

# Calcutta Geographical Society

Publication No. 3

## HOLY PLACES OF INDIA

BY

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*Ancient Literature, Kausambi in*

*Ancient Literature, etc., etc.*

1940

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# CALCUTTA GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

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The Calcutta Geographical Society, inaugurated in July, 1933, by a small band of workers, has been founded with the object of supplying the need of a central organisation for the increase and spread of geographical culture in Bengal. Geography, the most ancient of all sciences, is a synthetic science acquiring its data from all other sister sciences and is therefore of wide appeal and direct influence in the everyday life of the citizens of all countries of the world. It fosters a spirit of adventure and independent inquiry in every realm of activity pertaining to the world we live in and the human family of which we are a unit, and hence it should be given a high place in the education and equipment of the student, the businessman, the man of affairs, the political and social worker, all of whom must, if they are to help in the progress of modern India, try to cultivate breadth of vision and a world-wide outlook. The neglect of Geography in the past has been responsible for the making of poor citizens and people of narrow, mean outlook on life.

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Member's annual subscription is Rs. 3 and admission fee is Re. 1. Forms of application may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Calcutta Geographical Society, Asutosh Building, Calcutta.

Calcutta Geographical Society

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## PREFACE

This treatise contains a succinct account of almost all the important sacred places belonging to the three communities—Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains. These places have been arranged regionally and illustrated with maps and sketches. Knowing fully well the geographical importance of such a topic, the Calcutta Geographical Society has given me an opportunity of preparing such a booklet not only for the convenience of travellers but also for researchers. Here I have purposely avoided the use of diacritical marks. I shall consider myself fortunate if it is found useful by those for whom it is intended.

43, KAILAS BOSE STREET, }  
CALCUTTA,  
*16th June, 1940.*

BIMALA CHURN LAW



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# HOLY PLACES OF INDIA

## Section I—HINDU SACRED PLACES

### I. INDO-GANGETIC PLAIN

#### (A) BENGAL

Bengal contains a large number of sacred spots visited by Hindu pilgrims from all parts of the world. They are as follows :—

#### NORTH BENGAL

**Khetur**—It is a village in the Rajshahi District and enjoys a high repute for sanctity from its having been visited by Chaitanya, the great Hindu religious reformer of the sixteenth century, in whose honour a temple had been erected there. A religious fair held annually in October is attended by many pilgrims.

**Tarpan Ghat**—In the Nawabganj thana of the district of Dinajpur, it is still pointed out as the place where the sage Valmiki, the author of the Ramayana, bathed and performed religious rites (tarpan) ; and a mound of bricks in the vicinity, known as Sitakot, is the spot assigned by tradition as the home of Sita, Rama's exiled queen.

**Duarbasini**—(Maldah District) It is noted for its shrine and is much frequented by Hindu pilgrims.

#### WEST BENGAL

**Aranghata**—It is a village situated about 6 miles north of Ranaghat in the district of Nadia. The river Churni flows by the village and on its bank stands the Hindu temple of Jugul Kisore containing the images of Krishna and Radha. The temple is believed to have been constructed about

1728 A. D. Tradition has it that the image of Krishna was brought from Brindaban and first installed at Samudragarh (near Nabadwip), whence it was transferred to Aranghata by Ganga Ram Das, the first Mahant of the temple. The image of Radha is said to have been brought from the palace of Krishna Chandra, the famous Maharaja of Nadia, who made a grant of 125 bighas of rent-free land for the maintenance of the temple. A big fair is held here annually throughout the month of Jaistha, and is attended by pilgrims from all parts of Bengal. Among the visitors, females predominate, owing to the belief that any woman who visits the temple will escape widowhood, or, if she be already a widow, will be spared from that fate in her next birth. To the south of this temple there is another, and a more ancient one, containing the idol of Gopi Nath.

**Ballabhpur and Mahesh**—Two important festivals connected with the god Jagannath are held at Mahesh and Ballabhpur in the sub-division of Serampore of the District of Hooghly. The car festival held at Mahesh is very important and is attended by many thousands of pilgrims from all parts of India.

Sixteen days after the bathing festival, the Rathajatra or Car Festival takes place. The god is again brought out of the temple at Mahesh, placed on a huge car, and dragged for a distance of about a mile to the village of Ballabhpur, where he is placed in the temple of another god, Radhaballabh. After the lapse of eight days, the Ulta-rath or return journey takes place, the god being escorted back to the temple in the same way as he was brought out. A large fair is held at Mahesh at the time of the festival. Rathajatra of Mahesh is the largest festival of its kind in India outside Puri.

**Bansberia**—It is a village in the Hooghly district. There are three temples of Vishnu, Swayambhava or Kali and Hanseswari. The Vishnu temple is the oldest, being



built in 1679-80 A. D. North of it is a small unpretentious temple, built in 1788-89 and dedicated to Swayambhava. The Haneswari temple stands further to the east, and is the largest of the three. It was completed in 1814-15. The presiding deity is Haneswari whose image is of *nim* wood, painted blue ; she is seated on a lotus flower, the stalk of which springs from the navel of Siva lying prostrate.

**Dakshineswar**—This village in the Barrackpore subdivision, situated on the Hooghly river, was formed into a separate municipality in 1899. It contains a group of temples called Rani Rasmani's Navaratna, after the founder, Rasmani Dasi of Janbazar in Calcutta. These consist of two beautiful central temples dedicated to Kali and Krishna, faced by 12 minor shrines in honour of Siva.

**Kalighat**—Here is situated the temple of Goddess Kali on the bank of a old bed of the Ganges, 2 miles south of the southern boundary of Calcutta. It is the most celebrated place of pilgrimage, and derives its sanctity from the legend that when the corpse of Siva's wife, Sati, was cut into pieces by order of the gods, and chopped off by the disc (Sudarsan Chakra) of Vishnu, one of her fingers fell on this spot. The temple is supposed to have been built about three centuries ago by a member of the Sabarna Chaudhuri family of Barisa, who allotted 194 acres of land for its maintenance. The principal religious festival of the year is on the second day of the Durga-puja, when the temple is visited by crowds of pilgrims, and on the Kali-puja day Hindu pilgrims visit this temple in large numbers.

**Kenduli**—It is a village, also called Kendwa Billa or Jayadeva Kenduli, in the Bolpur thana of the Suri Sub-division, situated on the north bank of the river Ajay, a few miles west of Ilambazar and about 22 miles south of Suri. It is renowned as the birth-place of the great Sanskrit poet Jayadeva, who flourished in the 12th century A.D., and composed the well-known Gita Govinda, a Sanskrit lyrical

poem in praise of Radhika and Krishna. An annual fair in his honour is held in the village on the last day of the Hindu month Paus and the first two days of Magh, corresponding with the middle of January, and is attended by upwards of 50,000 pilgrims, mostly Vaishnavas.

The body of Jayadeva was buried and not burnt after his death, and his tomb is still to be seen at Kenduli, surrounded by beautiful groves and trees. A square piece of stone, said to have been used by Jayadeva as his seat at the time of worship, is preserved in a small hut near the Ajay river. The village also contains a temple of Radha Binode, commonly known as Jayadeva's temple, which, according to an inscription on a tablet, was built by the mother of Maharaja Kirti Chand Bahadur of Burdwan, and dedicated to the god in Sakabda 1605, *i.e.*, over 200 years ago. Another temple was also erected by the Mahant of Kenduli a few years ago.

**Khardah**—It is a village in the Barrackpore subdivision, situated on the bank of the Hooghly, 12 miles north of Calcutta.

The place is of interest from having been for some time the home of Nityananda, one of the greatest of Chaitanya's disciples. To him is ascribed the foundation of the village, the legend being as follows :—

Nityananda came here to live the life of an ascetic on the bank of the Hooghly. One day he heard the lamentations of a woman and went to her, when she told him that her only daughter had just died. Looking at the body, Nityananda said that the girl was only sleeping. The mother thereupon made a vow that if he would restore her daughter, he should have her for his wife. The saint immediately revived the girl, and wedded her. Being now a married man, he required a house to live in, and asked the landlord of the place for a plot of land for a site. The latter, to mock

him, took a piece of straw (khar) and threw it into an eddy (daha) of the river, telling him to take up his residence there. Nityananda's sanctity was such that the eddy immediately dried up, and left a convenient site for a dwelling. Hence the village took the name of Khardah.

From Nityananda's son Birbhadra are descended the Goswamis or Gosains of Khardah, who are regarded as gurus, or spiritual guides, by the Vaishnavas.

Khardah or Khardaha has become a great place of pilgrimage for the Vaishnavas, and many pilgrims flock there on the occasion of the fairs held at the Dol and Ras festivals. There is a fine temple containing an image of Shyamsundar or Krishna.

**Nadia or Nabadwipa**—It is a town from which the district derives its name. It lies on the west bank of the Bhagirathi, opposite the confluence of the Jalangi with that river. The present Navadwipa is situated on the site of the ancient village of Kulia in the Nadia district. It covers an area of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  square miles.

For many centuries Nabadwipa has been famous for its sanctity and learning. From its earliest days the patronage of the Hindu kings and the sanctity of its site attracted, from far and near, erudite scholars who taught Sanskrit philosophy to thousands of students. Of these were Halayudha, Pasupati, Sulapani and Udayanacharya, who are believed to have flourished there during the reign of Lakshmana Sen, and a Pandit from the upper country, who is said to have been the first scholar to set up a school of logic in Nabadwip. Basudev Sarbabhauma, Raghunath Siromani, Raghunandan, Krishnananda Agamabagisa were the most celebrated savants of the place. Chaitanya was born at Nabadwipa in 1485 A. D. He was undoubtedly a man of great intellect, but the key-note of his philosophy was universal love. He was the founder of the Vaishnava sect, and has still a very large following throughout Bengal.



The town is frequented by pilgrims from all parts of Bengal, chiefly those of the Vaishnava sect, who bathe in the sacred waters, and at the same time pay their homage at the shrine of Sree Chaitanya. The concourse of pilgrims is very large at the time of the full-moon in the months of Baisakh, Kartik and Magh.

Sir William Hunter remarks : "The past of Nadia raises very high expectations, but its present state is disappointing. It is not an ancient city with venerable ruins, crowds of temples, a great population and time-honoured tols in every street, with numbers of learned pandits, such as one might expect from its antiquity. All that meets the eye is a small rural town with little clusters of habitations, and a community of Brahmans, busied with earning their bread, rather than in acquiring a profitless learning. The caprices and changes of the river have not left a trace of old Nadia. The people point to the middle of the stream as the spot where Chaitanya was born. The site of the ancient town is now partly char-land, and partly forms the bed of the stream which passes to the north of the present town. The Bhagirathi once held a westerly course, and old Nadia was on the same side with Krishnagar, but about the beginning of this (19th) century the stream changed and swept the ancient town away."

**Santipur**—A town in the Ranaghat subdivision of the Nadia District is situated on the left bank of the Hooghly. It is held sacred because Adwaitacharya, who was supposed to be an incarnation in one person of both Vishnu and Siva, flourished here in the latter part of the 15th century. It is said that Chaitanya took his initiation from Adwaitacharya, who, afterwards, himself became a disciple of Chaitanya.

Of the temples, the three most famous are that of Syamachand, built in 1726 by Ram Gopal Khan Chaudhuri, whose family is still one of the wealthiest in Santipur ; that of Gokulchand, built about 1740 ; and that of Jaleswar, said



to have been built by the mother of Maharaja Ram Krishna of Nadia about the beginning of the 18th century.

The town is visited by a large number of pilgrims at the time of the full-moon in the month of Kartik, when the Rashjatra festival lasts for two days and ends with a procession in which the idols of the Gosains are carried about on elevated wooden platforms. It is a commercial town famous for dhootis and saris well-made by expert weavers.

