



bullocks were sent by Mohur Singh to his home. From Sydpoor we went to Kytee; and the next day to Rajghât. Very early the following morning we proceeded towards the west: it was then the month of Jeit, and the period of the Ghazymeean festival. When we reached a tank, we found two Sepoys and a Bearer sitting there. We drank toddy with them; and all went on together. Mohur Singh asked them where they came from, and whither they were going. They replied, "From the east towards the west." Mohur Singh said, "I am also going towards the west." In the evening, we halted at the Hurooah Bazar. When one quarter of the night only remained, we continued our journey, and went two miles on the Punch Cossy road, where there is a pucka well, with two mangoe-trees near it: there Moma and Imam Bux strangled the travellers; I standing by. Thirty rupees, ten pieces of cloths, and two brass pots, were found on them: there was also a horse and a mare. We were then twenty-five persons. Some of us threw the bodies into the well. My share was a doputta, and a rupee eight annas: the other Thugs had their proportion. I took the mare, and Mohur Singh the horse. From thence my companions and myself separated from the gang, and went home: the other Thugs likewise travelled in the direction of their homes. After being at home for some days, the Tomandar and Foujdaree Nazir of the



the city of Patna apprehended me. I was never taken up before, during the twenty-one years I have practised Thuggee. I have been in many excursions, in Oude and to the eastward; but excepting the three expeditions above alluded to, I have never done any thing in the Benares division. I have spent all my share of the plunder. The mare was taken from my house to the Patna Adawlut. There are only eight men connected with me in this business. Their names are, Moradhun, Bukus of Siverree, Shumsherah, Oozerah, Imam Bux of Khutary, Asmut, and Hunoman, a Brahmin of Jurrowah. Of these eight, Moradhun and myself are Sirdars. Mohur Singh has twenty-five men, and is a Sirdar. All the men were in these expeditions; but I cannot remember their names. We do not go armed; perhaps two may be armed. We strangle our victims generally; and never use a weapon, excepting in case of necessity. No wounds were inflicted on any of the victims of this district. Those who strangle receive an additional rupee.

“The third witness, Goplah, son of Dyar, of the Lode caste, inhabitant of Muteepurwa, Zillah Cawnpore, aged twenty-six years said:—‘A year ago, I left home alone, on a Thuggee expedition towards the east. When I reached Bhaugur Mow, in the Oude country, I met Kisseree Singh with twenty-five Thugs, and Bekram and Muhadut Jemadars with



with Mukdoom Bux and others. After travelling fifteen cose, we fell in with three travellers, whom Bekram, Mukdoom and Chudu strangled, and took their property. The bodies were thrown into a well. I had my share. Going by Meean Gunge and Hussun Gunge to Noel Gunge, we strangled five travellers. On arriving on Burount near Choby Bazar, Moradhun, Kadir, and Mohur Singh, Jemadars of Thugs, joined us with twenty-five men. Bekram and the other Oude Thugs returned thence. On the road from Mirza Mourad to Rajah-ka-Tullao, we met a Mussulman, who went with us to the latter place, where we rested at the Buneah's house near the temple, and, after taking some food, passed the night there. When the night was nearly over, we resumed our march towards Benares; and leaving the high road in a northern direction, struck into a pathway for a mile, until we came on a plain at some distance from a village. Mohur Singh strangled the traveller, and I and another threw the body into a well: we found on him seven rupees, a sword, two or four brass pots, and four or five cloths. In the division, my share was a turban. The cloths and pots were divided amongst us, and the rupees soon spent. We then came to Benares, and passed a day at the Serai Aurungabad. We crossed the Sepoy lines, and entered the Orderly Bazar, where we met two travellers with three bullocks. We inquired whence they came, and
where



