the religion of Lahaul. An earlier doctrine is still known under the name of *Lung pachhoi* (religion of the valley). While it flourished, in pre-Buddhistic days, many bloody sacrifices appear to have been offered to gods or evil spirits (*Iha*) residing in or near certain caves, rocks and old pencil cedar groves . The following legend has some bearing on the transitional stage between the two religions :

> "Near Khangsar village (Koolang), in ancient times, flourished an old pencil cedar tree in which was supposed to dwell a very powerful spirit. In order to propitiate this god and to make him well disposed towards the inhabitants of the village, a child of eight years old was annually sacrificed in front of the tree. Children to be sacrificed appear to have been supplied in turn by different families of the locality and it happened one year to be a widow who had to give up her only child. Before the sacrifice took place a travelling lama from Tibet heard the widow's lamentations and enquired the cause of her distress. On hearing her story the lama said: 'I will go instead of your child, but the spirit must kill me himself if he wants human flesh.' So he sat down in front of the tree and waited for a long time, but, as the demon made no attack upon him he became angry, and took down from the tree all the effigies and signs and threw them into the Semur Lungpa nala. He then told the people not to sacrifice any more human beings, which advice was followed. The demon then fled from his abode in the tree and settled on the opposite side of the Bhaga river and now gets only an occasional sacrifice of a sheep or goat supplied by shepherds."

Along the road to Kyelang, usually near villages, long walls or dikes of stone, four or five feet high and four feet or more in breadth, are occasionally encountered. On the top of these walls are flat or rounded stones on which are inscribed, in Tibetan characters, the prayer "Om Mani Padmi Hom" or other Buddhist texts and mantras. These walls are known locally as *manis*. The stones are carved by lamas, usually in winter, and are sold to persons who wish to deposit them as votive offerings for particular desires or thank-offerings for favours granted. When passing *manis* they must always be on the right hand and considerable detours are sometimes made to carry out this procedure. In addition to *manis* on the roadside, 'chonten'–square blocks of whitewashed masonry, surmounted by a rounded mass of stonework—are seen in fields or in the vicinity of monasteries.The 'chonten' near monasteries are usually tombs containing relics of departed saints or of very holy lamas, while those in fields may have been erected by well-to-do men on the site of the cremation of a member of one of their families.

With time to spare, a permit to cross the "Inner Line"* and inclination for further travel in this wild region, the trek can be extended to Patseo, two stages beyond Kyelang. The first stage, to Jispa, is rather a long march of 13½ miles. Jispa to Patseo is 10½ miles. P.W.D. Rest-houses are available at both stages. Between Kyelang and Jispa the road is frequently bordered by patches of cultivated land, but three or four miles beyond Jispa cultivation entirely ceases. Kolong, the ancestral home and estate of Thakur Partap Chand, Jagirdar of Lahaul, and his family, is passed just short of Jispa, also the home and estate of Thakur Mangal Chand. Below Jispa Rest-house is a small stream which usually holds snow trout.

Patseo is about 2,000 feet higher than Jispa and the road, in places, is rather steep, but is easily rideable the whole way. Darcha, two or three miles beyond Jispa, is the last village in the Bhaga valley and stands almost at the junction of the Yotse and the Kodo Dokpo streams with the main river. A connecting road between Lahaul and Zangskar runs alongside the Kodo Dokpo (or Zangskar *Chu*) and eventually crosses the great Himalayan range by the Shingkun pass, on top of which is a large glacier. The remainder of the road to Patseo is across bare and barren country on which reddish-coloured earth and rock are rather unusual features of the Lahaul country-side.

The Rest-house at Patseo is on the border of a wide plain where, in July-August each year, a large sheep-shearing and wool fair is held. During this period the wilderness is peopled by an animated crowd of shepherds and traders, living in tents of all shapes and sizes and in varying degrees of newness and obsolescence. Sheep and goats, pack ponies and donkeys are everywhere and appear to roam at random over the plain in search of grazing. Most of the sheep are driven down to Patseo from the higher Tibetan and Ladakhi plains and, when the shearing is over, return to their winter grazing grounds beyond the Baralacha Pass. These up-country nomads dislike coming down to any lower altitudes; they are afraid of the heat. In addition to the shearing and sale of wool, trade and barter in salt and borax from countries bordering Tibet with equivalents in tea, grain and cloth from down-country, provide another reason for this annual gathering.

If a couple of days can be spent at Patseo it is possible to make a trip to the top of the Baralacha Pass (over 16,000 feet)

*Particulars of "Inner Line", which may not be crossed without permission may be obtained from the Sub-Divisional Officer, Civil, Kulu. To travel further than Jispa it is necessary for the foreigners to obtain the permission of the Deputy Commissioner, Kangra, as at Darcha, where the Zankekar route from the Shingo La is joined, the "Inner Line" is met. The fee for a permit is -/8/- only.

and back. It is an easier climb than that of the Rohtang Pass and affords some wonderful views of vast Himalayan ranges.

All lamas and religious-minded Buddhists in Lahaul carry prayer wheels—metal cylinders of brass, copper or silver, about three inches long and two in diameter—containing a long roll of thin paper on which are prayers, printed or written. A small pendant, chained to the cylinder, causes it to revolve easily round a long metal pin attached to a wooden handle and, to followers of "the way" the click of revolving wheel is a constant accompaniment to their wanderings. Beyond the Rohtang Pass the prayer wheel is almost ubiquitous and travellers in this fascinating but inhospitable looking land of naked grandeur, peopled largely by a Mongolian featured race of more-or-less devout Buddhists, can, in passing, frequently listen-in to the soft muttering of this pious invocation, the unchanging formula, "OM MANI PADMI HOM."

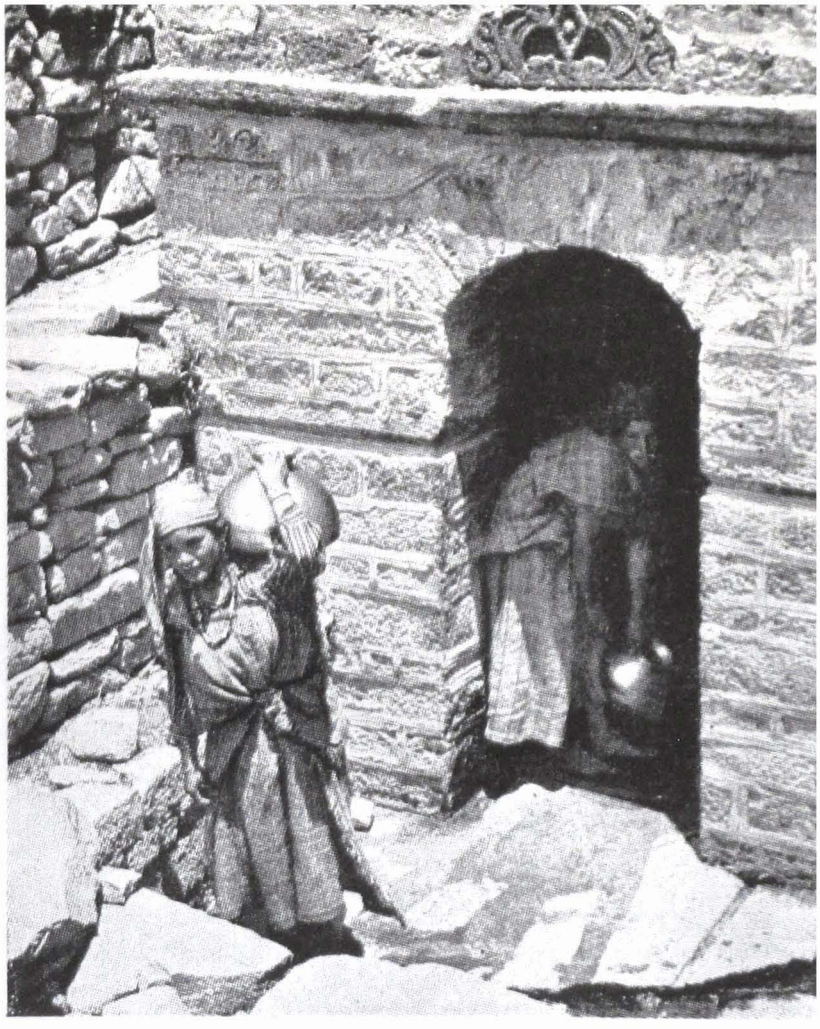
SPITI

(I)