About six miles from the town of Santipur there is a village called Phulia mostly inhabited by Brahmins. Kirttibasa was a native of this village and hence Phulia is very much frequented by Hindu pilgrims.

**Tarakeswar**—It is an important village in the thana Haripal of the Serampore subdivision in the Hooghly District. The chief object of interest is the shrine of the linga of the god Siva called Tarakeswara, which is about 500 yards from the railway station. This shrine throughout the year is visited by Hindu pilgrims. Several religious festivals are held periodically, the largest crowds assembling on the Siva-ratri and Charak Sankranti days.

**Triveni**—"Triveni" means "three streams" being at the point where the Saraswati on the west, and the Yamuna on the east leave the Hooghly. The famous Ghat of Triveni on the river Hooghly lies at a distance of about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles eastward of the Magra Station which is about 30 miles from Howrah.

The principal Hindu festivals celebrated at Triveni are chiefly concerned with bathing in the Bhagirathi on auspicious days, *e.g.*, (1) *Makar Sankranti* held on the last day of Paus ; a mela or fair is held there on the occasion of this festival. (2) *Baruni*, held in the month of Chaitra in honour of Baruna, the god of waters, and (3) *Dasahara*, held in Jaistha in honour of the goddess Ganga.

**Vishnupur**—The Vishnupur subdivision is bounded on the north by the River Damodar, on the south by the districts

of Hooghly and Midnapur, on the east by Burdwan and on the west by the Bankura subdivision. Here there are many Hindu temples known as Mallesvar, Madanagopal, Muralimohan, Madanamohan, Radha Govinda, Radhamadhab and Radhashyam. The Madana Gopal temple was built by Siromani in 1665 A. D., and the Muralimohan and Madanamohan temples were built in 1665 and 1694 A. D. There are several types of temples at Vishnupur. The temples of Shyam and Madanamohan are built of bricks and those of Radhashyam and Madanagopal are built of laterite. The Mallesvar temple is unique in type as it contains a single square tower. The brick temples are richly covered with carvings and in spite of the unsuitable material the laterite temples have also carvings here and there. Hindus flock in large numbers to visit these temples which are very sacred to them.

### EAST BENGAL

**Chandranath**—In the vicinity of Sitakund are the famous temples of Sambhunath, Chandranath, Labanakhya and Barabakund, which are picturesquely situated on hill-tops or in romantic glens, and are visited by pilgrims from all parts of Bengal. The largest gathering takes place at the Siva Chaturdasi festival.

The peak of Chandranath is regarded as a place beloved of Siva, for here, tradition relates, the right arm of Sati fell when severed by the disc of Vishnu. The shrine on the top of the hill contains a lingam or symbolical representation of Siva, and the ascent to it is said to redeem the pilgrim from the miseries of future rebirths. Other sacred temples in the neighbourhood are those of Labanakhya, 3 miles to the north, and Barabakund, 3 miles to the south.

**Sitakund**—It is a village in the Chittagong District, 24 miles north of Chittagong town. It gives its name to a range of hills running north from Chittagong town, which reaches

its highest elevation (1,155 feet) at Sitakund. Sitakund is the holiest place of the Hindus in the district, for tradition states that Rama and Sita, while in exile, roamed about on the hills in the vicinity and that Sita bathed in the hot spring (kund) which is associated with her name. The spring does not exist, but the site is marked by the temple of Sambhunath.

### SUNDARBANS

**Sagar Island**—This island is situated in the Diamond Harbour subdivision of the 24 Parganas at the mouth of the Hooghly river. It is bounded by the Hooghly on the west, and by the Baratala or Channel Creek on the east, while the Bay of Bengal washes its southern face.

Situated as it is, at the point where the holy Ganges once mingled its waters with the sea, it is regarded as a peculiarly sacred spot. The legend accounting for its sanctity is as follows :—

Sagar, King of Oudh, the thirteenth ancestor of Rama, had performed the *Asvamedha Jajna*, or horse-sacrifice, ninety-nine times. This ceremony consisted in sending a horse round the world, with a defiance to all the kings to arrest its progress. If the horse returned unopposed, it was understood to be an acquiescence in the supremacy of the challenger, and the animal was then solemnly sacrificed to the gods. When King Sagar made preparations for the hundredth sacrifice, Indra, King of Heaven, who had himself performed the ceremony a hundred times, jealous of being displaced by this new rival, stole the horse, and concealed it in a subterranean cell, where the sage Kapila, or Kapilmuni, was engaged in meditation. The sixty thousand sons of Sagar traced the horse to his hiding-place, and, believing the sage to be the author of the theft, assaulted him. The holy man being roused, opened his eyes and cursed his assailants who were immediately burnt to ashes and sentenced to hell.



A grandson of Sagar, in search of his father and uncles, at last came to Kapilmuni, and begged him to redeem the souls of the dead. The holy man replied that this could only be effected if the waters of Ganga could be brought to the spot to touch the ashes.

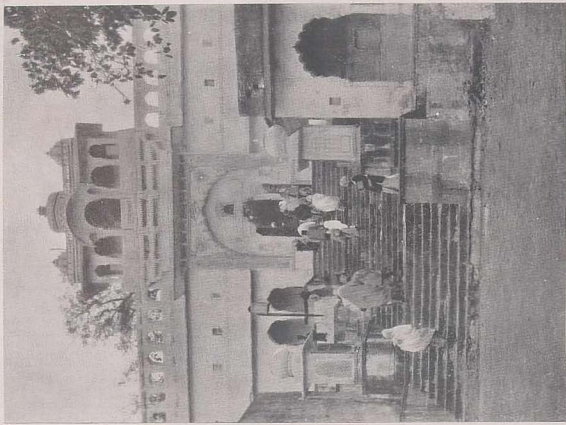
Now Ganga was residing in Heaven, in the custody of Brahma, the Creator, and the grandson of Sagar prayed him to send the goddess to the earth. He died, however, without his application having been granted. He left no issue ; but a son, Bhagirath, was miraculously born of his widow, and through his prayers Brahma allowed Ganga to visit the earth. Bhagirath led the way as far as Hathiagarh, in the 24-Parganas, near the sea, and then declared that he could not show the rest of the way. Thereupon Ganga, in order to make sure of reaching the spot, divided herself into a hundred mouths, thus forming the delta of the Ganges. One of these mouths reached the cell, and, by washing the ashes, completed the atonement for the offence of the sons of King Sagar, whose souls were thereupon admitted into heaven. Ganga thus became the sacred stream of the hundred mouths. The people say that the sea took its name of Sagar from this legend ; and the point of junction of the river and sea at Sagar Island is a celebrated seat of Hindu pilgrimage, to which thousands of devout pilgrims repair every year during the great bathing festival.

The festival is held at the time of the Makara Sankranti, when the sun enters the tropic of Capricorn, which is identified with the 1st Magh ( in the middle of January ) and is the occasion of a large fair. The fair takes place on the bank of a small creek leading to the sea, on a piece of sandy ground, where mat booths are run up for the sale of the hawkers' wares. The fair lasts several days, but three days are the limit of the religious festival. The first ceremony is the propitiation of the ocean, by casting into it various offerings with short ejaculatory prayers ; the oblations are commonly cocoanuts, fruits, or flowers.





The Temple of Kamakhya.



Temple of Brahma at Pushkar.

The most appropriate gift is that of the five gems (*pancharatna*), consisting of a pearl or diamond, an emerald, a topaz, and a piece of coral, along with a cocoanut, an areca-nut, and the sacred thread worn by Brahmins. These are wrapped up in a cloth, and cast into the creek which communicates with the sea, and also at the confluence. The jewels are in general not worth more than a rupee or two. On the first day the pilgrims bathe in the sea early in the morning, some repeating the bath at noon. Some also have their heads shaved after bathing, and many of those whose parents are recently dead celebrate the *sraddha*, or obsequial ceremonies, on the sea-shore. After ablutions, the pilgrims repair to the temple dedicated to Kapilmuni. On the second and third days, bathing in the sea, adoration of Ganga, and the worship of Kapilmuni continue as on the first, after which the assemblage breaks up. During the whole time the pilgrims, for the most part, sleep on the sand, for the crowds are so great that they cannot all find accommodation in the boats.

The image of Kapila is a shapeless block of stone daubed with red paint. During the greater part of the year it is kept in Calcutta ; but a week or two before the festival, it is handed over to the priests, who take charge of it during the festival, and receive a share of the pilgrims' gifts. It is placed in a temporary temple, as the old one has been washed away by the encroaching sea, and stands on a platform of sand about four feet high.

This celebrated place of pilgrimage is also known as Ganga-Sagara.

## (B) ASSAM

**Kamakhya**—There is no doubt that the temple of Sakti, Siva's consort, at Kamakhya near Gauhati, was famous in very ancient times, and that it was a great centre of the sensual form of worship inculcated in the Tantras, which probably had its origin there. The Kalika Purana and the

Jogini Tantra preserve the names of several kings, whose titles, Danava and Asura, betray their aboriginal descent, and who were followed by Naraka, the reputed founder of the ancient and famous city of Pragjyotishapura, the modern Gauhati. According to tradition, Naraka ruled from the Karotoya river to the extreme east of the Brahmaputra Valley, and met his death at the hands of Krishna.

The temple of Kamakhya in Kamrup is a special object of veneration to the devotees of this creed, as it is said to cover the place where the genitals of Sakti fell, when her body was cut in pieces by Vishnu ; but Saktism, as a rule, is not popular with the inhabitants of Assam, and many of the so-called Saktists were merely garden coolies and rough tribesmen, who had not yet learnt sufficient self-restraint to abandon meat and liquor. The devotees of Siva, who is the male counterpart of Sakti, are comparatively few in number. Most of them are found in the Surma Valley. Another small sect remarkable for the peculiarity of its tenets is the Sahaj Bhajan. Each worshipper endeavours to secure salvation by taking a woman as a spiritual guide.

Kamrup has many temples, but most of them are small and have fallen into disrepair, the two best known being the temple of KAMAKHYA on Nilachal hill near Gauhati, and the temple of Hayagriva Madhab at Hajo, about 15 miles by road north-west of Gauhati.

**Brahmakund**—It is a deep pool in the Brahmaputra on the eastern border of the Lakhimpur District, Assam. Parasurama, one of the ten incarnations of Vishnu, is said to have surrendered at this pool the axe with which he destroyed the Kshatriyas, and ever since it is visited by Hindu pilgrims from every part of India. The pool is situated at the place where the river emerges from the mountains, and is surrounded on every side by hills. The journey from Sadiya takes four or five days for ordinary travellers, but



is not attended by any risk. The return journey downstream can be completed in two days.

**Sibsagar**—It has numerous temples built by the Ahom kings. They are made of thin bricks of excellent quality, and are generally ornamented with bas-reliefs ; but the fact that figures of camels not unfrequently appear suggests that they were made under the direction of foreign artisans, as camels must always have been very scarce in a damp and marshy country like Assam. These temples were generally built on the side of large tanks.

Immense tanks, with temples on their banks, were also constructed at Gaurisagar, Rudrasagar, and Jayasagar, all within a few miles of the Sibsagar tank.

Another interesting ruin near that place is the small temple at which a human being was annually offered to the deity for many centuries by the Chutiya priests.

**Hajo**—It is a village in Kamrup District, Assam, situated on the north bank of the Brahmaputra, 15 miles by road from Gauhati. Hajo is famous for a temple of Siva, which stands in a picturesque situation on the top of a low hill. It is said to have been originally built by a sage and to have been restored to by Raghu Deb (A.D. 1583) after it had been damaged by the Muhammadan General Kala Pahar. It is an object of veneration not only to Hindus but also to Buddhists, who visit it in considerable numbers, under the idea that it was at one time the residence of Buddha.