where they were going. They said from Hansy to Gorruckpore. Mohur Singh said, "I am on my way to Gorruckpore; come with us." We proceeded to Kupuldara, and put up at the Dhurm Salah for the evening. At the sixth hour of the night we renewed our journey. When we reached the Ganges east from Kupuldara, some of us seized the hands, and others the feet, of the travellers, whom Chutu and Imam Bux strangled: we then threw them into the river. Five rupees, a lotah, a sword, and a pair of pyjamahs, were taken. Mohur Singh took the three bullocks. We travelled afterwards to Sydpore, Kytee, and Rajghât, putting up at the Luckah Serai. The next day we went towards Sheopore; and stopping at Shunkur Talao, we drank some toddy. We saw two Sepoys and a Bearer sitting there; whom Mohur Singh asked where they were going, and whence they came. Their reply was, from Cuttack, and their destination Lucknow. We all went on to Sheopore; and from that place to Hurooah, where we rested at a Buneah's shop. In the latter part of the night we continued our march; and after walking a mile on the Punch Cossy road, Beeka, Bheegoo, and Moradhun, threw the travellers down, when Imam Bux, Mohur Singh, and Goury, strangled them. The others remained on the watch. Twenty-five rupees, a gold mohur, fifteen pieces of cloths, and twenty brass pots, were gained. Six men and a Jemadar



Jemadar threw the bodies into a well. In the division of the plunder, a lotah, a merzai, and a rupee, were my share.'—The witness mentioned, that all the prisoners were Thugs, and concerned in the three expeditions that took place in the Benares division, with the exception of Asmut.

“The prisoner, Shumsherah, is an inhabitant of Purneah, Pergunnah Moneah, Zillah Patna, twenty-five years of age, of the weaver caste. Moradhun supported and protected him whilst a child; and whenever he went on a Thuggee excursion, the prisoner accompanied him.

“The deposition before the magistrate is as follows:—‘In the month of Aghun, 1240 Fuslee, Moradhun, Kader Khan, Bukus, Oozerah, Meher Ali, Asmut, Imam Bux, and myself, proceeded on a Thuggee expedition. We strangled several persons in Oude, remaining there until the month of Maug; and then went to Allahabad, from whence we travelled, in an eastern direction, until we came to Burount. We found Goplah and Beeka there; and further on the road, Mohur Singh, with four other Thugs. We met a traveller as we proceeded. Mohur Sing, and his party, went on with him. We rested in the evening at Hunoman Chokey. When the night was nearly spent, we went on, and Huna strangled the traveller. Seventeen rupees, some cloths, and brass pots, were found on him, and the body was thrown into a well. I being the adopted pupil



pupil of Moradhun, he took my share. He gave me food only, and I was his follower. Proceeding on our march, we met a Mussulman travelling: Imam Bux attached himself to him. We halted for the night at Rajah-ka-Tullao; and towards morning recommenced our journey. Leaving the high road at Serai Mohun to the right, we followed a small pathway. After walking a mile, we came near a garden, where Imam Bux strangled the traveller. Ten rupees, a sword, two dhotees, a lotah, and some old cloths, were the plunder. Two or three men took the corpse, and threw it into a well. Near Benares we met two travellers, with three bullocks. Moradhun, Kadir Khan, Goplah, and Beeka, joined them; and in the evening we made Kupuldhara our resting-place, stopping at the Dhurm Salah. When one quarter of the night only remained, the march was resumed; and near the banks of the Ganges, about a mile off, Beeka and Unna strangled the travellers. I do not remember what plunder was obtained. Meher Ali, Moradhun, Kader Khan, and Beeka, threw the corpses into the river. We then went to Sydpore. A Burkundaz, Salaroo, recognised Mohur Singh, who, in consequence, gave him four rupees; and Moradhun sent the three bullocks, by Bukus, to his house. We afterwards returned to the village of Bettree; and, going by Chundwuk, arrived at Rajghât. Remaining there all night, we marched very early the next