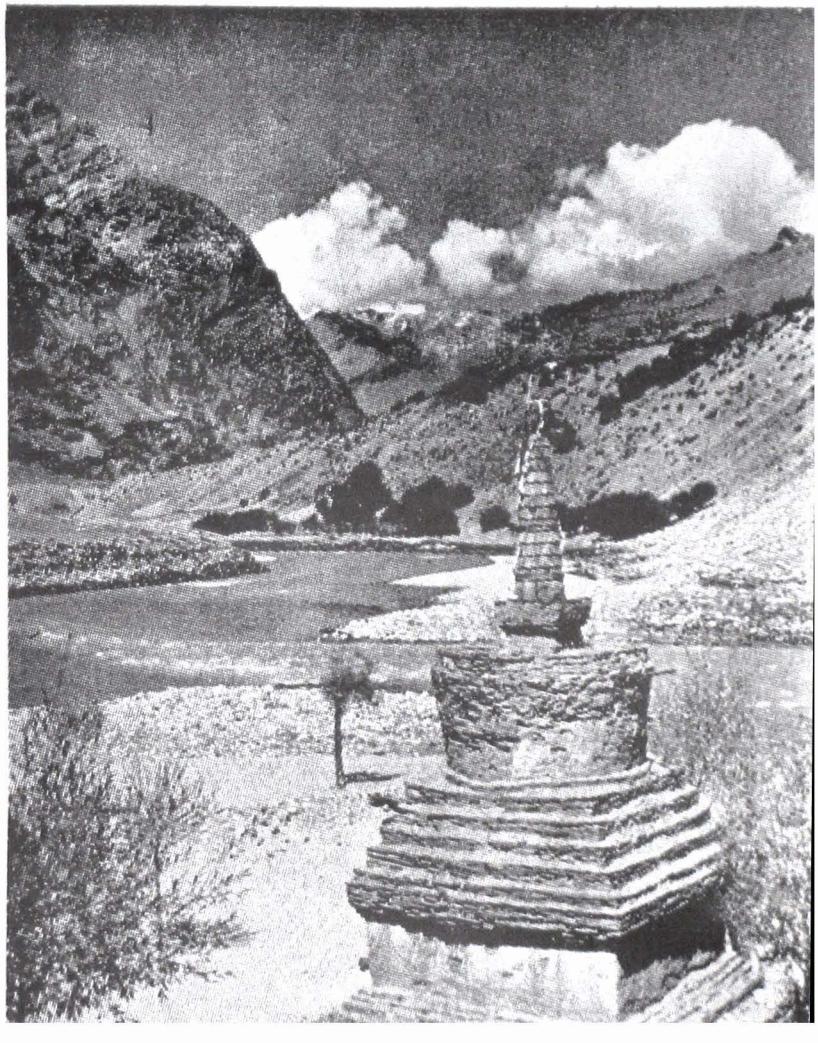
SPITI AND LAHAUL are names to conjure with. They fire the imagination of the traveller and the lover of natural beauty; though to the uninitiated they mean very little as the territory which they represent, though by no means inaccessible, is somewhat difficult of approach. The route to Spiti takes the traveller over two passes each 15,000 ft. above sea level and these passes are open for not more than four or five months of the year. There are some difficult and narrow paths to be negotiated, and a number of ice cold streams must be forded, for there are very few bridges in the area. But the effort and trouble involved in reaching these parts is amply compensated. Nature here holds sway in its wildest and grandest manner, and few parts of the Himalayas can compare with Spiti in sheer grandeur and the splendour of mountains in their ever changing colours and magnificent contours.

The traveller beholds long sweeping slopes of pure white snow, raging torrents emerging from caves of solid iridescent ice, massive crag formations that look like Madura temples or mediaeval citadels, perched thousands of feet above the valley, green grassy meadows that stretch out for a mile and delight the eye with a profusion of strange flowers. Buttercups and daisies, forget-me-nots and wild rose, violets and anemones, iris, columbine, harebell, blue poppy and a thousand other varieties grow in abundance. Here you find hills covered with Artemisia, that delightfully fragrant herb which, like lavender, may be used to keep moths away from woollies, but whose chief use is to provide santonin, the specific remedy for worms. There are whole fields of edelweiss, the flower which peeps out of the snows as soon as they begin to melt with the warm breath of summer. It is the national emblem of Switzerland and the Swiss are crazy about it, but in their country it is seen but rarely. In Spiti you will find a whole meadow of edelweiss sloping down to a marvellous stream that runs over a bed of bright red stones.

There is a little or no rain, for the monsoon does not penetrate beyond the lower ranges of the Himalayas. The climate of Spiti is dry and invigorating. The sun at these altitudes is bright and warm, the days are therefore almost hot, although the nights are



A pucca *baoli* for drinking water



Chorten—Buddhist Symbols in Lahaul

Unsophisticated dwellings of the hill people as seen against the great wall of mountains

cold. Clouds are of the picture postcard variety, bright and shapely against a background of deep blue. As you watch them moving across the zenith, they fade and disappear entirely, leaving the sky overhead clear. In some parts winds arise in the afternoon, but the mornings and nights are usually calm.

There are three routes leading into Spiti. The most picturesque approach is from Manali (23 miles from Kulu) over the Rohtang pass (13,000 ft.) through the Lahaul valley and across the Baralacha (16,000 ft.) and Balamo (15,000 ft.) passes. The second route also takes off from Manali. This lies over the Hamta pass (15,000 ft.) into the Chandra valley and then over the Kunzum pass (15,000 ft.) into Spiti. This is the best route for entering Spiti for the rise in altitude is more gradual and if the return journey is made *via* Balamo and Baralacha the traveller becomes acclimatized to staying at high altitudes when he comes to the Baralacha pass. The third route takes off from the Hindustan-Tibet Road more than a hundred miles from Simla, but this is much longer and for the most part dull and uninteresting.

The landscape in the Spiti valley has a strange and exotic appearance, quite unlike the lower ranges of the Himalayas. The valley lies beyond the greater Himalayan range. Its mean height is about 12,000 feet above sea level. The Spiti river is a fast torrent running through a deep and narrow valley scarcely more than a mile across, and above the river lies a plateau which was once its bed. On either side steep rocky mountains rise to a height of several thousand feet. For miles you see a splendid panorama of rugged crags and steep rubble slopes that change their colours from pale pink to bright scarlet, from slate grey to deep blue and purple. These alternate with the soft blues and greens of glaciers. There are no trees and shrubs, except in the villages where poplars and willows eke out a scanty existence from the moisture provided by snow streams. Suddenly you come upon a glorious meadow of luscious grass or a bank of wild flowers, up at a great height with a snow spring or a tiny rill flowing through the grass. Here you may rest and take a refreshing drink. A little later you may be called upon to cross a treacherous torrent which rumbles like distant thunder, as stones and boulders come hurtling downhill with the force of its water.

Villages in Spiti are small and few in number. Life in these villages is not easy. For four months of the year, the valley is under snow and the Spitial is confined to his house. From April to November, he (or rather she, for the women do most of the work, for reasons to be explained presently) sows and reaps a scanty crop of barley, buckwheat, rape-seed and peas. He collects juniper bushes which he dries and stores for fuel, and rears yaks for his

milk and butter, and for his transport. He brews *chhang* (a kind of light ale) and distils *arak* (a somewhat raw spirit not unlike vodka) which he consumes in large quantities particularly during the cold winter months. He professes the Buddhist religion and owes an emotional allegiance to the Dalai Lama at Lhassa, he speaks Bhuti, a Tibetan dialect. His features have a strong Mongolian cast. His dress consists of a long, loose, double-breasted, woollen gown, reinforced by a belt of woollen rope, wrapped round the waist. This gives him warmth and support and converts the upper part of his gown into an ample blouse with deep roomy pouches into which he stuffs all kinds of articles; his food consisting of dry *sattoo* (parched barley floor), a prayer box with the picture of the head lama of the local monastery, a silver bowl, a spare garment, a pair of shoes or a newly born lamb, all these can be stored and carried in these pockets. The Spitial has very little contact with the outside world, and in appearance, dress, manners and language, he is a foreigner.

The economy of the valley has a peculiar interest. Since food is scarce and cultivable land limited, an increase in population would prove disastrous. So the Spitials have found a way of warding of the danger of slow starvation. The law of premogeniture is observed throughout the valley. The eldest son inherits the lands and property of his father. The younger sons are sent to the Buddhist monasteries which abound in the locality. The young *lamas* take a vow of celibacy and thus check an increase in the population of the valley. There are also a number of convents for nuns, or *chomas* as they are locally called, and these give shelter to the superfluous women, for monogamy is the general rule. The monasteries and convents (*gonpas*) have been endowed with revenue free lands and they also receive regular offerings in kind from the neighbouring villages. If the eldest son dies, his younger brother leaves the monastery on payment of a fixed fee and comes back to secular life. He takes his deceased brother's land and also his widow. It is all very sensible and practical and the system obviates family disputes and complications of inheritance.