### (C) BIHAR

**Baidyanath Dham**—At Deoghar now known as Baidyanathdham in the Santhal Parganas District is found a group of twenty-two temples dedicated to Siva, which form a centre of pilgrimage for Hindus from all parts of India. The oldest temple is called Baidyanath, or Baijnath, and is



said to contain one of the twelve oldest *lingams* of Siva in India. The legend of the temples is told by Sir W. W. Hunter in the Annals of Rural Bengal. The group of temples is surrounded by a high wall enclosing an extensive courtyard with a pavement of Chunar stone. All the temples but three are dedicated to Siva as Mahadeo, the remaining three are dedicated to his wife Parvati.

**Bansi**—It is a village in the Banka sub-division of the Bhagalpur District, situated near the base of Mandaragiri. After the destruction of the temple of Madhusudan on Mandaragiri hill, the image of the god was brought to Bansi, where it now remains. Once a year, on the Paus Sankranti day, the image is carried from Bansi to the foot of the hill, and is swung on the triumphal arch. About 50,000 pilgrims assemble from all parts of the country, in order to bathe in the sacred tank at the foot of the hill, and a fair is held which lasts for fifteen days.

**Chinnamasta**—It is in the Gola subdivision of the Hazaribag District where formerly human beings were killed and offered to the deity.

**Jahnu-Asrama**—The hermitage of Jahnu Muni is at Sultangunj on the west of Bhagalpur. The temple of Gaibinath Mahadeva which is on the site of the hermitage of Jahnu Muni is situated on a rock which comes out from the bed of the Ganges in front of Sultangunj.

**Karangarh**—It is a hill, or more properly a plateau, in the head-quarters subdivision of Bhagalpur District and is said to derive its name from Karna, a pious Hindu king.

The only objects of interest are Saiva temples of some celebrity. These consist of four buildings (maths) with square bases and the usual pointed pinnacles. One is several hundred years old, the other buildings being modern. The Hindus pay their devotion here on the last day of the month of



Raja Rani Temple at Bhuvaneshvar.



Jaina Temple on the Satrunjaya Mountain at Palitana.

Kartik. The temples contain several of the so-called seats of Mahadeva, one of which is made of Narmada stone.

**Rishyasringa-Ashrama**—The hermitage of sage Rishyasringa was situated at Rishi Kunda, 28 miles to the west of Bhagalpur. It is one of the holy spots in Behar.

#### (D) ORISSA

**Baitarani**—The Baitarani (Dist. Cuttack) rising among the hills in the north-west of the Keonjhar State, flows first in a south-westerly and then in an easterly direction, forming successively the boundaries between the Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj States and between Keonjhar and Cuttack. It enters this district near the village of Balipur; and after flowing in a winding easterly course across the delta, where it marks the boundary-line between Cuttack and Balasore, it joins its waters with the Brahmani, and passing by Chandbali finds its way into the sea under the name of the Dharma river. The principal branches thrown off from the right bank of the Baitarani are cross streams connecting it with the Kharsua, the chief of which is the Burha. This river is mentioned in the Hindu mythology. The legend relates that Rama, when marching to Ceylon to rescue his wife Sita from the ten-headed demon Ravana, halted on its banks on the borders of Keonjhar. In commemoration of this event large numbers of people visit the river every January.

**Bhubanesvara**—It is a village in the Khurda subdivision, 18 miles south of Cuttack and 30 miles north of Puri town. It is mostly inhabited by Hindus and a large number of Brahmins and priests. The Lingaraja temple which is the main temple is unique from the architectural standpoint. Lingaraja is otherwise called Bhubanesvara or Tribhubanesvara. It covers an area of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres and is surrounded by a high thick wall of laterite, and oblong in shape. A courtyard inside is flagged with stone and is



crowded with 60 or 70 side temples. The temple of Bhagavati, wife of Siva in the north-west corner, is important. The main temple consists of 4 structures, viz., the dancing hall, the refectory hall, the porch and the tower. This place is not only holy but is very healthy situated on the Baliani river. It is full of nux vomica trees. There are many tanks, the most remarkable of them are the Vindusagara, the Devipadahara, Papanashini, Kedargauri near Kedareshvara, the Brahmakunda near Brahmeswara, and Kapilahrada outside the Kapileshvara temple. The biggest of all the tanks is Vindusagara.

**Gokarneswara**—At Deuli, a village in the Jajpur sub-division of the Cuttack District, situated two miles west of the Police station of Dharamsala, there remains a small temple of Gokarneswara which is picturesquely situated on a bend of the river Brahmani. It is one of the ancient temples of Orissa, which needs repair badly. There is a life-sized monolithic image of the four-handed Vishnu at the foot of a banian tree.

**Jajpur**—A temple containing the image of Sati under the name of Biraja or the passionless one, is situated at Jajpur. The present building is comparatively recent and cannot be of an earlier date than the 14th century; but the site is very old, and from the mention of "*Biraja-Kshetra*" in the Mahabharata it has been inferred that it was a sacred spot as early as the 2nd or 3rd century A. D.

**Puri**—It is famous for the Hindu temple Jagannath. It stands on the shore of the Bay of Bengal, and is a headquarters town of the district of the same name.

Sriksetra is one of the most sacred places of the Hindus. It extends from the Lokanatha temple on the west to the Balesvara temple on the east and from Svargadvara or the Gate of Heaven on the south to the Matia stream on the north-east. This sacred spot is said to

resemble in shape a conch-shell, in the centre of which lies the Jagannath temple. The town includes two distinct portions, the Balukhand or the sandy tract along the sea and the town proper. The inhabited portion of the Balukhand lies between two sacred tirthas, Svargadvara and Cakratirtha. The Svargadvara is not as clean as Cakratirtha, and the town is very dirty. From architectural standpoint the temple is not as important as that of Bhubanesvara. It stands on a very wide road where in the month of Asadha innumerable pilgrims flock to this place to attend the Car Festival of Jagannatha. Besides the main temple there are many other minor temples such as Markandesvara, Lokanatha, Nilakanthesvara and some tanks e. g., Markanda, Sivaganga, Indradyumna. About two miles from the great temple lies the Gundichabari. Many festivals are held here during the year such as Candanajatra, Dolajatra, etc.

**Sakhigopala**—Within ten miles of Puri stands the temple of Sakhigopala. There is a tradition that here Krishna stopped and turned himself to stone. It is frequently visited by pilgrims.

## (E) UNITED PROVINCES

**Ayodhya**—It is a sacred place of the Vaisnavas, and is situated on the banks of the Saraju river. It is about 6 miles from the Fyzabad Railway Station. There is a fine motorable road from Fyzabad to Ayodhya. It was the capital of Ramchandra. It contains the temples of Rama, Sita, Hanumana, and many old buildings.

**Allahabad** (Ancient Prayag)—The junction of two or more rivers, called Prayag-sangam, is usually considered sacred. Here, a large bathing festival is held annually in the month of Magh (January). Every twelve years the fair called the *Kumbh-mela* is held there and innumerable pilgrims from every part of India flock to the junction to have a dip in the sangam. In Prayaga, the hermitage of

the sage Bharadvaja was situated. The image of the sage is worshipped in a temple in Colonelgunge. The hermitage was visited by Ramchandra.

**Badrinath**—It is in Garwal. It is a peak of the main Himalayan range, 55 miles north-east of Srinagara. The temple of Nara-Narayana is built on the west bank near the source of the Alakananda. This temple is said to have been built by Sankaracharya in the 8th century A.D.

**Benares**—According to some, Baranasi is a place found sacred by the Vaisnavas. The city has been named after Barna and Asi, the two rivers flowing through the city. In the literature of the Vaisnavas, there is no difference between Siva and Visnu and as Benares contains the image of Vindumadhava, it is considered sacred by the Vaisnavas. Viswanath and Annapurna are the two celebrated deities much adored and worshipped by the Hindus. Besides there are many other minor deities. The temple of Adi-Kesava is one of the oldest temples in Benares. There are many well-known bathing ghats such as Dasaswamedha and Harischandra. The most sacred of all cremation ghats in the Manikarnika. It is now a populous city and crowded with pilgrims throughout the year.

**Bindhyachala**—It is a famous place of Hindu pilgrimage. The town which is gaining recognition as a Sanatorium, is situated on a detached hill on the right bank of the Ganges. The panoramic view from the top of the hill facing the river is a special feature. This place contains the famous temple of Bindubasini situated on a part of the hills near Mirzapur. The temple of the eight armed Yogamaya which is one of the 52 Pithas where the toe of Sati's left foot is said to have fallen, is at a short distance from the temple of Bindubasini.

**Bithur**—Is situated 14 miles from Cawnpur and contains the hermitage of Valmiki, the author of the Ramayana.

**Brindaban**—About 5 miles to the north of Mathura



stands this celebrated holy place of the Hindus on the banks of the river Jumna. It also contains many Hindu temples. The temple of Madanagopaladeva is the most ancient and its present name is Madanamohana. The temples of Govindaji are also well known. They all contain big courtyards. The temple of Gopinathaji was built by a wealthy Rajput named Sri Rai Silaji and this is considered as the old temple of Gopinatha. Besides there are other temples recently built by Lala Babu and Seth Luchminarain. There are many ghats or bathing places here, e. g., Kesighat, Rajghat, Varahaghat, Adityaghat, Yugalaghat, Sringaravata-ghat, etc. Close to these ghats, there are some groves and *kundas* or ponds which are considered sacred by the Hindus, e. g., Nikunjavana, Nidhuvana, Madhuvana, Talavana, Kumudavana, Radhakunda, Syamakunda, Lalitakunda, etc.

Radhakunda is also known as Arit because Srikrishna in the guise of an ox killed the asura named Arista. As Sri Radha, the wife of Krishna, refused to touch his body because he killed a cow, he had a pond dug for his bath and for extirpating his sins. This pond was known as Syamakunda. Sri Radha also had a pond dug by the side of the Syamakunda and it is known as the Radhakunda.

**Garhmukhtesar**—It is a town in the Meerut District, situated on the right bank of the Ganges. It is famous for its Ganga temple and bathing ghats, and is sacred to the Hindus as certain Rishis obtained salvation by performing 'tapa' (penance) on the banks of the Ganges at this place. A big mela takes place here annually at the end of 'Kartik' (November) and is attended by a large number of Hindus.

**Gokul**—On the left bank of the Yamuna stands the village of Gokul, so very famous in the history of Vaisnavism. This village contains the temple of Gokulanathaji. Vasudeva being afraid of Kamsa crossed the river Jumna and left Srikrishna in charge of Nanda who used to live in this village. After leaving his former residence, being very much

troubled by the asuras, Putana and Trinavartaka he came to live in the village known as Nandigram. It seems that this village is very ancient. Brickbuilt houses are in ruins. One has to go through these dilapidated houses to see the temple of Gokulanatha. There is a motorable road from Mathura to Gokula, a distance of 27 miles. It is very much frequented by pilgrims from all parts of India. Vallabhacharyya who was a contemporary of Chaitanya and who founded the Vallabhachari sect of Vaishnavas built new Gokula in imitation of Mahavana.

**Govardhanagiri**—is situated at a distance of 8 miles from Mathura. It contains the temples of Harideva and Chakresvaramahadeva. It also contains the image of Srinathaji formerly known as Gopala. About 6 miles to the south of Mathura stands the Mahavana which is so very sacred to the Vaisnavas.

**Haridvara or Haradvara**—in northern India is looked upon by the Vaisnavas as their holy place. According to the Mahabharata, this city is known as Gangadvara, and in the Vaisnava literature, it is called Mayapuri. On the banks of the Ganges, Vidura listened to the Srimadbhagavata read out by the sage Maitreya. In this city the Ganges descends from the Himalayas. This place is also called Gangadvara which contains the shrine of Nakuleswar Mahadeva. It is in the district of Saharanpur.