next morning, in a western direction. After leaving the city, we met two Sepoys and a Bearer. Beeka entered into conversation with them, and they came on in our company. We halted at Hurooah Bazar. Towards day-break we resumed our route; and going about two miles on the Punch Cossy road, where there is a pukka well, with two mangoe-trees, Mohur Singh, Ramsuhoy, and Selwunt Rai, strangled the three travellers. They gained thirty-two rupees, some cloths and brass pots. The bodies were thrown into the well. The travellers had a horse and a mare with them: Kadir took the first, and Goplah the latter. We afterwards went to Burogong, where we divided the plunder; and separated, going to our respective homes. I have never strangled any one, but have aided in throwing bodies into wells. Eight annas is a very good remuneration for murdering a man. We often strangle a victim who is suspected of having two pice. We are unrestrained by any fears, in pursuing our vocation. We do not sell our plunder; but, when there is a large quantity, send it to our homes.'

"Bukus once accompanied Moradhun and others on a Thuggee expedition in Oude, and was with them two years; but has never practised in the Benares district, and is unjustly accused.

"Oozerah declares that he is innocent. He once found himself with Moradhun, &c., in Oude; but



but ran away the moment he could, when he discovered his companions were Thugs.

“Meher Ali served Moradhun, as a grass-cutter, for five or six months. He acknowledged, before the magistrate at Patna, to having been his servant for the above number of years, and to having accompanied him in his Thuggee expeditions.

“Asmut was formerly called Dubery, alias Neeamut Ali, at present Asmut. He attributes his name being mentioned to a family dispute he had with the two brothers, Kadir Khan and Moradhun, with whom he is connected by marriage; and, of course, asserts his innocence. The depositions of Nanuk, Ramphul, Rujoo Singh, Balukgur, Purshad, Jugernat, Thakooree, Kudoo, Isseredyeal, Uchalall, and Matadyel, point out the halting-places of the Thugs in these expeditions; and the wells, &c. where the bones and other remains of the murdered persons were discovered.”

The Court of Nizamut Adawlut sentenced four of the persons engaged in this transaction to be transported for life.



CHAP. VII.

WHAT is called the "Burwaha Ghât affair," is remarkable, in many points of view. It became the subject of elaborate investigation; and it cannot be unacceptable to present a portion of the evidence.

Naroooha Kumusdar, of the purgunah of Burwaha, taken on the 5th of November 1831, before Captain Sandys, Assistant to the Resident at Indore, and in charge of the Nunar district, deposed thus:—
"In the year Sumbut 1884 (on the 29th January, A.D. 1829,) three camels loaded with treasure, belonging to Dhunraj Seth of Omrowtee, came to the town of Burwaha, rested the 30th and 31st, paid the duties demandable at the Custom-house, and marched again, on the 31st January, towards Indore, by the village of Naen, which was then unoccupied and waste. On the bank of the nullah near that village, the men escorting the treasure were all killed, and the treasure taken off by robbers; and on the 3d of February 1829, Khosala Balar, of the village of Omureea, came to the guard in the evening, and reported it. It was then late, and the horsemen of the guard had gone to escort treasure
to



to Mundlesur ; and I deferred going out till the next morning, when I, with Runa Ragonauth Singh, Zemindar of the purgunah, and Chutter Duffadar, and three foot soldiers of the guard, went towards Naen, the place where the murders had been committed. On the road, we met Golbeea, a Pardhee of the village of Nadeea, who told us that the three camels were left in the jungle ; one with his legs tied, and the other two free. On coming to the nullah, at about a hundred paces distant from the road to the west, on the dry bed, we found three bodies : they were under the branches of a Golur-tree, covered with leaves, dry sand, and stones. We took them out ; and found all their throats cut, apparently with swords. On one of the bodies was a black coat ; and by that coat he was recognised to be Meer Futteh Alee, a merchant of Borhanpore : he often passed by Burwaha on business, and became known to the peeadas of the guard. We then went to Omureea ; and asked Humtah, the Putel of that place, where the bodies were that he had reported : and he took us to a part of the nullah in which some water remained, with Girdhur Mukatee and Nana Putwaree ; and about fifty paces west from the place where we discovered the first three bodies, we saw two more bodies, lying on the ground on the edge of the water : their throats had been cut in the same manner as those of the other two, and they had been mangled by animals. From
this