Life in the monasteries is, however, far from edifying. The *lamas*, on the whole, lead a lazy and unproductive existence. In theory they are ascetics, but their religion is of the arm-chair type. The *gonpas* are usually situated in lofty and almost inaccessible spots and in the seclusion of monastic life, the inmates tend to become slothful and dirty. They do little more than act as unintelligent guardians of the rich and artistic treasures housed in these institutions. The visitor finds beautiful wall paintings, exquisitely painted silk banners, silver and brass figures imported years ago from Tibet, Chinese carpets, carved wood panels, jade and amber articles, china and chased silver cups in which tea, *dahi* or *sattoo* is served, rare manuscripts; but on everything there is a layer of grime and dirt,

the air in the rooms is musty and heavy, the *lamas* themselves give out a strong odour of unwashed bodies and rancid butter, their clothes are greasy and thick with the dirt and sweat of unwashed years. Very few of them can read and the beautifully inscribed scriptures lie in perpetual neglect. Once a day they say their prayers and the chorus of *Om mani padme hom* resounds through the low dark corridors of the *gonpa*; once a year they have a religious festival at which the villagers are given free food. Occasionally they perform a picturesque masked dance, symbolising the war between the forces of good and evil, and on these occasions rich silk dresses of gorgeous colours and embroideries are taken out and worn on bodies that have never known the luxury of a bath. The dance is a long and interminable ritual that goes on for hours in a dull and monotonous manner. For the rest of the time the *lamas* wallow in their dirt, and drink quantities of *chhang* and *arak*. They have evolved a religion that makes very few calls on those who profess it. Even the saying of prayers has been simplified. You need not take the trouble to sit down to address the deity in quiet seclusion; communication by mechanical means is permissible. The prayer, consisting of the sacred words *Om mani padme hom*, is inscribed on a small metal wheel mounted on a wooden rod which serves as its axis. The wheel is rotated in a clockwise direction by a rhythmic movement of the hand and with every revolution a prayer is sent forth on its pious errand. The words are painted on a large wooden drum and *lamas* spend hours rotating them. Sometimes the wheel or drum is driven mechanically by means of a water-mill, or the prayer is written on a banner fixed to a pole and as the cloth flutters in the wind, the prayer is being said on behalf of the person who put it up. Thus piety is manufactured wholesale by the forces of nature, while saints and sinners sit back and reap its benefits, for the banner that flutters in the wind will atone for their sinful thoughts and the water stream will wash away the ill effects of evil deeds. It is a comfortable religion and encourages inaction.

(II)

The people of Spiti are simple and mentally undeveloped. They are, for the most part, illiterate and unprogressive. There is so much that can be done for them and there is ample scope for our missionaries. A Moravian mission worked in Lahaul for many years and taught the Lahaulis a great many things. They learnt to knit and weave, and keep their houses clean. They reared a new variety of wheat and made useful experiments in fruit farming. Blackberries and gooseberries were successfully planted in some parts, and plum and apricot trees grew up. The foreign missionaries, however, could not accomplish as much as they might have, for the people questioned their motives and suspected that they had come

not to uplift them but to convert them to Christianity. A team of selfless Indian missionaries would be more successful, as there is a great deal to be done especially in Spiti. It is beyond doubt that the culturable area can be considerably increased by constructing more watercourses; more trees can be grown to provide timber and fuel; the idle winter months can be usefully employed in developing a number of cottage industries, involving the use of willow trees and wool. It should not be difficult to set up small electric generators to provide power and light, as there are numerous mountain torrents. The valley is said to be rich in mineral wealth and observers have found evidence of iron, lead, silver, gypsum and large quantities of antimony. An antimony mine was actually worked on a small scale, but the difficulties and expenses of transport stood in the way of further development and the mine was closed down. There is an asbestos mine near Kaza, now lying idle, and a geological expert told me that there are several deposits of clay suitable for pottery.

The Spitial and Lahauli is inclined to look up to Tibet rather than India, for his social, cultural, linguistic and religious background is associated with Lhasa. The Spitial is a tough and hardy individual and he can be made into a useful citizen of India. The country he lives in has industrial and horticultural possibilities that must be explored, and it is a wonderful land for the tourist and the holiday maker.

The route from Spiti to Lahaul takes the visitor over the Morang pass (15,000 ft.), up the Chandra valley and across the Baralacha pass (16,000 ft.). The path as it exists today is difficult, but involves no dangers. The traveller obtains a splended view of the some of the most gorgeous glaciers to be seen in the Himalayas. To camp at an altitude of 14,500 ft. on the grassy bank of Chandra Tal is an experience in itself. The waters of this lake have the brilliance of precious stones and they seem to have been made from liquid emeralds. Rich green downs, covered with silvery edelweiss, buttercups and bright blue forget-me-nots slope down from the surrounding hills, and, higher up, precipitous rocks stand like mighty sentinels to guard this heavenly spot. Further on the Baralacha pass is reached after an easy climb. Here the river Chandra (which later assumes the name Chenab) takes birth from a large glacier and a little below the pass, the river Bhaga emerges from a pretty little lake called Suraj Tal, where the Lahaul valley begins. From now on there is more vegetation and less of the rugged grandeur of Spiti and the roads are wider and easier. There are also rest houses all the way to Kulu and the traveller enjoys a number of comforts and amenities which were denied him in Spiti.

The Lahaulis are less insular in their outlook towards the visitors for they have frequent contacts with the outside world. In

many respects, however, they are nor unlike the people of Spiti, for they, too, profess the Buddhist religion, dress in the same ways and speak the same language. But they are not so poor for their valley is more fertile. Perhaps it is due to their comparative prosperity and outside contacts that some of their old customs are beginning to disappear.

The Lahauli marriage is a most intriguing affair. According to a time-honoured custom the bridegroom stays at home while his sword and shield are carried by his relatives and friends in a festive procession to the bride's house. The party proceeds to the accompaniment of music till it encounters a similar procession coming from the bride's house, and now a battle of wits begins. All along the way to the bride's house a line of stones, twenty-one in number, has been erected. At the first stone the bride's party poses a question, which must be correctly answered by the groom's party. If the right answer is forthcoming the stone is knocked down and the procession advances till the second stone is reached. Here a second question is put. If the question is not answered correctly there is much jeering and taunting from the bride's party, and humble apologies are offered by the bridegroom's supporters. The ritual is repeated till all the twenty one stones have been negotiated. The questions and answers are all in the form of songs and are taken from a book which is a sort of matrimonial catechism, and both parties have spent the last few days in assiduously learning up their parts. A great deal of time is taken up in this trial of wits and when the procession finally reaches the bride's house, the bridegroom's supporters are faced with yet another ordeal.

A sheep's heart has been secretly buried and this must be discovered and brought out. Information of its exact location is conveyed to the bridegroom's party by means of a cleverly constructed song, like the clues in a treasure hunt. Someone from the bridegroom's party comes forward with a sword and starts the hunt. The rules of this interesting game demand that the heart must be dug out with one stroke of the sword, and this is not easy for the error of a few inches may mean failure and consequent loss of prestige. Attempts are made to obtain information of the exact whereabouts of the heart by means of bribery or unfair means, but whatever the outcome the proceedings are accompanied by a great deal of hilarity and end in the usual festivities that mark the celebration of marriages.

In the Lahaul valley the bridle-path maintained by the P.W.D. is perfectly safe and comfortable for mules and pedestrians. There are bridges over the larger streams and rest houses at several places. In Spiti, however, conditions are quite different. The paths are for the most part nothing more than narrow and ill-defined sheep

tracks along precipitous slopes or across rough moraines covered with stones and boulders. It is rough going for the traveller who is used to hiking in comfort. There are very few bridges and torrents have to be forded. This must be done early in the morning for as the day advances, the heat of the sun, melts the snows and the streams swell to dangerous dimensions.

Bad communications mean isolation, lack of progress and poverty. In the whole of Spiti which has an area of 2155 square miles (though a population of less than 3000) there is not a single officer of the civil departments and not a single police official. Recently a contingent of PAP personnels has been posted at Kaza, for security purpose. There are no permanent dispensaries and a doctor visits the valley only for two or three months every year. There is only one school with a roll of about twenty pupils. The administration, if this expression can be used to describe what takes place in this area, is entrusted to the Nono, who is a descendant of the old titular heads of Spiti. The Nono has authority to try some of the less serious offences such as theft, cattle lifting, abducting of women, assault, causing hurt etc. and can inflict a sentence of fine. A few years ago it was discovered that he was abusing his powers in the unapproachable seclusion of his territory and had begun to award sentence of imprisonment. The sentence was carried out by confining the prisoner in a barbarous dungeon into which he was lowered through a narrow hole in the roof. Food and drink were provided by the complainant once a day and the rations supplied were very scanty. This evil practice has now been stopped, but a state of affairs which makes such abuse of authority possible is obviously unsatisfactory and it is important that a proper and more efficient machinery of administration be set up in this part of our country. Better roads and a few bridges are the first requirement, more schools, two or three dispensaries, some expert advice in agricultural matters and assistance in setting up a few cottage industries are urgently required.

It is gratifying to know that a start has already been made. The Central Government has undertaken the construction of a bridle road from Gramphu near Khoksar in Lahaul to the interriors of Spiti *via* the Kunzam pass. A portion of this road upto Kunzam pass is almost complete and with the construction of some bridges it will make the Spiti Valley easy of access. A number of rest houses and serais is also being built at suitable places *en route* and with a few more amenities the valley will be made into a glorious holiday resort for four months of Summer. There lare numerous places where winter sports could be organised. The ong sweeping slopes when covered with snow would provide excellent skiing, if only one could reach them in winter.