**Hrishikesh**a—a holy city of the Vaisnavas situated on the Ganges about 20 miles from Haridvara. According to the Vaisnavas, this place is considered as the abode of Narayana. It must be admitted that Badarinarayana is no other person than Narayana, who has come to the earth as Krishnarjuna to bring the wicked princes under control and to establish peace in the world. The image of Badarinarayana is made up of stone. One will have to undergo a great hardship in reaching this place. Here the Ganges is always covered with snow and it is difficult to touch it.

There is a beautiful temple of Adha-Badarinarayana. The scenery of this place is attractive. This place also contains many sages.

**Kankhala**—It is a small village two miles to the east of Hardwar at the junction of the Ganges and Niladhara. It was the scene of *Daksha-yajna* of the Puranas. Here the Ganges contains very big fish which are fed by the pilgrims and not touched or killed. Many Hindu sages dwell there.

**Lachmanjhola**—Not very far from Rishikesh, there is a beauty spot famous for its mountain scenery. Pilgrims from Hardwar halt there before proceeding to Kedarnath and Badrinarayana. The name is derived from a hanging bridge which used to swing when pilgrims passed over it. Of the many sacred spots on the way from Rishikesh to Lachmanjhola, Swargashrama and Kailasashrama are the two most important.

**Mathura** (Dist. Muttra)—In this city Srikrishna was born in the prison-cell where he was locked up by Kamsa, the tyrant King of Mathura. He killed a washerman, granted the boon to the garlandmaker, Sudama, gave the celestial beauty to a hunchback, broke the Indra-bow, killed the elephant of Kamsa and at last put an end to the life of Kamsa. He then took the sacred thread worthy of a Ksatriya and learnt the art from the sage Sandipani belonging to the city of Avanti (Malwa). He was a bosom friend of the Pandavas. He sent Akrura to Hastinapura to enquire about the welfare of the Pandavas. Srikrishna had a fight with Jarasandha with the result that Jarasandha fled being defeated. After fighting with him again and again for 17 times, Srikrishna built the fort and his own dwelling place in the city of Dvaraka in Gujrat.

The present city of Mathura is divided into two parts, the city proper and the cantonment. It is a very populous



city and it contains the big market known as the 'Cak' and many Hindu temples, such as Kedaresvara mandir, Kubja-mandir, Kalabhairava mandir, etc. The temple of Kedaresvara is the highest and the best among the temples in this city.

**Naimisaranya or Nimsar**—is situated on the banks of the Gumti in the Sitapur District. It is an important place of Hindu Pilgrimage, being one of the fifty-one "pithasthanas," and the abode of the ancient Aryan Rishis who wrote the Puranas here. It was the abode of 60,000 Rishis.

In addition to the monthly *amawas mela*, a big mela is held at this place on every "somwati amawas," i.e., when the new-moon falls on a Monday. There are two Dharamshalas at Nimsar, for the convenience of the Hindu pilgrims.

## (F) THE PUNJAB

**Brahmaur** (Brahmapura).—It is a village in the Brahmaur Wazarat, and the ancient capital of the Chamba State, Punjab. It contains three ancient temples, of which the largest is of stone and dedicated to Manimahesh, an incarnation of Siva, with an inscription of 1417. The second temple of stone is dedicated to the Narsingh or lion incarnation of Vishnu; and the third, mostly of wood, is dedicated to Lakshana Devi, with an inscription of Meru Varma, a ruler of Brahmaur in the seventh century. This temple exhibits an elaborate carved woodwork.

**Dharmsala**—It is a hill station, the head-quarters of Kangra District, Punjab. Dharmsala lies on a spur of the Dhaola Dhar, 16 miles north-east of Kangra, in the midst of wild and picturesque scenery.

The Dal fair, held at the Dal Lake, close to the cantonment, in September, is largely attended by the Gaddis and other Hindus. The famous temple of Bhagsu Nath is 2 miles to the east of the station.



Shiva Temple at Khajuraho.



The Golden Temple at Amritsar.

**Golden Temple at Amritsar**—Amritsar which is the headquarters of the Amritsar District, Punjab, and holy city of the Sikhs, situated on the North-Western Railway and the grand trunk road, 33 miles east of Lahore ; distant by rail from Calcutta 1,232 miles, from Bombay 1,260 and from Karachi 816.

The Sikh religion centres round the *Golden Temple of Amritsar* and its tank. Guru Ram Das first settled near the tank about 1574, and obtained a grant of the site with 500 bighas of land from Akbar in 1577. The tank was called Amritsar, 'the tank of nectar or immortality', though others derive the name from Amar Das, the predecessor of Ram Das. Arjun, the next Guru, built the temple, and the foundation grew in religious and political importance until, on the retirement of Ahmad Shah from India, in 1762, the temple rose from the ashes in which he had left it, and Amritsar became the acknowledged capital of an independent community. It was for a time in the hands of the Bhangi confederacy, but Ranjit Singh seized the city in 1802. As a devout Sikh, he spent large sums of money on the decoration of the temple and roofed it with copper sheets. The fame of the temple brought visitors from far and near.

The Darbar Sahib, as the *Golden Temple* is called by the Sikhs, is a square building with a dome-shaped roof, plated with copper gilt. The walls throughout are of marble, the spoils of Jahangir's tomb and other Muhammadan monuments, and are adorned with inlaid devices of figures and flowers. Under the dome, shaded by a gorgeous silk canopy, lies the Granth Sahib, the sacred book of the Sikhs, from which the attendant priests read passages morning and evening. The tank surrounds the temple on all sides, and a broad causeway leads across from the temple itself to the buildings which cluster round the tank. The most conspicuous of these is the Akal Bungah, which contains the temple treasures.



**Jawala Mukhi**—It is an ancient site in the Dera Gopipur *tahsil* of the Kangra District, Punjab, situated on the road from Kangra town to Nadaun, at the foot of a precipitous range of hills, which forms the northern limit of the Beas valley. Once a considerable and opulent town, as its ruins testify, it is now chiefly famous for the temple of the goddess Jawala Mukhi, 'she of the flaming mouth', which lies in the Beas valley and is built over some natural jets of combustible gas, believed to be a manifestation of the goddess Devi. Another legend avers that the flames proceed from the mouth of the demon Jalandhara, the Daitya king whom Siva overwhelmed with mountains, and who gives his name to the Jullundur Doab. The building is modern, with a gilt dome and pinnacles, and possesses a beautiful folding door of silver plates, presented by the Sikh Raja, Kharak Singh. The interior of the temple consists of a square pit about 3 feet deep, with a pathway all round. In the middle the rock is slightly hollowed and on applying a light the gas bursts into a flame. The gas escapes at several other points from the crevices of the walls of the pit. It collects very slowly, and the attendant Brahmans, when pilgrims are numerous, keep up the flames with *ghi*. There is no idol of any kind, the flaming fissure being considered as the fiery mouth of the goddess, whose headless body is said to be in the temple of Bhawan. The income of the temple, which is considerable, belongs to the Bhojki priests. At the principal festival held in September-October many pilgrims are said to congregate, many coming from great distances.

**Kalait**—It is a village in the Narwana *tahsil*, Karmgarh nizam, Patiala State, Punjab, 13 miles south-west of Kaithal on the Narwana-Kaithal branch of the Southern Punjab Railway.

The place is famous for four ancient temples ascribed to Raja Salbahan, and for a tank, called Kapal Mani's *tirath*, which is held sacred by Hindus. The temples, which are

adorned with sculptures, are supposed to date from the eleventh century.

**Katas**—It is a sacred pool in the centre of the Salt Range, in Jhelum District, Punjab, situated at an elevation of over 2,000 feet. The pool lies at the head of the Ganiya nullah, a small ravine between low stony hills, and is fed by springs. From it issues a small stream which flows past Choa Saidan Shah into the Gandhala valley. It is visited every year by thousands of pilgrims who come to bathe in its waters. The Brahmanical story is that Siva being inconsolable at the death of his wife Sati, tears rained from his eyes and formed the two pools of Katas or Kataksha, 'raining eyes', and Pushkar near Ajmer.

At the foot of the Kotera, the western hill, are the remains of twelve temples clustered in a corner of an old fort. These are called the Sat Ghara, or 'seven temples', and are popularly attributed to the Pandavas, who are said to have lived at Katas during a portion of their seven years' wanderings. Their style is that of the Kashmir architecture which prevailed from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries, and they comprise a group of six small temples placed in pairs at regular distances.

**Muktsar Town** (Muktesar).—It is the head-quarters of the *tahsil* of the same name in Ferozepore District, Punjab, on the Rajputana-Malwa Railway (extension line).

The town is chiefly noticeable for a great Sikh festival, which takes place in January. It lasts for three days, and commemorates a battle fought in 1705-6 by Guru Govind Singh against the pursuing imperial forces. There is a large tank in which pilgrims bathe, begun by the Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and continued and completed by the chiefs of Patiala, Jind, Nabha, and Faridkot.

**Nirmand**—It is a village in the Kulu subdivision of the Kangra District, Punjab. Near it stands an ancient

temple dedicated to Parasu Rama, in which is deposited a copperplate deed of grant in Sanskrit, probably of 612-3 A. D. recording the assignment of the village of Sulisagrama by a king Samudrasena to the Brahmins who studied the Atharva Veda at Nirmand, a temple dedicated to the god Triparantaka or Siva under the name of Mihiresvara or the Sun-god.

**Pahowa**—It is an ancient town and place of pilgrimage in the Kaithal *tahsil* of the Karnal District, Punjab, situated on the sacred Saraswati river, 16 miles west of Thanesar. It lies in Kurukshetra, and its name is a corruption of the Sanskrit Prithudaka, the 'pool of Prithu', the son of Raja Vena.

It is still, however, a place of pilgrimage ; and close to it are the temples of Pirthudakeshwar or Pirthuveshwar, built by the Marathas during their supremacy in honour of the goddess Saraswati (Sarsuti), and of Swami Kartik. The latter is said to have been founded before the war of the Mahabharata in honour of the war-god Kartik.

**Thanesar Town** (Thaneswar).—It is the head-quarters of the *tahsil* of the same name in Karnal District, Punjab, situated on the banks of the Saraswati, and on the Delhi-Umballa-Kalka Railway.

It is famous as the most sacred place in the holy land of Kurukshetra, its name meaning 'the place of the god' (sthaneshwara). In the time of Hiuen Tsiang, Thanesar was the capital of a Vaisya (Bais) dynasty, which ruled parts of the southern Punjab, Hindustan, and Eastern Rajputana. In A. D. 648 a Chinese ambassador was sent to Harshavardhana of Thanesar, but found that the Senapati Arjuna had usurped his kingdom, and the dynasty then became extinct. Thanesar, however, continued to be a place of great sanctity ; but in 1014 it was sacked by Mahmud of Ghazni, and although recovered by the Hindu Raja of Delhi in 1043, it remained desolate for centuries.



By the time of Sikandar Lodi it had, however, been in some measure restored, for that emperor proposed to make a raid on it to massacre the pilgrims. In 1567 Akbar witnessed its great fair ; but Aurangzeb desecrated the shrine and built a castle in its sacred lake, whence his soldiers could fire on pilgrims who attempted to bathe. At the annexation of the cis-Sutlej territory, the town and neighbourhood were in the possession of a Sikh family, but they lapsed to the British Government in 1850. The Dvaipayana hrada is situated in Thanesar.

The bathing-fairs held here on the occasion of solar eclipses are sometimes attended by half a million pilgrims.

### (G) RAJPUTANA

**Amber**—It is the ancient capital of the State of Jaipur, Rajputana, about 7 miles north-east of Jaipur railway station. The way from Jaipur to Amber commands a panoramic view of hills and jungles.