this place, we returned to the first three bodies, and, searching further, found two more, about ten or twelve paces from them, covered with sand, leaves, and stones, and lying one over the other: we took them up, and found their throats cut in the same manner as those of the others. There was no other wound discoverable on any one of the seven bodies. We now went in search of the camels; and about a quarter of a cose from the bodies, to the east, we found one camel down, with his legs tied. We took him up, and came on to the village of Nadeea, where we found the two other camels browsing in a field; and sent all three, without ropes or saddles, to Burwaha: and I collected the Baloes from Nadae Rampoor, and Agurwara, and Omurreea, to bury the bodies; and returned to Burwaha; and, at the Custom-house chokee, ascertained, from the books of Gunput Raw, the agent on the part of the Farmer of the Customs, that, on the 30th of January 1829, Dhunraj Seth's three camels had paid duty; and that on the same day, a Bhowanee Persaud, and others his companions, bearing arms, and residents of Bundelcund, thirty persons, with six ponies, had been entered as paying Rahadaree duties; and, on the same day, Meer Tullah Alee, the merchant, had passed on his way to Indore. After learning these particulars, I sent off in pursuit of the robbers."

Davey Singh, peeada of the guard, deposed, on



the same day, to the same effect; as also did Gobind Apa, peeada of the same guard; and Chutter, dufadar of the same guard; and Rana Rugonath Sing, zemindar of the purgunah of Burwaha. The men employed for this purpose deposed to their having buried the seven bodies, by order of the Kumasdhar.

Bijan Naek Nahil, of Omureea in Burwaha, said:—"In the year Sumbut 1884, three camels laden with treasure, from Dhunraj Seth, were robbed at the nullah of the village of Naeen, and seven men, who escorted it, murdered. Naraba, kumasdhar of the purgunah, called me, and ordered me to search for the murderers. I took three other nahils from Omureea, and two danuks from Nadeea, and Bheela Raw, a peeada of the guard of Burwaha, with me, to pursue the track (*many*) at the place where the bodies lay. We could find no trace; but, after a good deal of search, we found the *many* on the road to Key, about a cose from the village of Naeen east, near the deserted village of Khoree; and from that place we followed it, through the villages of Gidwara, Jugutpoorah, Ramgolah, Chorunudee, Khamkee, Khargee, Baroul, and Kutkote, Holkar's territories. From this place Bhula Raw returned home to Burwaha; and we took zemindars, one Dhanuk and one Bilae, to follow on the *many* or track. We found it through Ranjhunna, Gowarbar, Gureegor, Chundere



dere Gurh, Sankola, Byroogow, Kop Gowra, Beetora, up to the bowlee of the village of Portula, in the purgunah of Neemunpore, Mukoar, in the territories of Bunnear; which bowlee is situated about two hundred paces from the village: from that bowlee no trace could be found. We told the putel of that village, Dew Chund Kolee, and two other people, to carry on the trace; and if they could not, they must answer to their Government for the murders; and having told them this, we returned. On our way, we saw the people of Kutkote cutting wood, and asked about the people who had passed of late. They said they had seen, on the Nuddee, under Kutkote, twenty-five or thirty men from Bundelcund Awud, with five or seven ponies, and asked them whence they came: they said they were from Malwa, and were going to Pootula, but had lost their road. We returned, and reported all to the kumardar of Burwaha."