(III)

The easiest and the most convenient route into the Spiti valley is over the Rohtang or the Hamta pass, then up the river Chandra and over the Kunzam pass. A round tour including Spiti and Lahaul makes an excellent trek and the traveller can, in the course of about four weeks see the best there is in the two valleys. A brief description of this route will give the reader a rough idea of the beauties and rigours which the journey provides. The stages can be varied and the hardy trekker can cover the entire distance in about three weeks, a more leisurely holiday maker will take things easy and linger at the beauty spots. The extent of the country which it is intended to cover may also be varied at will. A reference to the map and the list of stages given at the end of this chapter will enable the tourist to plan his trek according to the time and energy at his disposal.

Visitors to Spiti must carry tents and supplies. For the first five stages even food is unobtainable. In the Spiti valley there are several villages and yak's milk, coarse barley flour and green peas can be obtained. If one is lucky an occasional snow pigeon may be shot. This makes excellent eating. For the rest the traveller must carry everything with him. Provisions are best carried in medium-sized wooden crates as pack ponies cannot carry heavy or bulky loads over the kind of terrain they have to negotiate.

An early start each morning is advised. This has many advantages. The best part if not the whole of the day's march should be completed by 1 p.m. In the afternoon high winds frequently arise and these make travelling difficult and uncomfortable. Many of the streams have to be forded and they are shallowest in the morning. By noon the melting snows increase the volume sometimes to unfordable dimensions; lastly an early arrival at the end of the day's journey means less fatigue, a comfortable night and an early start the next day. So the traveller is advised to start early. If he can pack up and leave before sunrise he will get the best out of a most wonderful holiday.

The route recommended is as follows :

Leave Manali near the Post Office, and crossing over the footbridge*, over the Beas, turn sharp right and follow the path to Jagatsukh. In the village Prini turn left and climb up the Alaininal. The path is steep and somewhat dusty, but passes through a thick wood. After about two miles the gradient becomes easier and the trees sparser, the path crosses grassy downs and meadows strewn

* A jeep can pass over this bridge.

with iris and buttercups, anemones and wild violets. Strawberries may be picked and eaten. A torrent emerges from under an ice bridge and roars down the valley to the left. Chikka the camping ground is reached at mile 13.

The next stage is Chikka to Chhatru (10 miles). The path continues at an altitude of between eleven and twelve thousand feet. The last devidars and rhododendrons are soon passed, the tree line is left behind and the landscape assumes a wild and rugged aspect. As we approach the Hamta pass rocks and boulders slope down from the flanks in magnificent sweeps. The saddle is completely covered with snow and the gradient to the top of the pass is fairly steep. Over the pass the route descends rapidly down to Chhatru where a grassy down above the Chandra river offers a good camping place.

Chhatru to Phuti Rooni (8 miles) is the next stage. From the camping ground the path goes down to the bed of the river and proceeds along its left bank for a mile or so. A small stream is forded and the path continues for another mile, when another stream larger than the first one must be crossed. In June and early July there is a snow bridge over this stream and this makes the crossing easy. The path after sometime climbs a little to the right and passes through a rich grassy plateau and another mile brings us to the camping ground at Phuti Rooni. Phuti Rooni means cracked stone. A huge boulder 30 feet high split into two by frost action gives its name to the place. There is a beautiful stream near the camping ground and Phuti Rooni is a veritable beauty spot where the traveller with time to spare will wish to stay.

Phuti Rooni to Karcha (9 miles) is an easy walk though it involves the crossing of one or two uncomfortable streams. The Shigri stream is difficult to ford and it is advisable to make a detour of two miles and cross the stream over the snow bridge. The view of the Shigri stream emerging from beneath a huge iridescent archway of solid ice is a never to be forgotten sight. Behind this archway lies the Shigri glacier climbing upto a dizzy height. The path underfoot is hard and stony, but the rugged grandeur of the landscape more than compensates the rough going. The camping ground is near the river bank.

The Karcha stream is not difficult to ford and the path begins to climb up to the Kunzam pass. The first part of the day's journey is dull and tiresome. The route lies across the face of a steep moraine which runs down to the Chandra river—a raging torrent at this place. After an hour or so we turn right and approach the pass. Here we go up the banks of a small stream. The top is soon reached and from here there is a magnificent view of the snow

peaks on all sides. We now go rapidly down to a valley of red stones, and on the way see a large variety of flowers. These stand out against a background of rich green vegetation and rocks of all colours grey, blue, slate, red and black. From here the path to Losar is almost level. Two streams must be forded butthese do not present any difficulty. Losar, the western most village in the Spiti valley, is 12 miles from Karcha. Here we camp on the south or right bank of the Spiti river.

The next day we cross the Spiti at a ford below the village. It is advisable to obtain local assistance as the unwary traveller may easily lose his footing in the rapids and be washed away. The path across the river is easy and almost level. The next village is Hansa (7 miles) where there is a Buddhist monastery. Two miles further lies the village of Kioto which marks the end of the day's march. The Spiti valley is deep and narrow. Lofty crags rise on either side to a great height and the appearance of the valley is not unlike the pictures of the Grand Canyon in America.

Kioto to Kibar (11 miles) is a most picturesque walk. The path leaves the high plateau and runs down to the bed of the Spiti river. The Talking stream is crossed and the path climbs upto the Lagudarsi pass. The high banks of the Spiti river at this spot assume fantastic shapes. One sees towers, spires and steeples all the way down to the river bed. The route up to the pass is not very steep and the pass itself is a huge meadow of rich green grass merging into downs that slope down from both sides. We now descend steeply to the Kibar gorge a marvellous piece of river erosion. Crossing the gorge the path climbs up to village Kibar a large village with plenty of cultivation in the land surrounding it. The local monastery is worth a visit.

The next stage is Kibar to Kaza—a distance of 8 miles. Two miles from Kibar take the upper path to the left to visit the Kye monastery. From the monastery the path descends steeply down to the Kye village and thence to the bed of the Spiti river. A little further it climbs up to the left and leads to Kaza village. At Kaza the asbestos mine may be visited but this involves a stiff climb up a rocky path and the effort involved is scarcely worth the prize of seeing a mine which was closed up many years ago.

Kaza to Dangkar is 15 miles. The fort at Dangkar is worth visiting but if the travellers intend to go into the Pin valley or make the return journey along the right bank of the Spiti river, a halt at Camp Lidung three miles short of Dangkar is advised. Lidung to Dangkar and back is a short afternoon trip. An enterprising Assistant Commissioner spent a whole winter in the Dangkar fort and has left a detailed account of his experiences,

From Dangkar (or Lidung) the traveller may proceed further along the Spiti river, enter the Pin valley by crossing the Atargo bridge over the Spiti or turn back. The entry into the Pin valley is along a narrow and rocky path perched above the Pin river but the path is not difficult and mules can with a little care and encouragement negotiate it without danger. After a mile or two the path broadens and presents no difficulty whatever. The Pin valley is narrow at its mouth and the rock formations are interesting. Marine fossils may be picked up en route. Kuling is a pretty village and a halt may be made here. The path continues up the Pin river and crossing the Pin-Parbatti pass enters into Mantalya in Parbatti valley.

The return journey is made *via* Lara over the Rangrig bridge to Sumning, Morang and Pangmo and back to Kioto over the bridge. The landscape on the right bank of the Spiti is not vastly different from what we saw on the outward journey along the left bank. From Losar the route continues to Spiti, and over the Balamo pass into the glorious valley of the Chandra river. The path is rough and in places difficult but the scenery ***en route*** is of the superlative quality. Glaciers all along the valley, Chandra Tal a lake of exquisite beauty set on a large meadow of edelweiss, the thrill of crossing the rapids of Dogpo Yogma and Dogpo Gogma are subjects on which a whole book may be written. Both Dogpo Yogma and Dogpo Gogma are difficult to ford especially the latter, but there is a footpath over the snow bridge in each instance. Thus over the long and grassy Baralacha pass, the traveller enters the Lahaul valley where he will get the comfort of a good road and frequent rest-houses.

Elsewhere the reader will find a description of the route in the Lahaul or the Chandra Bhaga valley.