There are several handsome temples, notably the Sri Jagat Saromanji and the Ambikeshwara, both beautifully carved. The Sila Devi ( the 'stone goddess' ) is a small but very old temple, where a goat is daily sacrificed to Kali who is very much adored by the Hindus.

**Bhainsrorgarh**—At Barolli, about three miles north-east of Bhainsrorgarh in the state of Udaipur in Rajputana, there is a group of Hindu temples which Fergusson considers as the most perfect of their age, and, in their own peculiar style, they are perhaps as beautiful as anything in India. The principal temple, dedicated to Ghateshwar, stands in a walled enclosure which is full of other interesting buildings and remains, the most important being the Singar Chaori or nuptial hall of Raja Hun ; the shrines of Ganesh and Narada ; two columns, one erect and the other prostrate, the shrine of *Asht Mata* ; and the shrine of the Tri-murti or Hindu triad, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva. Outside the

enclosure is a fountain or *kund* with a miniature temple in the middle, and surrounded by small shrines, in one of which there is a figure of Vishnu, reposing on the *Sesh Shayya* or bed of the serpent, which Fergusson considers as the most beautiful piece of purely Hindu sculpture. These buildings are said to belong to the ninth, or possibly the tenth century ; and in carving and artistic conception there is nothing in Mewar to equal them except perhaps the Sas Bahu temple at Nagda near Udaipur City.

**Bhinmal**—About 14 miles to the south-east of the town in the Jaswantpur district of the State of Jodhpur, Rajputana, is the Sunda hill, presided over by the goddess Chamunda in a rock-cut cave-like temple. This is a very sacred spot of the Hindus.

**Bijolia**—It is the chief town of an estate of the same name in the State of Udaipur, Rajputana.

The ancient name of Bijolia was Vindhyavalli ; it is a small walled town, picturesquely situated on a plateau called the Uparmal. Among places of antiquarian interest may be mentioned three Sivaite temples, probably of the tenth century ; a reservoir with steps called the Mandakini Baori ; five Jain temples dedicated to Parasnath ; and the remains of a palace built in the twelfth century. There are also two rock inscriptions of the period last mentioned ; one gives the genealogy of the Chauhans of Ajmer from Chahuman to Someshwar and the other is a Jain poem called Unnathshikhar Puran.

**Kundian**—On the right bank of the Banas river, about 50 miles north-east of Udaipur city there are many temples and a beautiful pool, called Matri Kundian, which owes its sanctity, as it is said that the sins of Parasurama, the would-be matricide, were washed away on his bathing in its waters. A fair, lasting for three days, is held in May and is largely attended by pilgrims who bathe in the pool.

**Nathdwara**—At the walled town in the State of Udaipur, Rajputana, on the right bank of the Banas river, about 30 miles north by north-east of Udaipur city, and 14 miles north-west of Maoli station on the Udaipur-Chitor Railway, stands one of the most famous Vaishnavite shrines in India, which contains an image of Krishna, popularly said to date from the twelfth century B. C. This image was placed by Vallabhacharya in a small temple at Muttra in 1495 and was moved to Gobardhan in 1519. About 150 years later, when Aurangzeb endeavoured to root out the worship of Krishna, the descendants of Vallabhacharya left Muttra District with their images and wandered about Rajputana till 1671, when Rana Raj Singh invited three of them to Mewar. To Dwarka Nath he assigned the village of Asotiya near Kankroli, while for Sri Nathji's worship he set apart the village of Siar, to the south of which the town of Nathdwara was subsequently built. The guardian of the temple is termed Maharaj Gossain, and is the head of the Vallabhacharya sect of Brahmins.

**Puranagar**—It is situated on a lofty range of hills, some 18 miles to the west there is Puranagar, the old capital of the Bargujar Rajas, chiefly remarkable for the holy temple of Nilkanth Mahadeva, which is the most famous place of pilgrimage in the Alwar State.

**Pushkara**—It is situated at a distance of six miles from Ajmere and is much frequented by the Hindu pilgrims. It contains Savitri hill which is very sacred to them. There are many Hindu temples and images. The Pushkar lake is a fairly big tank, water of which is considered holy. The Ghat road leading to Pushkar from Ajmere commands a fine view and is very attractive.

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## II. NORTH-WESTERN INDIA

## KASHMIR

Among the numerous temples at Kashmir two may be noticed—Martand and Payech—the first for its grandeur, and the second for its excellent preservation.

**Martand**—Martand, the Temple of the Sun, stands on a slope about 3 miles east of Islamabad, overlooking the finest view in Kashmir. The great structure was built by Lalitaditya in the eighth century. Kalasa came here at the approach of death and expired at the feet of the sacred image (1089). In the time of Kalhana the chronicler, the great quadrangular courtyard was used as a fortification, and the sacred image is said to have been destroyed by Sikandar, the iconoclast.

The building consists of one lofty central edifice, with a small detached wing on each side of the entrance, the whole standing in a large quadrangle surrounded by a colonnade of eighty-four pillars with intervening trefoil-headed recesses. The length of the outer side of the wall which is blank is about 90 yards; that of the front is about 56 yards. The central building is 63 feet in length by 36 feet in width. As the main building is at present entirely uncovered, the original form of the roof can be determined only by a reference to other temples and to the general form and character of the various parts of the Martand temple itself. It has been conjectured that the roof was pyramidal.

The interior must have been as imposing as the exterior. On ascending the flight of steps, now covered by ruins, the votary entered a highly decorated chamber, with a door-way on each side covered by a pediment, with a trefoil-headed niche containing a bust of the Hindu triad, and

on the flanks of the main entrance, as well as on those of the side doorways, the niches were pointed, each of which held a statue of a Hindu deity.

**Payech**—Payech lies about 19 miles from Srinagar under the Naunagri Karewa, about 6 miles from the left bank of the Jhelum river. On the south side of the village, situated in a small green space near the bank of the stream surrounded by a few walnut and willow trees, stands an ancient temple, which in intrinsic beauty and elegance of outline is superior to all existing remains in Kashmir of similar dimensions. Its excellent preservation may probably be explained by its retired situation at the foot of the high tableland which separates it by an interval of 5 or 6 miles from the bank of the Jhelum, and by the marvellous solidity of its construction.

**Amaranatha**—About 60 miles from Islamabad, the ancient capital of Kashmir, lies Amaranatha, a celebrated shrine of Siva in a cave in the Bhairavaghati Range of the Himalayas. The cave is situated at a great height on the west side of a snowy peak locally called as the Kailasa. The path to the cave lies along the side of the Amaraganga stream which is a tributary of the Indus. This celebrated shrine of Siva is considered holy by the Hindus. The *linga* or phallic image is about 25 ft. from the entrance and is at the inner extremity of the cave. Every year in the month of *Sravana* ( July-August ), the pilgrims start from Martand for Amaranatha, escorted by the officers of the Kashmir State.

**Sarda (Sardi)**—It is one of the *pithas* ( sacred places ) where Sati's head is said to have fallen. It is on the right bank of the Kissenganga near its junction with the Madhumati near Kamraj in Kashmir. The sage Sandilya performed austerities there. When Lalitaditya, king of Kashmir, treacherously killed a king of Gauda, the Bengalees entered Kashmir on the pretext of visiting the temple of

Sarda and destroyed the image of Vishnu, mistaking it for that of Parihasakesava. ( Cf. Rajatarangini, Vol. I, p. 152 ). Even the celebrated sage Sankaracharya was not allowed to enter the temple till he answered the questions put to him by learned men belonging to various sects,

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### III. DECCAN PLATEAU

#### CENTRAL INDIA

In Central India the principal places at which remains and buildings of interest exist are Ajaigarh, Amarkantak, Bagh, Baro, Barwani, Bhojpur, Chanderi, Datia, Dhamnar, Gwalior, Gyaraspur, Khajraho, Mandu, Nagod, Narod, Narwar, Orchha, Pathari, Rewah, Sanchi, Sonagiri, Udayagiri, Udayapur, and Ujjain.

The various records, both inscriptions on stone and copper-plate land grants, have afforded much information regarding the history of the dynasties which from time to time ruled in Central India, notably the Guptas of Magadha of the fourth to the sixth century, the Rajput chiefs—the Paramaras of Malwa, the Chandels of Bundelkhand, the Kalachuris of Baghelkhand—the rulers of Kanauj of the ninth to the fifteenth century, and the subsequent Muhammadan rulers.

Central India is unusually rich in architectural monuments, especially of Hindu work, which afford probably as complete a series of examples of styles from the third century B. C. to the present day as can be seen in any one province in India.

The earliest constructions in Central India date from the third century B. C. and are Buddhist. They include



stupas often containing relics of famous teachers of that faith, *chaityas* or dagobas and *viharas* or monasteries. A considerable number of stupas are still standing in Central India, many being grouped round Bhilsa, and the finest of the series being the Sanchi Tope. This and another, which formerly stood at Bharhut in Nagod, were erected in the third century B. C. Of the Chaityas numerous rock-cut examples exist, but none is of great age.

Though many buildings of the so-called Jain style have disappeared, the Gyaraspur temples, the earliest buildings at Khajraho, the later temples at the same place, and the Udayapur temple give a sufficiently consecutive chain leading up to the modern building of the present day with its perpendicular spire and square body.

Numerous examples of this mediæval style (of the eighth to the fifteenth century) lie scattered throughout Central India in various stages of preservation, those at Ajaigarh, Baro, Bhojpur, and Gwalior being important. The later developments of the sixteenth century are to be seen at Orchha, Sonagir, and Datia, and of the seventeenth century to the present day in almost any large town. The modern temple as a rule has little to recommend it. The exterior is plain and lacks the light and shade produced by the broken surface of the older temples, and the general effect is marred by the almost perpendicular spire, the ugly square body often pierced by foliated Saracenic arches and surmounted by a bulbous ribbed Muhammadan dome; while all the builder's ingenuity appears to be lavished on marble floors, tinted glass windows, and highly coloured frescoes. Temples of this class abound, those at Maksi in Gwalior and several in Indore city affording good examples of the modern buildings. The *chhatra* of the late Maharaja Sindhia at Gwalior is perhaps as good an example of modern work as any.

**Amarkantaka**—It is a village in the Rewah State, Central India, on the easternmost extremity of the Maikala

Range, 25 miles by country road from Sahdol station on the Katni-Bilaspur section of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway ; 3,000 feet above sea-level.

Amarkantaka is famous for the source of the Narbada river, and is one of the most sacred spots in India. There are eleven places in the neighbourhood which are regularly visited by pilgrims, the most important being the sources of the Narbada, the falls of Kapildhara where the footprints of the Pandava Bhim are shown, and Son Munda where the Son river rises. The most important temple now standing is curious in consisting of three sanctuaries, which were evidently to have been connected by a single mandapa or hall, never completed. The mouldings, though plain, are bold and good, and the *sikhara* or spire is of the graceful curvilinear form. It is said to have been built by Karna Deo Chedi (1040-70). About fourteen other temples stand near, and many more farther off. The tank from which the river is now supposed to take its source is not the original one.

**Khajraho**—It is a village in Chhatarpur State, Central India, famous for its magnificent collection of mediæval temples, 25 miles from the town of Chhatarpur.

The earliest supposed reference to Khajraho is in the account of the travels of Hiuen Tsang, who visited the country of Chi-ki-to, which has been indentified with Jijhoti. The Chinese pilgrim does not mention any chief town by name, but notes that there were in the country a number of sangharamas (monasteries) with but few priests, and also about ten temples.

There are no Buddhist remains on the spot, except a colossal Buddha inscribed with the usual creed in characters of the seventh or eighth century.