Another witness, named Tejula Bular, of the village of Nadeea, purgunah of Burwaha, testified to this effect:—"In the Sumbut 1884, on a nullah in the village of Naeen, in the purgunah of Burhawa, three camels laden with treasure, belonging to Dhunraj Seth, were robbed, and the men who escorted them murdered. I had been taken as a begar with a kafila of Government servants, who were going with a palkee, and other things, from Borhanpore, as far as the village of Omureea;



and was on my return, and warming myself at a fire left burning on the ground, which a party of Brinjaras had just quitted, near the village of Naeen, when I saw a number of carrion-birds, such as vultures and others, descend from the sky, and collect on the bank of the nullah: on seeing this, I went to the village of Rampora in the above purgunah, and told Omrow Bhugwan, and other Baloes, that some animals must be lying dead in the nullah of Naeen, as carrion-birds were there collected. They all accompanied me to the nullah, to see; and we found two human bodies lying in the nullah, close to the edge of the water. On seeing them, my companions returned to Rampora, and I came home. On my way, I met Heera Rajpoot, of the village of Agurwara, feeding his cattle in the grounds of Naeen; and I told him that I had seen the bodies of two murdered travellers in the bed of the nullah; and, at his request, I went again, and pointed them out from a distance."

The deposition of the person thus referred to was as follows:—"I was grazing my cattle on the boundaries of Naeen, when Tejula Bular, of Nadeea, came towards me from the nullah, and said some people had murdered two travellers, and thrown their bodies into the nullah; and, at my request, he went and pointed them out to me. At that time, Nana Putwaree, of Naddera, was on his way from Burwaha to Omureea; and meeting him,

I men-



I mentioned the circumstance. He went on towards Omureea; and I returned to my cattle."

Nana Putwaree deposed—"That, on hearing the circumstances from Heera Rajpoot, he went to Omureea, and told Girdhur Muktee and Himota Putel; and went with them, and Bichun Nahil and Shamila Bilae, to see the bodies. After seeing the two, we returned; and I requested Shamila Bular to go and report to the guard at Burwaha; but he sent his brother Khosala to do so. Khosala deposes, that he was sent to report the circumstance to the guard at Burwaha; and reached the place towards evening, and reported accordingly."

Urzee, of Dhun Raj Seth, forwarded, through Captain Robinson of Ellichpore, the following statement:—"About thirty-three months ago, 45,000 rupees of my property, on three camels and one pony, with nine men, on their way from Bombay to Indore, were taken by twenty-nine Thugs, four cose from Alvee Bureyra, and twenty from Indore. The men were all killed, and the pony taken with the property, but the camels were let go. Behareelal and Gomanee Ram, my gomashtas, went, with Dolla Hurcara of Holkar's, in search of the Thugs; found them in Jhansee; and gave information to the Governor-General's Agent at Humeerpore, who got them seized and put in irons. They confessed that the property had been taken, and divided into
a hun-



a hundred and one shares; and the Agent sent them all to the Resident at Indore. The Resident sent them back to the Agent at Humeerpore, who made them over to the Jhansee Rajah's vakeel, with orders to recover and make good the property.

"Some time before this, gold, to the value of 22,000 rupees, in charge of four hurcaras, and another batch of gold to the value of 11,000 rupees, on their way from Poona to Jeypore, were taken by Thugs, and the people murdered. The robbery was traced to these same Thugs, some of whom were in the Gwalior, and some in the Dutteea territories : many were taken, and made over to Kishen Persaud, Holkar's vakeel, and put into his highness's fort of Alumpore. I have recovered fourteen or fifteen thousand rupees out of the whole ; but my agents have, in thirty-three months, spent, in the search, fifteen or sixteen thousand.

"The officer in charge of the Jubulpore district has seized seven of the Thugs, and sent them to the Resident at Indore ; and their case is not yet decided. All these Thugs reside in Jhansee and Jubulpore ; and they should be made to give up my property. My gomashtha at Humeerpore wanted a hurcara and a letter ; but the Agent of the Governor-General would not furnish them, out of regard for the Jhansee Chief ; though the Residents of Nagpoor and Gwalior and other places have written to him in my behalf."