Routes in Lahaul and Spiti

(I)

		Miles	
1.	Kulu (Sultanpur) to Katrain	12	4,200 ft.; Civil Rest House
2.	Manali ..	12	6,00 ft.; Civil Rest House; Post Office; Forest Rest House
3.	Kothi ..	7	8,500 ft.; P.W.D. Rest House
4.	Khoksar ..	13	P.W.D. Rest House, Cross Rohtang Pass
5.	Sissu ..	8	P.W.D. Rest House
6.	Gondhla ..	8	P.W.D. Rest House
7.	Kyelang ..	10	P.W.D. Rest House
8.	Jispa ..	13	P.W.D. Rest House
9.	Patseo ..	11	P.W.D. Rest House
10.	Zingzingbar ..	5	Camping ground and Serai
11.	Kyinlung ..	13	Cross Baralacha Pass 16,047 ft.
12.	Lingti ..	17	A vast plain. No supplies available.
13.	Leh ..	145	Miles

(II)

1.	Manli to Chika	13	Camping ground
2.	Chatru ..	10	Cross Hamta Pass
3.	Phooti Rooni ..	8	
4.	Karcha ..	9	Cross Shigri Glacier
5.	Losar ..	12	Cross Kunzam Pass. First village in Spiti
6.	Kioto ..	9	
7.	Kibar ..	11	
8.	Kaza ..	8	
9.	Dangkar ..	15	
10.	Poh ..	8	
11.	Tabo ..	4	
*12.	Lari ..	5	

(III)

1.	Losar to Chandra Tal	11	Cross Morang Pass (15000')
2.	Dokpo Yogma ..	8	
3.	Dokpo Gongma ..	8	
3.	Zingzingbar ..	5	Cross Baralacha Pass

*From village Lari onward a path leads to Bushahr territory of Himachal Pradesh, where it meets the H.T. road at Wangtu bridge over the river Sutlej, after crossing Changu pass. This route entails a journey of about 14 stages.

APPENDIX A

TIPS FOR TREKKING IN KULU

The real joys of trekking—the unhurried absorption of surrounding scenery and the leisurely observance of incidental wayside comeliness of figure, fashion and behaviour—is not infrequently subordinated to pride of achievement in covering long distances. Similarly, in climbing a high mountain or pass: the urge to reach the summit or crest, in order to accomplish, without seeming waste of time, this definite object, leaves scant leisure for appreciation of immediate scenic environment. In the young and healthy this pride may be justifiable, but to work-weary visitors, direct from heat-stricken and enervating districts, a breaking-in-process to distance and altitude is very desirable. For strenuous climbs like the Chandra-Khanni, Rohtang and other passes, where pony transport is possible, a riding pony—even if used in turn with a companion—is not to be despised, and can make all the difference between wearisome toil and a comfortable journey.

Early rising : Advantages that accrue from an early start on the day's trek are numerous and decisive. Occasional exceptions are :

(*a*) When the march is one of a few miles which can, without discomfort, be accomplished at any time of the day.

(*b*) When atmospherical elements are unpropitious.

(*c*) When local conditions favour a journey in the afternoon or evening.

Ordinarily, however, the freshness and purity of the early-morning atmosphere; the exhilarating coolth—even chilliness—at break of day; the supreme joy of sunrise over high mountain and deep valley; the orderly and unhurried march, with time to spare for sight-seeing and photography; even the satisfying sense of a leisurely arrival at the day's destination; all tend towards comfort and real enjoyment. In more outlandish districts, where mountain streams have to be forded, an early start is essential while headwaters and runlets are still clogged with night frost and snow. Delaying tactics by pack-pony attendants occasionally tend to ruffle the harmony and day-to-day routine of this early starting procedure, but a

stipulation that *backsheesh* will only be distributed for helpful endeavour and satisfactory service will invariably overcome the difficulty.

Pack transport : Pack ponies and mules, if in good condition, carry a load of from 2 to 2½ maunds over ordinary routes, providing packages or tents are compressed into reasonable bulk. Difficult passes, bad roads, and snow-bound paths involve a reduction in both weight and bulk. On precipitous routes, around projecting rocks, and across landslips, baggage has occasionally to be man-handled and bulky articles provide difficult and sometimes dangerous problems of transport. A fair average is two maunds per strong animal. In estimating the number of pack animals required allowance must be made for the food and bedding of servants and pack-pony attendants. Leather yakdans, specially manufactured for pack transport, stand up to rough usage better than wooden cases or tin trunks and afford, perhaps, the safest method of transporting provisions and stores. If tin boxes are used they should be protected by light wooden crates. Small tarpaulins, or waterproof ground sheets, which can be used for covering bedding rolls are extremely useful and should never be omitted on long treks. Before commencing a trek ponies and mules should be inspected for general condition, lameness, or sore backs. Any found suffering from lameness or bad sores should be refused.

Coolies : The use of pack animals is more satisfactory and less expensive than coolie transport. Whenever possible, however, and whether riding or walking, one coolie, with a kilta (a cone-shaped wicker basket), should be engaged to accompany the party. Jerseys, waterproofs, thermos flask, sandwiches, (or small lunch basket) and any other items likely to be required on the day's march, should be packed in the kilta. This coolie must be given definite instructions to remain close to one member of the party—neither to rush ahead nor lag behind—so that waterproofs, wraps, food, drink, etc., are readily available when required.

Permits for Rest-houses : (See column 5 of Appendix B for designations of sanctioning authorities). Permits for the occupation of Departmental Rest-houses should be applied for well in advance of proposed dates for particular treks so that alternate dates may be selected if the bungalows are already booked or are reserved for Departmental officers. In making application for permit of occupation the number of persons comprising the party should be mentioned, also the number of rooms required, bearing in mind that accommodation in most Rest-houses is somewhat limited.

Rest-houses : Departmental Rest-houses are not elaborately furnished, but beds, tables, chairs, crockery, cutlery, cooking utensils,

lamps, etc., are generally sufficient for small parties. Beds are usually of the "newar" variety, without mattresses, so a thin mattress, which can be packed in the bedding roll, will always be useful. Failing a mattress, a cotton *razai*, or thick blanket, folded, makes a good substitute. Folding camp cots add little to the weight of equipment and may occasionally be preferred to the beds available in Rest-houses. On the more frequented routes, when other trekking parties are likely to be encountered, a few extra knives, forks and spoons, which also take up little space, may not come amiss. If crockery, cutlery, other table equipment, lamps, etc., belonging to the Rest-houses are used they should be thoroughly cleansed and carefully counted before being returned to the chowkidar who issued them. Any breakages should be noted in the "Remarks" column of the Visitors' Book and paid for in accordance with the tariff rates hung up in each bungalow or in the custody of the chowkidar.

Servants and sweepers : Rest-houses, generally, are in charge of a chowkidar. No other servants are usually available and, unless the trekking party prefers to do its own cooking and washing-up, a cook-bearer should invariably be taken. When applying for permits for occupation of bungalows in out-of-the-way places enquiries should be made if sweepers are available at the bungalow or in the vicinity. If not, a sweeper should either be added to the retinue or all rooms occupied, as well as bath rooms, at these particular Rest-houses, left in a clean state.

Lamps, kerosene oil, etc. : Hurricane lamps for personal use and for the use of servants should always be included. A torch might answer the purpose for personal use, but extra batteries and bulb should be carried. Candles are occasionally helpful ; matches a necessity. In remote tracts like Malana, Parbatti Valley, Lahaul, and Spiti kerosene oil is usually unobtainable and a supply should be taken. For a fairly large quantity petrol tins with well-fitting screw tops are useful. For smaller quantities, "Flit" or similar containers will answer the purpose. The best of containers are liable to accident so must be kept well away from food-stuffs.

Clothing, footwear, etc. : For day wear, even at high altitudes when the sun is shining, khaki or grey muzari shirts and pants (or shorts) comprise the most comfortable and useful kit. Most trekkers prefer shorts to long pants, but the latter have advantages, especially during early summer in Kulu, as protection against a small gnat (*chhanchu*) which seems to find bare knees the most convenient place for drawing its quota of blood; also in the autumn when spear-grass prickles abound in most localities. For early morning and evening wear (before sunrise and after sunset), especially at high altitudes where there is a big difference between

day and night temperatures something warmer is necessary and, if comfort is a consideration, a warm dressing gown or overcoat and warm sleeping suit need not be despised. On sunny days a sola topi or "Stetson" type of head-wear is as necessary on the high hills as it is on the plains. Strong, roomy walking boots or shoes, well broken-in, are the most comfortable footwear on ordinary foot and bridle paths. On snow there is nothing to beat heavily hob-nailed "ammunition" boots. For steep, grassy slopes (like the last few hundred feet up Baragarh mountain) string overshoes (pullahs), manufactured locally and worn over ordinary footwear, afford the best footholds, but wear out quickly. Boots and shoes should be roomy enough to allow for two pairs of thick socks or stockings. At the end of a long march a change into comfortable slippers is very soothing to tired feet. Sunlight on snow can be very trying to unprotected eyes and dark or tinted glasses will save much discomfort over snow fields and snow-crowned passes. An alpenstock (Khud-stick), also manufactured locally, is always useful on snow and on steep climbs and descents.