Ibn Batuta, who visited the place about 1335, calls it 'Kajura', and describes the lake, about a mile long, round which there were idol temples frequented by a tribe of jogis

with long and matted hair, to whom even Muhammadans resorted in order to learn magic. The place must, therefore, at this time have still been in the possession of the Hindus, and important as a religious centre. It seems probable that the partial demolition of its temples and consequent loss of importance dates from 1494-5, when Sikandar Lodi, after his expedition into Panna and Baghelkhand, retreated through this region and sacked the country as far as Banda.

Its present importance lies solely in its magnificent series of temples, which, with two exceptions, were all built between 950 and 1050.

The temples fall into three main groups: the western, northern, and south-eastern, each group containing a principal shrine and several smaller temples. The western group consists entirely of Brahmanical temples, both Saiva and Vaishnava. The northern group contains one large and some small temples, all Vaishnava, and several heaps of ruins. The south-eastern group consists entirely of Jain temples. All the temples, with the exception of the Chaunsat Jogini and Ghantai, are constructed of sandstone, and are in the same style. Even the Jain temples in the south-eastern group show none of the peculiarities commonly found in the temples of this religion, and externally they are similar in appearance to the Hindu edifices. There are no courtyards and no prominent domes.

The oldest temple in the western group is the Chaunsat Jogini. All that now remains is a celled courtyard, the cells being of very simple design. Fergusson is of opinion that there had originally been a central shrine of wood which no longer lasts.

This temple is assigned to the end of the eighth or early part of the ninth century. Of the remaining temples, the Kandarya Mahadeva is by far the finest. Its construction is curious, as the sanctuary does not occupy the full breadth



of the building, a passage being left round the sanctuary for the circumambulation of the image, and the outer wall pierced by three porticoes to admit light to the passage. This gives the temple the unusual form of a double instead of a single cross. The carving is exceedingly rich and covers every available inch of space, but many of the figures are highly indecent. The other large temple in this group is the Ramachandra or Lakshmanji, dedicated to Vishnu, which is similar to the Kāndarya Mahadeva. It contains an inscription of the Chandel dynasty, dated in 954. The Vishvanath temple, also in this group, contains Chandel inscriptions of 1001 and 1117, and one of a feudatory, dated 1000.

The northern group includes one large temple dedicated to the Vamana or dwarf incarnation of Vishnu. It is, however, very inferior in decoration to the best in the western group, and the remaining temples in this group are small. The heaps of ruins or mounds in this portion, which General Cunningham considered to be the remains of the sangharamas mentioned by Hiuen Tsang, are situated near the large temple.

The south-eastern group contains Jain remains only. The oldest temple in this group is the Ghantai, now a mere skeleton, consisting of a set of delicate pillars still bearing the architraves. The pillars are of sandstone. The remains of this temple, which is assigned to the sixth or seventh century, are very similar to those at Gyaspur. The shrine of this group is the temple to Jinanath. Its design is unusual, consisting of a simple oblong with an open pillared vestibule and sanctuary, and the interior decoration is very fine. A Chandel inscription of 954 exists in it.

On the Kurar Nala, not far from the village of Khajraho, stands the magnificent temple known as the Kunwar Nath, which, though inferior in size to some of those in the three groups, is quite equal to them in design and the profuseness of its decoration. At the village of



Temple at Rameswaram.

Jatkari,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles away, stands another temple which is traditionally said to have been built by Suja, sister of the famous Banaphar hero, Alha, who figures so prominently in popular traditions of the wars between the Chandels and Prithwi Raj of Delhi.

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#### IV. EASTERN COASTAL PLAIN

##### MADRAS AND SOUTH INDIA

**Anantapura**—It is situated in Trivandrum, the capital of Travancore, which contains the celebrated temple of Padmanatha which was visited by Chaityana and Nityananda.

**Conjeeveram**—It is a very ancient place and is divided into two parts, Sivakanchi and Visnukanchi. According to some, it is divided into three parts, large Kanchi, small Kanchi, Pilayar Koliyam. The temple at Siva-kanchi is the most ancient and the temple at Visnu-kanchi was built later. This city was influenced by Saivaism, Buddhism and Jainism. At one time the city is said to have possessed 108 Siva temples and 18 Visnu temples. The Kamakshi temple at Conjeeveram is the most important. In the temple of Kailasanatha there is a figure of Ardhanarisvara. In the temple of Kacchapesvara, Visnu in the form of a Kurma is shown worshipping Siva. There are many Visnu temples. In the Western part of the town which is called Visnu-conjeeveram, various forms of Visnu are depicted in sculptures in the temple of Baikunthaperumal. There is a place called Jainakanchi, which contains ruins of Buddhist and Jain temples.

**Chidamvaram**—This place lies between the river Velar on the north, the Bay of Bengal on the east, the Coleroon on the south and the Veranun tank on the west. It is one of the

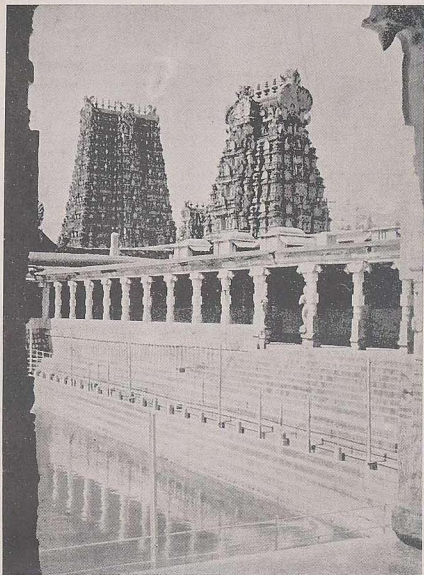


most important sacred places of south India. Nataraja temple is visited by devotees from all parts of India all the year round. The Chidamvaram temple contains four courts, the famous one-thousand-pillared hall, dancing hall, the shrine of Siva and the Sivaganga tank. Besides, there are the figures of the eight deities of cardinal points (astadikpalas). This place contains the sky image.

**Jambukesvara**—This famous place is 2 miles away to the north of Trichinopoly. The deity is known as Water-linga. It is so called because the deity always remains in water. Jambukesvara temple contains the mandapa with many carvings. Siva stands in the middle with Brahma and Visnu to the right and left respectively.

**Kumbhakonam**—It is one of the oldest cities of south India, situated on the river Kaveri. The town derives its name from the deity Kumbhesvara whose temple is very famous in the locality. The Kumbhakonam temple contains a tank and a gopura as we find in other south Indian temples. There are several stone images representing Visnu with his consort, the marriage of Parvati, etc. Sarangapani temple, Nagesvara temple and Ramasvami temple deserve mention.

**Madras**—In the city of Madras there are two important Hindu temples, the temple of Parthasarathi at Triplicane and the temple of Kapilesvara Mahadeva at Mylapore. The temple of Parthasarathi is the oldest temple there. Each temple contains a torana, mandapa (pavilion), and a tank. The temple contains beautiful carvings and representations of Arjuna (Parthasarathi) and his consort. In front of this temple, there remains a big chariot which is decorated on the Rathajatra day and the deity is placed inside the chariot. The next important temple at Madras is the temple at Mylapore which contains the image of Kapilesvara-Mahadeva. There are several legends connected with this temple, but they are hardly noteworthy.



Minakshi Temple, Madura.



Mahabalipuram.

About 5 miles north of Madras, there is a famous centre of pilgrimage known as Tiruvotriyur which is in the Chingleput district.

**Madura**—This is the largest temple in South India. Minakshi temple is the best. Goddess Minakshi is made up of gold. As her eyes are like those of a fish, she is therefore called Minakshi. She is no other than Lakshmi. The temple compound is so large as it is sufficient to accommodate a big market, tank, pavilion, vault, etc. The temple is daily crowded with pilgrims throughout the day. The porch leading to the Minakshi temple is called Astasaktimandapa on account of the eight saktis being figured therein. There is a temple of Siva. The topmost part of it is covered with gold. In South India every temple contains golden flagstaff which is decorated on festivals. There is a temple of Visnu which can be seen from the Madura station. This temple is made up of black stone.

**Mahabalipuram**—It is situated on the sea about 35 miles to the south of Madras and 20 miles on the south-east of Chingleput. It is also known as the land of the Seven Pagodas. Its architectural importance is very great. The Varaha or the boar incarnation of Visnu is of great importance. This deity is seen standing with his right foot, resting on the god of snakes and the goddess of the Earth resting on his right thigh. In caves we find beautiful sculptural representations of the Pauranic scenes.

**Paksitirtha**—This tirtha is situated in a large village in the Chingleput district. Every day at 10 o'clock in the morning two birds come to the temple on the top of a hill and partake of the offerings given to the deity. There is a tradition that these two birds have been visiting this place for a long time. They appear as falcons.

**Ramesvaram**—This island is a famous place of Hindu pilgrimage. It is a very delightful place on the sea. It

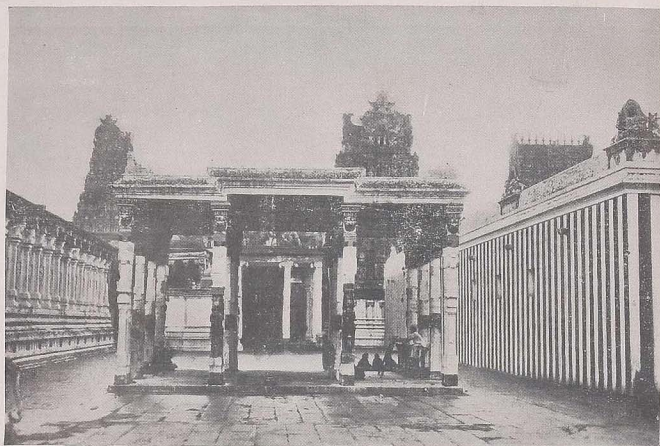


contains the famous temple of Ramanathasvami which is long and wide, having an extensive courtyard and a huge corridor with innumerable pillars. This temple contains the Sivalinga established by Ramchandra and such deities as Parvati, Annapurna, Rama, Lakshmana, Sita, and Hanumana. The temple itself is a wonderful specimen of Dravidian architecture. In front of this temple there is a big Nandi bull, bigger than the bull at Tanjore. Throughout the year this temple is visited by pilgrims from all parts of the world and the Devasthanas people are very hospitable to them. There are several tanks and wells inside the temple. There are many inscriptions in the temple which relate the exploits of various kings. The temple is not the work of one age but the work of a long period lasting for many years.

**Simachalam**—About 9 miles from Waltair there is a place called Simachalam where there is a celebrated Hindu temple on the top of a hill dedicated to God Varaha Narasimhasvami. It is very much frequented by the Hindu pilgrims.

**Srirangam**—This island is situated three miles to the north of the ancient Dravidian town of Trichinopoly. It lies between two branches of the Kaveri river, and the great temple lies in the centre of the island. The great festival of Baikuntha Ekadasi is observed here to commemorate the victory of Ekadasi goddess who overcame the Asuras. The temple contains the image of Ranganatha. The ten incarnations of Visnu deserve mention. From architectural standpoint the temple of Srirangam stands pre-eminent. The skill and earnestness with which the Hindu kings constructed these buildings, especially for the temples of gods deserve admiration. The temple was built by the kings of the Nayak dynasty of Pandya.

**Srikalahasti**—This religious place also known as Sripuram is well known for its temple dedicated to Vayu and



Tanjore Temple.



Pakshitirtha near Chingleput.

is surrounded by two sacred hills. The legendary account is that in consequence of a quarrel between Adisesa and Vayu, one of the three blocks separating itself from Mount Meru fell at Kalahasti. One of the two hills on the north has the temple of Durgamba and the other in the south has the shrine of Kannapeswara. The temple of Kalahasteswara is located in the west of the Kannapa hill. The two entrance towers of the shrine are very attractive.

**Srisailam**—On the southern bank of the river Krishna stands the famous religious shrine of Srisailam on the Risabhagiri hill. This shrine is very ancient and its sanctity is claimed both by the Hindus and the Buddhists. The legendary account is that Risabha or the sacred bull of Lord Siva performed penances there and that to bless him Siva with his wife Parvati appeared in the form of Mallikarjuna and Brimharambha.

**Tanjore**—It is a very ancient place and contains the famous temple of Vrhadesvara Mahadeva which is situated within a mile from the Railway station. The height of the temple is about 270 feet and contains many fine carvings. Within the precincts of the main temple there is the temple of Ganapati. In front of the main building there is a very big stone-bull which is one of the chief features of the south Indian temples. The main temple at Tanjore contains a huge Sivalinga which is adorned with a big sandal spot in the centre. Within the temple precincts there are sculptures representing dvarapala (door-keeper) Ganesh, Kartic, armed soldier, etc. There is a museum inside the temple compound which contains the old weapons, etc., of the Naik and Mahratta rulers of Tanjore. Besides, this town contains many minor temples.

**Tirupati**—It is a hill shrine standing on a cluster of seven hills and forming a part of Mount Meru. It contains Vishnu deity which is known in South India as Venkatesa-perumal. Vishnu in the incarnation of a boar was the



original deity of the Tirupati Hills. Lower Tirupati dedicated to Govindarajaperumal is situated at the foot of the hills. All these hills are known by different names and they represent the body of the serpent Adisesa on which the Lord Vishnu is said to rest. The seven hills are said to represent the seven heads of the serpent on which Venkatachalapati stands. Many pauranic legends are commemorated in sculpture in Gopura. This is one of the most important holy places of South India, which is daily visited by a large number of pilgrims.

Thus we find that South India is full of temples built by the Pallava, the Cola, Pandya and Naik rulers and they are all of the same architecture with slight variations. But they greatly bear testimony to India's glorious past.

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## V. WESTERN INDIA

### BOMBAY

**Agastipuri**—Twenty four miles to the south-east of Nasik, at Agastipuri there was the hermitage of sage Agastya ( Agastya-ashram ).

**Ambarnath**—There is a temple which is reached from Ambarnath Station near Kalyan on the G. I. P. Rly. This beautiful temple is a fine specimen of genuine Hindu architecture which dates back to the 9th century.

**Bombay**—In the city of Bombay there is a very important temple of Laksmidevi, which is very much adored and worshipped by Hindu pilgrims.

**Dwarka**—The town of Dwarka is situated on an open sea and is the seat of Krisna. It contains a very beautiful

temple. The large temple is surrounded by smaller ones and held in very high esteem by the Hindus. Every Hindu must visit this temple at least once in his life.

**Harischandragarh**—It is a fort in the Akola taluka of Ahmadnagar District, Bombay, 19 miles south-west of Akola and one of the most interesting points on the Western Ghats. It stands on an elevation of 4,691 feet above sea-level. The fort and the temples on the summit are annually visited by numerous pilgrims on the occasion of the festival called Maha Sivaratri. The ascent from the Poona side is very arduous. The visitors bathe in a masonry reservoir near the temples, apparently of Hemadpanti origin, and a fair is held in the vicinity.

**Nasik**—It is not only holy but healthy, 117 miles from Bombay. The town is 6 miles away from the Nasik Road Station. It is situated on the river Godavari. The temple of Rama-Sita is the most important and there is a miniature Pancavati. Eight miles from Nasik town lies the Tapovana which contains the temples of Laksmidevi and also Rama-Sita. Here Laksmiana cut off the nose of Surpanakha. One has to go on foot to reach the Tapovana.

**Pandharpur**—The town contains a celebrated shrine to Vithoba and is visited by many Hindu pilgrims, especially during the chief fairs held there in July and October. It is situated on the right bank of the Bhima river and has many landing places built for the use of pilgrims.

**Somnatha**—Close to Prabhasapeta and facing the sea are the ruins of the famous temple of Somnatha. Round about Somnatha there are many sacred places such as Bhalka tirtha where Krisna met his death from an arrow. Here an image of Krisna is found sitting with the wound in his foot; Trivenisangam which is the meeting place of three rivers, Kapila, Sarasvati and Hiran; Prachipla, an important sacred place of the Hindus who perform their sradh ceremonies here.

**Trayambakeswara**—It is situated in a dense forest, and is an important Hindu tirtha in the Bombay Presidency. The river Godavari rises from here.

**Vajresvari**—It is on the B. B. C. I. Rly., and contains a temple known as the Vajresvari temple which is sacred to the Hindus.

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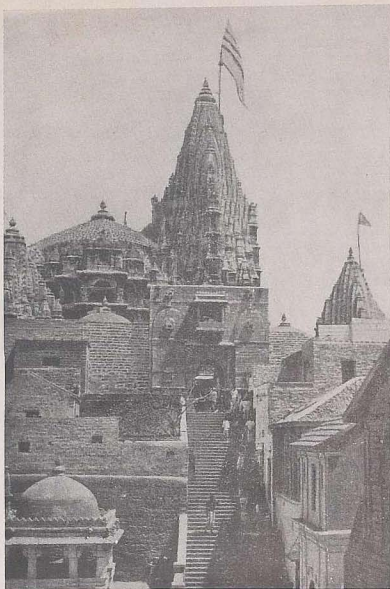
## VI. HIMALAYAN REGION

### NEPAL

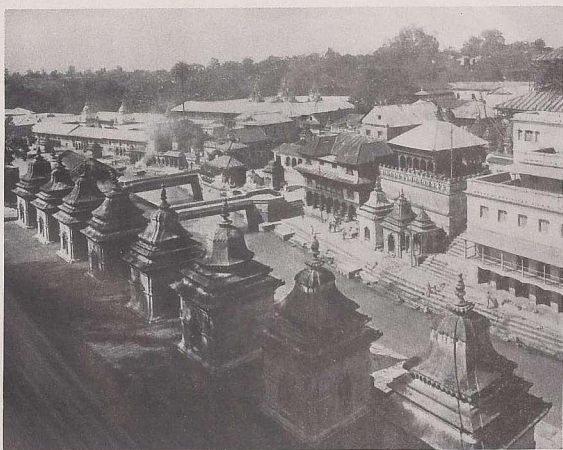
**Pasupatinatha**—The temple of Pasupatinatha or Pasupati in Mrigasthala in Nepal is one of the celebrated Hindu temples, situated on the western bank of the Bagmati river in the town of Devipatan founded by Asoka's daughter, Charumati, about 3 miles north-west of Katmandu. It is said that a fowler obtained the boon of salvation from Mahadeva at this place, as the drippings of blood from his bag of game fell upon the head of the latter. On the eastern bank of the river fronting the temple, there is a hill covered with lofty trees and jungles, which is called Mrigasthali or Mrigasthala.

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Dwarka Temple.



Pashupatinath at Nepal.

## Section II—BUDDHIST SACRED PLACES

Where the Buddha was born, i. e. Lumbini Garden, where he obtained Buddhahood, i. e. Buddha Gaya, where he first preached his sermon, i. e. Sarnath, and where he met with his death, i. e. Kusinara—all these places are considered sacred to the Buddhists.

**Buddha Gaya**—It is situated at a distance of 6 miles from Gaya proper. Here at the foot of a *Bodhi* tree, on the bank of the river Neranjana, the Buddha was seated in meditation, when Mara tried to prevent him from doing so in various ways but in vain. At Buddha Gaya the Buddha attained perfect enlightenment. The celebrated temple was built by Emperor Asoka. The Bodhi tree under which Siddhartha obtained enlightenment is no longer in existence. But an Asvattha tree is now visible. Buddha's footprints are now found at the temple. Inside the main temple there is a big figure of the Buddha besides many other small Buddha images. Several big bells are found in front of the main temple. The temple is situated at a place very much lower than the level of the main road, and one has to tread many steps in order to get into the temple compound. This temple is visited by pilgrims from all parts of the world.

**Chittagong**—In the district of Chittagong there are many temples at Mahamuni, Thegarpuni and Cakrasala. The other principal Buddhist temples are the following :—Sakyamuni, Candamuni and Culamuni. All these temples contain images of the Buddha, not only adored and worshipped by the Buddhists but also by local Hindus who light candles and present pice before them. Annual fairs are held in many temples of special sanctity, in some on the Maghi purnima day and in others on the Phalguni purnima, Bisuvasankranti and Vaisakhi Purnima. At the celebrated Mahamuni temple in the village called Pahartali, the Cakmas

and other hill tribes not only present their offerings and hang up long flags but also the Hindus and Mahomedans of the locality light candles in the temple and present clothes and money before the image of the Buddha. At the Mahamuni temple the fair is held day and night for seven days and sometimes more. The village named Pahartali contains three temples with large images of the Buddha, two of which belong to the Baruas and the third to the Mong Raja, a hill chief in the Chittagong hill tracts.

**Kusinagara** (Kusinara)—This was the town of the Mallas. In the Sala forest of the Mallas the Blessed One attained *Mahaparinirvana* (passing away from this world). The Buddha was attacked with dysentery after taking his meal at the house of Cunda, a blacksmith. While ill, he came to Kusinara from Pava. Knowing fully well that his end was near, he sent for the Mallas of Kusinara, who, on receipt of the news, assembled to pay their last homage to the Blessed One.

**Lumbini Garden**—Lumbinivana is included in Kapilavastu which is the birthplace of Gautama Buddha. The celebrated Chinese Buddhist traveller Yuan Chwang visited this grove which is called by him as *La-fa-ni Grove*. The Rummindei pillar Inscription of Asoka definitely locates the site of the Lumbini grove. This grove is situated about 10 miles east of Kapilavastu near the Konagamana stupa.

**Nalanda**—It is a village seven miles to the north-west of Rajgir in Patna district identified with modern Baragaon. It was often visited by the Buddha who had many discussions here with the bhikkhus. Buddha dwelt at the Pavarika mango grove at Nalanda and also lived at the King's palace in Ambalatthika's garden. After Buddha's passing away, five monasteries were built there. According to Tibetan accounts, the place where the University with its grand library was located was called Dharmaganja (Piety Mart).



It consisted of three grand buildings. The University of Nalanda produced many distinguished pupils e. g. Dharmapala, Silabhadra. The celebrated Chinese travellers, Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing studied at Nalanda. There are many large tanks surrounding Bargaon, several of which are now dry and are under cultivation. The celebrated scholar Nagarjuna who introduced the Mahayana system of Buddhism in the first century resided at the Nalanda monastery making it a seat of Mahayana school of Central India. This is a sacred spot of the Buddhists and is often visited by Buddhist pilgrims from all parts of the globe.

**Nepal**—In Nepal, the five Buddhas, five Taras and five Bodhisattas are worshipped by the Nepalese Buddhists. On the summit of the Sayambhu hill also known as Gosringa hill, there is a big chaitya and on its northern side are many caves some of which contain images. The temple contains a huge figure of Sakyamuni.

**Sarnath**—It is here that the Buddha preached his first sermon. He explained the Wheel of Law (Dharmacakra) to the group of his first five disciples. Sarnath is known to the ancients as Isipatanamigadava. Here the bhikkhus discussed with Buddha many difficult problems of Buddhism. Several images, potteries, etc., have been discovered after excavation of the site by the Archæological Department of the Government of India, which have been carefully housed in a newly-built museum.