Provisions : Milk, eggs, potatoes, onions, rice, dal, maize and wheat atta are usually available at the larger villages like Bhuin, Banjar and Ani. At more out of-the-way places like Jari, Pulga, Kothi, etc., milk and potatoes can generally be obtained, but supplies are soon exhausted and, to be on the safe side, should not definitely be relied upon. For fairly long treks—and according to individual tastes—the following items might be included in the list of provisions: Flour, Baking Powder, Sugar, Tea, Cocoa (or Coffee), Tinned Milk, Butter, Cheese, Jam, Marmalade, Rice, Dhal, Curry Powder, Porridge, Potatoes, Vegetables, Eggs, Ghee (or other cooking medium), Bread, Biscuits and Fruit. Also a selection from the following items : Tinned Soups, Meats, Sausages, Fish, Vegetables and Fruit. Bread will keep fairly fresh for a few days, but with a supply of atta and baking powder scones can be baked fresh every day. A detailed estimate of stores likely to be required for each day of the trek, allowing a small margin for unforeseen delays, should be compiled beforehand and should be adhered to as far as possible *en-route*. Don't omit a tin opener and corkscrew. During summer flies are a nuisance at almost any height and beaded muslin covers, which take up very little space, should be carried for the protection of food and drink.

Simple remedies : It may not be necessary to have recourse to most of the following simple remedies, but it is comforting to have them at hand if actually required. Quinine and Aspirin Tablets, Bicarbonate of Soda, Vaseline, Iodine, Adhesive Plaster, Lint. Cotton Wool, Bandages, Cold Cream (for high altitudes), Enos or Andrews' Salts or some such laxative. Also Epsom Salts or Caster Oil for servants and pack-pony attendants. Keatings Powder

occasionally comes in useful; so also does a "Flit Gun" (or some other type of sprayer), with suitable insecticide. But insecticides, like kerosene oil, must be kept away from any possible contact with provisions. An iodine pencil is very convenient for treating insect bites, especially that of the *Chhanchu* gnat, where the original bite or sting may not be particularly disconcerting, but if not treated immediately intense irritation continues for several days.

Silver and small change, and cheap cigarettes : throughout the whole district silver is more appreciated than currency notes and goes further in the purchase of local commodities, especially in the smaller villages. A liberal supply of small change will also prove very useful. Away from main villages cigarettes are not easily obtainable and a few dozen packets of cheap brands for distribution to servants and pack-pony attendants will be heartily esteemed by the recipients.

Tents : Small double-fly tents, preferably with jointed tent poles, are the most convenient for pack transport. Tent equipment should comprise waterproof ground sheet, camp cots, folding chairs (Roorkee pattern are convenient and comfortable), folding (or roll-up) table, canvas bath and wash basin, and folding commode. A shouldari should be provided for servants to sleep under at night; during the day it can be used for cooking. Pitch tents on slightly sloping ground so that rain water will drain off. A small trench at each side of the tent will facilitate drainage. Iron is scare and expensive in the hills so count up and take care of all iron tent pegs. Tents and tent equipment are not ordinarily available for hire in Kulu.

Camping in Forest areas : During dry weather especially, care should be taken to see that all camp fires are thoroughly extinguished when breaking up camp. Precautions should also be taken against the indiscriminate flinging away of lighted cigarette ends.

Guides : Main hill roads, especially where villages line the route, are fairly easy to follow. Beyond the more densely-inhabited localities, however, where the route is a mere footpath, numerous grazing tracks are apt to confuse strangers and, if only to avoid uncertainty and loss of time, a local guide will be useful. Professional guides, as a class, are not obtainable in Kulu, but a man or boy from the nearest village can usually be found to guide a party in his own particular locality over difficult country.

APPENDIX B.

Routes on which Dak-bungalows or Rest-houses are available.

ROUTE A—*Pathankote to Manali by motor road.*

Town or village	Miles	Approximate altitude	Dak-Bungalows and Rest Houses	Officers to whom applications for permits should be addressed
Pathankote	..	..	Railway Refreshment and Waiting Rooms	Permit not necessary
Shahpur	40	2,400	Dak Bungalow	Permit not necessary
Palampur	32	4,000	Dak Bungalow P.W.D. Rest House	Permit not necessary Executive Engineer Dharmsala
Baijnath	10	4,150	Dak Bungalow	Permit not necessary
Jogindernagar	15	3,880	Dak Bungalow P.W.D. (Hydro-Electric (Rest House)	Permit not necessary Resident Engineer, Jogindernagar
Mandi	36	2,480	Dak Bungalow Rest House	Permit not necessary Executive Engineer, Mandi
*Kulu.	43	4,200	Dak-Bungalow Civil Rest House Forest Rest House	Permit not necessary S.D.O. (Civil) Kulu Divisional Forest Officer, Kulu
*Katrain.	12	4,800	Civil Rest House	S.D.O. (Civil) Kulu
*Manali.	12	6,000	Civil Rest House Forest Rest House	S.D.O. (Civil) Kulu Divisional Forest Officer, Kulu

The Kangra Valley Railway (narrow gauge) extends from Pathankot to the present rail head at Jogindernagar. Travellers by this route will contact Himachal Pradesh Government and Kulu Valley Transport bus services at Jogindernagar. Light refreshments are available at a small tea room on the station. Through bus services from Pathankote to Kulu are also available. (see Chap. II).

*This indicates the places where stage contractors have been appointed by the Government.

ROUTE B—*Jogindernagar to Kulu* via *the Bhubu Pass*

Town or village	Miles	Approximate Altitude	Dak Bungalows and Rest Houses	Officers to whom applications for permits should be addressed	Remarks
		Feet			
Jogindernagar ..		3,880	Himachal Govt. Dak Bungalow P.W.D. (Hydro-electric Rest House)	Permit not necessary Resident Engineer, Joginder Nagar	
Jhatingri	11	6,600	Himachal Rest House	S.D.O. P.W.D. Mandi	Seven days notice to be given
Sil Bhadwani	12	6,000	Himachal Forest Rest House	D.F.O. Mandi	Cross Bhubu Pass, 9,480 feet
Karaon	12	6,400	Civil Rest House	S.D.O. (Civil) Kulu	
*Kulu	8	4,200	Dak Bungalows, etc.		

ROUTE C—*Drang* (or *Mandi*)† *to Kulu* via *the Dulchi Pass*

Town or village	Miles	Approximate altitude	Dak Bungalows and Rest Houses	Officers to whom applications for permits should be addressed	Remarks
		Feet			
Drang ..		4,000	Himachal Forest Rest House	Divisional Forest Officer, Mandi	
Kataula	14	4,000	do	ditto	Cross Dulchi Pass 6,760 feet
*Bajaura	17	3,600	Civil Rest House	S.D.O. Civil), Kulu	
*Kulu	9	4,200	Dak Bungalow etc.		

†The bridle path from Mandi to Kataula connects with the road from Drang at the far side of the ridge overlooking the Uhl valley

*Stage contractors.

ROUTE D.—*Simla to Kulu* via *Jalori Pass*—135 *Miles*

upto Luhri motor-road and Luhri to Aut (Jeepable road)

Town or village	Miles	Approx. altitude	Dak Bungalows and Rest-houses	Officers to whom applications for permits should be addressed	Remarks
		Feet			
Simla	..	7,220	Hotels	..	..
Phagu	12	7,700	Dak Bungalow	Permit not necessary	
Theog	6	7,700	do	do	
Matiana	11	8,000	do	do	
Narkanda	11	8,800	do	do	
Luhri	13 (a)	2,600	do	do	
	26 (b)				
*Ani	12	4,000	Civil Rest House	S.D.O. Civil, Kulu	Between Khanag and Shoja cross Jalori Pass, 10,000 feet.
*Khanag	9	8,300	do	do	
*Shoja	7	8,800	do	do	
*Banjar	8	5,000	P.W.D. Rest House	S.D.O., P.W.D., Kulu	
*Larji	12	3,200	Civil Rest House	S.D.O. (Civil), Kulu	
Aut	2½	..	Forest R. H.	D.F.O. Mandi (Himachal)	
*Bajaura	9	3,600	Civil Rest House	S.D.O. (Civil) Kulu	
*Kulu	9	4,200	Dak Bungalow, etc.	..	

*Stage contractors (a) by bridle paths (b) by motor road

ROUTE E.—*Simla to Kulu* via *Kotgarh, Rampur, Bushahr and Bashleo Pass*

(Simla to Narkanda as Route "D")

Town or village	Miles	Approx. altitude	Dak Bungalows and Rest Houses	Officers to whom applications for permits should be addressed	Remarks
		Feet			
Narkanda	..	8,800	Dak Bonglow	Permit not necessary	
Thanedhar Kotgarh	10	..	P.W.D. Rest House	Executive Engineer	
Nirth	10	3,000	Mahasu Distt. Himachal Govt. Simla-4.	do	
Rampur Bushahr	13	3,300	(*i*)Dak Bungalow (*ii*)P.W.D. Rest House	Permit not necessary Executive Engineer Mahasu, Simla-4.	
*Arsu	8	5,800	P.W.D. Rest House	S.D.O. (P.W.D.) Kulu.	
*Sarahan	8	8,000	Civil Rest House	S.D.O. (Civil), Kulu.	Between Sarahan and Bathad cross Bashleo Pass, 10,750 feet
*Bathad	8	6,000	P.W.D. Rest House	S.D.O.(P.W.D.), Kulu.	
*Bandal	6		Forest Rest House	D.F.O., Saraj at Kulu.	
*Banjar	5	5,000	P.W.D. Rest house	S.D.O. (P.W.D.) Kulu.	