**Sravasti**—This town is identified with Sahet-Mahet on the bank of the river Rapti in the district of Gonda in Oudh. It was the capital of Uttara Kosala, ten miles from Balarampur, 58 miles north of Ayodhya and 720 miles from Rajgir. It was founded by Sravasta, a king of the solar race. In Buddha's time Prasenajit was the king of Uttara-Kosala and his capital was at Sravasti. Here Buddha delivered many edifying discourses. He found in a great merchant named Anathapindika and in a liberal-hearted lady named

Visakha Migaramata his staunch disciples. He dwelt at Jetavana in the garden of Anathapindika and delivered discourses there. This town was often visited by the Buddha who gave discourses on many difficult and knotty points of Buddhism. While the Lord was there, many bhikkhus got the opportunity of discussion with him to solve their doubts on many points of Buddhist thought. This town contributed a fair number of the bhikkhus and bhikkhunis who acquired fame in the Buddhist congregation for the purity of their lives. It was at one time a commercial centre haunted by many merchants who used to go to Mithila to trade and to Subarnabhumi for the same purpose. Buddhists frequent this place which is considered sacred by them.

These are considered as sacred places by the Buddhists, besides cave temples in the Barabar hills, Nagarjuni hills, Ellora, Ajanta, Nasik, Kanheri, Karley, Bhaja, Bagh and Elephanta, the detailed descriptions of which are given in my *Geographical Essays* \*. All these cave temples are surely fine specimens of ancient art and architecture. They once afforded dens for wild animals, and dwellings for the recluses. Hidden far away from human localities, they served as halls for the congregation of those of the Buddhist holy order representing different sects and schools, as sanctuaries for the installation of richly carved figures of the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas. They still stand with full reminiscences of India's glorious past.

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\* B. C. Law, *Geographical Essays*, Vol. I., Chap. IX.

## Section III—JAIN SACRED PLACES

### BIHAR

**Khandagiri and Udayagiri**—Close to Bhuvanesvara in the District of Puri, there are Khandagiri caves where there are some Jain temples much frequented by the Jain pilgrims. The Khandagiri and Udayagiri hills which are the most important sacred places of the Jains are situated at a distance of about five miles to the north-west of Bhuvanesvara in the Puri district. The two hills are honey-combed with caves tenanted by the Jain monks. These caves are situated in forests infested with wild animals. At the foot of the hills, the Jains have built a Dharmashala for the convenience of the pilgrims.

**Paresnatha**—The most important archæological remains are the Jain temples at Paresnatha. Buddhist and Jain remains exist on Kuluha Hill in the Dantara pergana, and a temple and tank to the west of the hill dedicated to Kuleswari, the goddess of the hill, are visited by Hindu pilgrims in considerable numbers. The only other remains worthy of mention are four rock temples on Mahudi Hill, one of which bears the date 1740 Samvat, ruins of temples at Satgawan, and an old fort which occupies a strong defensive position at Kunda.

◆ **Pava**—It was at Pava that Mahavira breathed his last. The Mallas used to reside here, who were devotedly attached to Mahavira and Buddha. According to the Kalpasutra, the nine Mallakis or Malla chiefs, to mark the passing away of the Great Jina, were among those that instituted an illumination on the day of the New Moon saying "Since the light of intelligence is gone let us make an illumination of material matter". It was also at this Mallian city of Pava that Buddha ate his last meal at the house of Cunda, the smith, and was attacked with dysentery. Some hold that



Pava, Papa or Pavapuri is the same as Kasia situated on the little Gandak river to the east of the District of Gorakhpur. It seems that this city was situated near Rajgir in Behar. It is considered as one of the sacred places of the Jains. Mahavira left his mortal existence when he was dwelling in the palace of king Sastipala of Pava. Four beautiful Jain temples were built at the spot where Mahavira left his mortal existence. The ancient name of this city was Papa or Appapuri. The Pavapuri temple was built during the victorious reign of the glorious Emperor Shahjahan, in the year 1698 of the Samvat era.

**Rajgir**—Rajagriha (ancient Girivraja) was the ancient capital of Magadha. It was so called because it was built by a king and every house of the capital resembled a palace. It was also called Kusagrapura or the city of the superior reedgrass. As it was surrounded by five hills, it acquired the name of Girivraja, which name occurs in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as the capital of king Jarasandha of Magadha. According to the Sasanavamsa, this city was built by king Mandhata. It had 32 gates and 64 posterns. On the west it could be approached through a narrow pass and on the north there was a passage through the hill. This town was extended from east to west and was narrow from north to south. It was a gay town where festivities were held in which people indulged themselves in drinking wine, eating meat, singing and dancing. A festival known as the Nak-khattalila or the sport of the stars used to be held here, which lasted for a week in which the rich took part. It was an abode of many wealthy bankers. Meetings were held in the Santhagara at Rajagriha where the people met and discussed the means of welfare. The people of the town were always ready to satisfy the needs of the bhikkhus under the belief that such pious acts were attended with blessings of rebirth in a higher region. This city was visited by such eminent disciples of the Buddha as Sariputta and Moggallana. It was here that Upali was ordained as a bhikkhu. The

Buddha's activity in this city was remarkable. Mahavira spent 14 rainy seasons at Rajagriha.

Modern Rajgir (ancient Rajagriha) is a holy place of the Jains, and very close to it are the ruins of Nalanda vihara. It is a very healthy place with a bracing climate.

## GUJRAT

**Raivataka**—Close to Junagadh in Gujarat stands the Girnar or Raivataka hill which is considered to be the birth-place of Neminath. It contains the temples of Neminath and Parsvanath. The river Suvarnarekha is flowing at the foot of the hill. Neminath was the religious preceptor of king Dattatreya. There is a foot-print on the Girnar hill known as Gurudattacarana.

**Somnath**—This village is situated in Junagadh and is a sacred place of the Jains. It is also known as Candraprabhasa. Formerly there was a wooden temple here but later on the temple was built in marble.

## KATHIAWAR

**Satrunjaya**—Of the five hills in Kathiawar it is the holiest according to the Jains. To the east of it is the city of Palitana. Baghattadeva, Dewan of king Kumarapala of Gujarat, repaired the Satrunjaya temple. Caumukha temple is the highest of all Jain temples situated on top of the Satrunjaya hills.

## CENTRAL INDIA

**Bawangaja Hill**—Five miles from the town of Barwani in Central India is Bawangaja ('52 yards') hill, a place of considerable sanctity among the Jains. Its name is derived from the popular idea of the height of the gigantic figure of the Jain teacher Gomateswara. The figure is carved on the face of the hill about three-quarters of the way up the slope.

On the summit is a small temple constructed from the remains of an older building, which contains two inscriptions dated 1166 and 1459. Large numbers of Jain pilgrims visit the place on the full moon of the month of Pausa ( January ). At the foot of the hill stand some modern Jain temples.

## RAJPUTANA

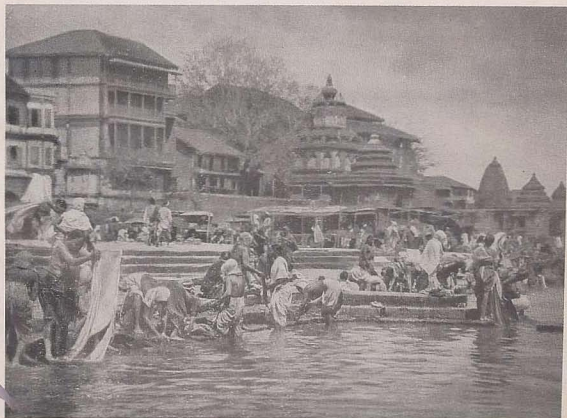
**Abu**—(Ar-bu, 'the hill of wisdom', identified as the Mons Capitalia of Pliny).—It is a celebrated mountain in the south of the State of Sirohi, Rajputana, 17 miles north-west of Abu Road station on the Rajputana-Malwa Railway, and 442 miles north of Bombay.

The celebrated Delwara temples (devalwara, 'the place of temples') are situated about a mile to the north of the station. They are five in number and two of them require special notice, being in many respects unrivalled in India. The first is the temple of Vimala Sah, built, as the inscription records, in 1032. It is dedicated to Adinath, the first of the twenty-four tirthankars of the Jains. The second, which is just opposite, is the temple of the two brothers Vastupala and Tejapala ; it is dedicated to Neminath, the twenty-second of the tirthankars, and was built in 1231. Both are of white marble, and carved with all the delicacy and richness of ornament which the resources of Indian art at the time of their creation could devise. The temple of Vimala Sah consists of a shrine containing a large brazen image of Adinath with jewelled eyes and wearing a brilliant necklace. In front of the temple is a platform which, with the shrine, is raised three steps above the surrounding court. The platform and the greater part of the court are covered by a mandap or portico, cruciform in plan and supported by forty-eight pillars. The eight central pillars are so arranged as to form an octagon, supporting a dome, which, together with its circular rims and richly carved pendant, forms the most striking and beautiful feature of the entire composition. The whole is enclosed in an oblong courtyard surrounded by





Temple of Neminath at Dilwara, Mt. Abu.



Nasik. Bathing places on the Sacred Godavari River.

fifty-two cells, each of which contains an image of one of the tirthankars. Externally the temple is perfectly plain, and one is totally unprepared for the splendour of the interior. At the entrance is the hathi-khana or elephant-room, in the door-way of which stands a life-size equestrian statue of Vimala Sah. Round the room are ten marble elephants which formerly bore riders, but the figures have nearly all been removed. In the other temple (that of Vastupala and Tejapala), the dome is the most striking feature. It stands on eight pillars and is a magnificent piece of work. It has a pendant which is a perfect gem.

The celebrated shrine of Amta Bhatani and the famous Jain temples dedicated to Rishabhadeva and Neminath on Mount Abu deserve mention.

**Rakhabha Deva**--It is situated in a village in the Magra district of the State of Udaipur, Rajputana, about 40 miles south of Udaipur city, and 10 miles north-east of the cantonment of Kherwara.

The famous Jain temple, sacred to Adinatha or Rakhabhanatha, is annually visited by thousands of pilgrims from all parts of Rajputana and Gujarat. It is difficult to determine the age of this building, but three inscriptions mention that it was repaired in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The principal image is of black marble and is in a sitting posture about three feet in height ; it is said to have been brought from Gujarat towards the end of the thirteenth century. Hindus as well as Jains worship the deity, the former regarding him as one of the incarnations of Vishnu and the latter as one of the twenty-four tirthankaras or Jain religious teachers. The Bhils call him Kalaji from the colour of the image and have great faith in him. Another name is Kesaryaji, from the saffron (kesar) with which pilgrims besmear the idol. Every votary is entitled to wash off the paste applied by a previous worshipper, and in this way saffron worth thousands of rupees is offered to the god annually.

**Ranapur** (or Rampura)—It is the site of a celebrated Jain temple in the Desuri district of the State of Jodhpur, Rajputana, about 88 miles S. E. of Jodhpur city, and about 14 miles E. S. E. of Falna station on the Rajputana-Malwa Railway. The temple was built in the time of Rana Kumbha of Mewar (fifteenth century), in a lonely and deserted glen running into the western slopes of the Aravallis, and is still nearly perfect. It is most complicated and extensive in design, covering a platform measuring 200 by 225 feet, exclusive of the projections on each face. In the centre stands the great shrine, not, however, occupied as usual by one cell but by four, in each of which is placed a statue of Adinatha, the first of the Jain saints. On a second storey are four similar niches opening on the terraced roofs of the building. Near the four angles of the court are four smaller shrines, and around them, or on each side of them, are 20 domes supported by about 420 columns. The central dome in each group consists of three storeys in height and towers over the others, and the part facing the principal entrance is supported by a very unusual number of 16 columns.

## SOUTH INDIA

**Chandragiri**—Near Belgola not far from Seringapatam it was known to the ancients as Deya Durga.

**Sravana-Belgola**—It is a town in the Hassan district, Mysore, between the hills Chandrabetta and Indrabetta. It was an ancient seat of Jaina learning. On the top of Chandrabetta there is a big statue of the Jain god Gomatesvara. This town was visited by Bhadrabahu, the great Jain teacher, who died there. Hence it is sacred to the Jains.

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