*Stage contractors.

(Onward to Kulu as in Route D.)

ROUTES F.—*Larji to Bhuin* via *Sainj and* via *Sainj to Banjar.*

Town or village	Miles	Approx. altitude	Dak Bungalows and Rest House	Officers to whom applications for permits should be addressed	Remarks
*Larji (2½ miles from motor road at Aut)	..	3,200	Civil Rest House	S.D.O. (Civil), Kulu	
*Sainj	9	3,200	Forest Rest House	Divl. Forest Officer (Saraj Division), Kulu.	
Bhalan	8	7,500	ditto	ditto	
*Garsa	6	4,500	ditto	Divl. Forest Officer, Kulu	
*Bhuin (1 mile from motor road	9	3,700	ditto	ditto	
*Sainj	..		Forest Rest House	Divl. Forest Officer (Saraj Division), Kulu	
*Panihar	10		ditto	ditto	
*Banjar	12	5,000	P.W.D. Rest House	S.D.O., (P.W.D.), Kulu	

*Stage contractors.

ROUTE G—*Kulu to Manikarn and Pulga—Parbatti Valley and return* via *Borsu*

Town or village	Miles	Approx. altitude	Dak Bungalows and Rest Houses	Officers to whom applications for permits should be addressed	Remarks
		Feet			
*Kulu	..	4,200	Dak-Bungalow etc.		
*Bhuin	7	3,700	Forest Rest-house	Divisional Forest Officer, Kulu	
*Jari	13	5,000	Ditto	Ditto	
*Kasol	5	5,300	Ditto	Ditto	
Manikarn	2½	5,700	No Rest House		Hot springs
*Pulga	9½	7,000	Forest Rest House	D.F.O. Kulu	
*Jari	..	5,000	Forest Rest House	D.F.O. Kulu	
Borsu	14		Ditto	Ditto	
*Kulu	10	4,000	Dak-bungalow Civil and Forest Houses	Permit not necessary S.D.O. (Civil) Kulu & D.F.O. Kulu	

*From Borsu, *via* Tandla to Naggar, (16 miles) a small Forest Rest House is located at Tandla, seven miles from Borsu, and a Civil Rest House at Naggar.

*Stage contractors

ROUTE—H—*Manali to Patseo (Lahaul) via the Rohtang Pass*

Town or village	Miles	Approx. altitude	Dak Bungalows and Rest Houses	Officers to whom applications for permits should be addressed	Remarks
		Feet			
*Manali	..	6,000	Forest Rest-house Civil Rest-house	D.F.O. Kulu S.D.O. Civil	
*Kothi	7	8,203	P.W.D. Rest-house		Between Kothi and Khoksar cross
*Khoksar	13	10,400	ditto	S.D.O.P.W.D. Kulu	Rohtang Pass, 13,400 feet
*Sissu	8	10,100	ditto		
*Gondhla	8	10,300	ditto		
*Kyelang	10	10,388	ditto		
*Jispa	13	10,500	ditto		
*Patseo	11	12,500	ditto		

NOTE— (*i*) From Patseo onward, either to Ladakh *via* Baralacha Pass (16,200 ft.) or Spiti, tents and camp equipment are necessary. Patseo to Leh, the capital of Ladakh is about 152 miles. Patseo to Losar, the first village in Spiti is five marches off.

(*ii*) The Sub-divisional Officer Civil, Kulu, Naib Tehsildar, Lahaul, officers-in-charge check posts Manali and Kyelang have been authorised to issue certificates to the intending travellers to Tibet. The Sub-Divisional Officer, Civil, Kulu, and the Naib Tehsildar Lahaul at Kyelang have also been authorised to issue Kashmir transit permits.

(*iii*) To travel further than Jispa it is necessary for the foreigners to obtain the permission of the Deputy Commissioner, Kangra, as at Darcha, where the Zankekar route from the Shingola is joined, the "Inner Line" is met.

APPENDIX C

All travellers can claim shelter in a staging bungalow. Departmental Rest-houses are meant primarily for Government servants travelling on duty. When not required by Government servants travelling on duty they may be occupied by travellers, subject to the prior permission from officers incharge of such Rest-houses. The chowkidar, however, is authorised in special cases, when the Rest-house is un-occupied and no permit has been issued, to allow occupation by travellers, without permit, provided they at once apply for it. The rent payable by travellers will be per bed room, (nothing being charged for dressing room or the common dining room, or sitting room where available) at the scale of fees as detailed below :

For the first 24 hours (subject to the rules given below in note 2).	1	8	0
For every additional 24 hours or part thereof	1	4	0
Maximum rent per diem when whole building is reserved.	5	0	0

NOTE: The above rates are for 'B' class Rest-houses under which class fall most of the Rest-houses in Kulu Sub-division.

2. If a traveller remains not more than four hours and uses only the dining room or verandah, with the use, not exclusive to other travellers, of a bedroom or bathroom, the charge will be 8 annas only.

3. Travellers are required—on arrival at a staging bungalow—to enter their names, full address and hour of arrival in the book which will be brought to them for this purpose.

4. Travellers are required, previous to their departure, to enter in the Travellers' Book the amount of the stated fees paid by them in accordance with these rules. The time of their departure should also be noted.

5. Travellers pitching tents in the enclosure of a staging bungalow, and not using the bungalow, will pay eight annas a day

for each tent. Travellers using the bungalow and paying the regular fees will not be charged for tents.

6. A fee of eight annas a day is to be paid for every wheeled vehicle, horse, mule or other animal used for riding or driving and for every tent, box or other property which is left in the compound of a staging bungalow after the departure of the owner.

7. The chowkidar of the bungalow will, if required, cook provisions furnished by travellers. Those who employ him to supply food must, unless terms have been specially agreed upon, pay according to the tariff hung up in the rooms.

8. Whoever loses, breaks, removes or injures any furniture or other property belonging to the bungalow will pay at the rates specified in the list kept by the servants in charge of the bungalow.

9. Sweepers are not kept at some of the rest houses and travellers are requested to make arrangement to see that Rest-houses are left in a clean condition.

Rules regarding the provision of transport and supplies in the Kulu Sub-Division including Lahaul and Spiti.

1. Travellers who are not Government Officers touring on duty are not entitled to, and should not rely on, the assistance of officials, lambardars or Government supply contractors for transport or supplies, but should make their own arrangements. The Tourist Bureau at Kulu, on receiving applications for assistance from travellers who are not Government servants, will put them in touch with contractors if they require cooly, mule or pony transport.

2. There are supply contractors appointed by Government at the places starred in route tables. They are bound to supply Government servants, travelling on duty, with the usual supplies and with transport and have been instructed to give assistance to other travellers, but as a matter of courtesy only and not of right.

3. Coolies are ordinarily obtainable, except during the harvesting months (15th May to 30th June and 1st October to 15th November) if sufficient notice is given to the supply contractors at any of the places starred, and at other places to village lambardars.

4. Officers travelling on duty who apply for official help will be supplied only with mule or pony transport on main routes and with coolie transport on routes impossible for mules or ponies.

5. Coolies to Spiti are not to be changed at intermediate stages. For every two coolies carrying luggage, wood or grass, an extra coolie must be taken to carry food for himself and the other two.

6. To visit Spiti where supplies and transport are difficult to obtain, travellers must make their own arrangements for supplies and transport, but mule transport, provided the route is over the Baralacha Pass, can usually be obtained at Kulu if one month's notice is given to the contractor at Kulu.

7. The maximum coolie load is 26 seers, but coolies travelling over a pass over 8,000 feet high should not be required to carry more than 24 seers.

8. Not less than 10 clear days' notice must be given to the Tahsildar, Kulu, for Kulu; to the Naib-tahsildar, Banjar, for Saraj; and one month's notice to the Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu for Lahaul, for the transport needed. The date and stage where the transport is required and the number of animals and coolies should be given in writing.

9. Every coolie who has been sent for under these rules at the request of a traveller, whether official or non-official and has not been employed, will be paid at half rates.

Transport rates for Kulu Sub-division

		Per mule or pony per Stage			Per porter per stage		
		Rs.	As.	Ps.	Rs.	As.	Ps.
1.	Kulu Sub-division (excluding Spiti and Lahaul areas)	2 to 3	8 0	0 0	1 to 1	6 8	0 0
2.	Spiti and Lahaul area	5	0	0	(Not fixed)		

NOTE— (*i*) It is a recognized practice that :—

(*a*) The rates for Kulu Sub-division for a single mule or pony or porter are 50% higher, when passes occur on the travel route.

(*b*) The contractor is entitled to get annas two as commission per stage but in case of haultage no commission is paid.

(*ii*) These rates are subject to revision from time to time by the Government.

(*iii*) Transport at above rates is not easily available to the tourists or non-official travellers. They are to pay more than the rates approved.

APPENDIX D-'A'

Abridged Rules for "Big Game" Shooting and Hunting in the Kulu Sub-Division.

Big game denotes the following species :

English Name	Kangra Name	Kulu Name
Himalayan Ibex	Tangrol	Katrol Tangrol (Spiti) Skin (Lahaul).
Tahr	Kart (.M) Meshi (F.)	Kart Korth (M.) Bakri (F.).
The Great Tibetan Sheep or Nyan ..	..	Nian
The Blue Wild Sheep or Bharal	..	Miatu
The Himalayan Goat Antelope or Serow	Goa	Yamu Emu
Goral	Pij	Ban Bakri
	Ban Bakri	Ghurrar
	Ghorrur	Ghoral
		Ghurral
		Gudh
Spotted Deer ..	Chittal	
	Bara Singh	
	Jhank	
Hog Deer	Para	
Barking Deer or Muntjao	Kakar	Kakar
Musk Deer ..	Kastura	Bina, Kastura
	Taunsa	Roonwi (F.)
	Bina	Ranwhin (F).
Blue Bull or Nilgai	Nilgai, Bangai, Rauj	
Brown Bear or Snow Bear	Lagru	Rotta Bhalu
		Rata Balu
Bear	Brahbo	Bhrid
		Brabbu

The shooting of big game is absolutely prohibited, except under a license to be granted by the Divisional Forest Officer for which the following license fees will be charged :

		Rs.
Kulu.. .. .. Lahaul Spiti	(*a*)	30 (for animals other than brown bear).
	(*b*)	40 (for one brown bear in addition to other animals).

These fees include a deposit of Rs. 10 which will be refunded when the licensee returns his license, duly completed, to the Divisional Forest Officer. A separate shooting license is required for Lahaul and Spiti areas under forest rules.

The holder of any of these licenses will be permitted to shoot big game in any forest not closed to sport by the Conservator of Forests, subject to the periods mentioned in Schedule III of the Punjab Wild Birds and Wild Animals Protection Act, 1933, provided that the licensee does not kill (*a*) more than the numbers of animals specified below or (b) immature specimens or, (*c*) females other than she-bears or, (d) she-bears with cub or cubs.

(1)	Ibex or Tangrol	1. (Kulu. No head to measure less than 30 inches).
		2. (Lahoul. No head to measure less than 30 inches).
		3. (Spiti. No head to measure less than 30 inches).
(2)	Nyan	1. (Minimum head 38 inches).
		2. (Kulu and Lahaul. Minimum head 20 inches).
(3)	Bharal	4. (Spiti. Minimum head 20 inches).
(4)	Goral	4. (No limit).
(5)	Tahr or Kart	2. (Minimum head 10 inches).
(6)	Serow	1. (No limit).
(7)	Barking deer	3.
(8)	Brown bear	1. (Except in Bara Bangahal where 2 may be shot only when without cub or cubs.)
(9)	Spotted deer or Chital	1. (No hornless stag or stag with horns in velvet may be shot).

The shooting of musk deer, both male and female, is prohibited.

Licenses to shoot big game will remain in force for twelve months from 1st January of the year of issue and are not transferable. Every license must be returned to the office of issue within a fortnight of the date of its expiry or earlier and the license holder must endorse upon it the number and kind of big game killed.

Applications for licenses should be sent by registered post to the Divisional Forest Officer, Kulu, or to the Divisional Forest Officer, Saraj Forest Division, according to the locality in which it is proposed to shoot. Applicants for a shooting license in Kulu should state whether they require an (*a*) license or a (*b*) license mentioned above.

The Conservator of Forests may, at his discretion, limit the number of licenses to be in force at any one time.

All holders of licenses to shoot big game in Kulu and Lahaul must employ a shikari registered on the list of shikaris maintained in the Divisional Forest Office at Kulu. A copy of this list will be sent to each person with his license.

Breaches of these rules are punishable under sections 26 (i) and 33 of Act XVI of 1927.

Nothing in the rules shall prevent the destruction of any brown bear known to be a sheep killer, either in defence of property or life, or with the written permission of the Divisional Forest Officer.

NOTE:—A list of forests closed to all sport by the Conservator of Forests and the areas declared as game Sanctuaries by the State Government shall be published in the official gazette, and a copy attached to all licenses issued.

APPENDIX D—'B'

Abridged Rules for Small Game Shooting and Hunting in the Kulu Sub-Division.

A Forest department shooting license for which a sum of Rs. 5/-/- will be charged will permit the holder to shoot small game in any forest not closed to sport by the Conservator of Forests and not declared as game sanctuary. The snaring, trapping, and netting of small game is prohibited.

The schedule showing open season for shooting various birds is as under :—

	Name of Bird	*Opening and Closing Dates*
1.	Ducks (all kinds).	September 1st to March 31st.
2.	Snipes (all kinds), Sandgrouse (all kind except Painted Sandgrouse).	September 15th to April 1st
3.	Black and Grey Patridge.	November 1st to March 1st
4.	Lapwing, Plovers Moorhen Coots, Doves and Pigeons, Bustards, Houbora, Floricon, Stone, Plover, Coursers.	September 15th to March 15th.
5.	Pheasants (all kinds), The Himalayan Snow Cock, The Tibetan Snow Cock, The Snow Patridge.	October 1st to March 15th.
6.	Chukor, Painted Sandgrouse, See-See, Hill Patridge, Peafowl, Jungle Fowls, Button Quail.	September 15th to March 1st.
7.	Hares.	September 15th to March 31st.

FISHING RULES FOR KULU SUB-DIVISION

(TROUT WATERS)

(*Vide Government Notification No.* 1848-*D*, *dated the* 9*th May*, 1925, *Part E.*)

No person shall fish in the waters of the Beas River and its tributaries from the source of the Beas to the mile stone "Kulu 3/1" near Washing Bihal, Sainj River and its tributaries, and the Tirthan River and its tributaries from and above Manglour Bridge, in so far as they are situated within the jurisdiction of the Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu, except an "Angling License" to be granted by the Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu, or by the Assistant Warden of Fisheries, Katrain who is authorised to determine the number of licenses to be granted at any one time.

(*i*) Provided that nothing in these rules shall entitle a license holder to fish in any water closed to fishing by a rule notified under section 6 of the Indian Fisheries Act, 1887.

The charges for a license shall be :

	Single License Rs.	*Family License* Rs.
For the season	30 0 0	40 0 0
For the month	12 0 0	15 0 0
For ten days or less ..	5 0 0	7 0 0
For one day	1 0 0	..

"Family" includes husband, wife, and children in any combination not exceeding two, whose names must be entered on the license. No license is transferable.

Provided that the licensee's children below the age of 16 may fish without a license by any of the methods permitted under the rules contained in this part.

3. It shall be a condition of every license granted under these rules that Warden of Fisheries, Punjab, shall determine at the beginning of each season:

(*a*) the size or weight limit below which no trout may be killed; and

(*b*) the maximum number of trout of the size prescribed in (*a*) above, which may be caught during the term of the license.

NOTE—The holders of a family license shall be restricted to the same number of fish as the ordinary licensees.

4. It shall be a condition of every license granted under these rules that the license holder may fish with rod and line only, using any of the following rules :

I. Artificial Fly.
II. Natural Fly.
III. Artificial spinning bait, including spoons.
IV. Natural spinning bait.

4-A. It shall be a condition of the license that every licensee shall be bound to show the license to any person empowered under section 6 of the Act to arrest without warrant for offence under the Act.

5. No fish of any species shall be killed between the 10th day of October and the 9th day of March, both days inclusive, except in the Sainj and Tirthan rivers, in which no fish of any species shall be killed between the 1st day of November and the last day of February, both days inclusive.

(Added by Punjab Government Notification No. 3923-D dated 16th March, 1943, further amended by No. 27-Agr., dated 4th January, 1945).

Provided that nothing in these rules shall prevent the catching of any species at any time of the year by employees of the Fisheries Department acting under the authority of the Head of the Department.

6. All apparatus erected or used for fishing in contravention of these rules may be seized and taken to the nearest Police Station by any persons empowered under Section 6 of the Act to arrest, without warrant, for offences under the Act, and all such apparatus and all fish taken by means of any such apparatus may be forfeited on conviction of the offender under section 5 of the Act.

7. The Sub-Divisional Officer, Kulu, or Warden of Fisheries, Punjab, may cancel a license, the holder of which has been convicted of a breach of these rules, or under any section of the Indian Fisheries Act, 1897.

The gods in assembly at the Dussehra fair.

Dussehra is the most colourful fair of the Kulu Valley. In the picture, the hill simu- cians are taking t gods in a procession to the *mela* ground.