Some



Some information on the subject was also received from Urzee, of Nanik Ram, gomashta of Dhunraj Seth, through Mr. Graeme, the Resident at Nagpore:—"About three years and four months ago, three camels and a pony were laden with 12,500 reals of silver, value 40,000 rupees, and, under the escort of seven matchlock-men, were on their way from Bombay to Indore: on the road, about six cose from Indore, twenty-nine Thugs killed all the escort, and took the pony, but left the camels. Behareelal and Gomanee Ram, my gomashtas at Indore, heard of the robbery; and informed the Court of Holkar, who sent Dolla Hurcara with them, to search for the Thugs. They found them at Jhansee; and informed the Agent at Humeerpore, who got them secured: and when they had confessed the crime, he sent them off to the Resident at Indore, with the Jhansee Rajah's hurcara. 1200 rupees and three of the reals were found upon them, and made over to the gomashtas; and the Resident, having proved the theft, sent them back to the Governor-General's Agent at Humeerpore; who made them over to the Jhansee Rajah's vakeel, with orders to request his master to make good the property.

"Some time before this, silver and gold, to the value of 33,000 rupees, were on their way, in charge of hurcaras, from Poona to Jypore; and the men were all killed by Thugs, and the property



property taken: this was made known to the Agent at Humeerpore, who discovered that the Thugs were from Gwalior. They were seized, and sent to the Resident at Gwalior; who ascertained the truth, and recovered gold to the value of 4000 rupees, and put it in deposit at Gwalior, and afterwards made it over to my gomashta. Four Thugs had been seized by the gentleman at Jubulpore, with 1400 rupees of gold upon them; and, on my representation, through the then Resident of Nagpore, Mr. Wilder, they were forwarded to Indore. The gold was there made over to my gomashta, and the Thugs sent to Humeerpore; where the Agent made them over to the Jhansee Rajah, with orders that he should satisfy me, and get my razeenameh, as he must have received a share of the booty.

“The vakeel sent them all to Jhansee, but remained himself at Humeerpore: and the Rajah detained my gomashtas a month; and then told them to go to Humeerpore, and he would send them the thieves. They went accordingly to the Agent at Humeerpore, who promised to recover the property for them; but it is not yet forthcoming. The gomashtas are reduced to despair, and have expended thousands of rupees. The Saugor gentleman is now in charge, and 320 reals have been found upon the Thugs: and as Behareelal and Hursahee, my gomashtas, are
now



now at Saugor, I pray a letter to his address, to request he will cause the Jhansee Rajah to make good my losses."

The confession of one of the principal actors in the Burwaha-ghât massacre cannot but be interesting. The adverse fates of so many of the leaders enumerated must be sufficient to shew that, of late, the occupation of a Thug is far from having been a comfortable one. The person whose confession follows was named Moklal. The deposition was taken at Saugor, before Captain Sleenman:—

"In the month of Kartick, about six years ago, I, Bukhut Jemadar, and Thukoree at large, Dhokul Meraea Pande (hung at Saugor), and Moklal approver, left our homes at Poorah in Jhansee, on an expedition to the Deccan; and after taking the auspices outside the village, we proceeded *vid* Jhansee, Bhilsa, and Rehlee. Leaving Bhopaul on the right, we crossed the Nurbudda at Cheepanere, and encamped outside of the village, under a Bur-tree on the bank of the river, where we found a gang of fifty Thugs under the following leaders:—

"Roshun Jemadar, hung at Saugor, with ten followers.

"Khuleel ditto, hung at ditto, with ten ditto.

"Ghureeba Dhadee, hung at ditto, with seven ditto.

"Zolfukar



“Zolfukar Jemadar, hung at ditto, with seven ditto.

“Golab Khan, alias Puhara, hung at ditto, with three ditto.

“Sheikh Madaree, hung at Joura.

“Moollooa Aheer, and Kehree Lodhee, who died in the Saugor jail.

“Nunha Mussulman, Manoola, Bhowanee (son of Rostum), Mahomed Buksh, Pawn Mahomed, Sheikh Chotee, Daood, and Pawn Khan, approvers, also encamped, and we joined them: they had reached this place from their homes without committing any murder. The next morning, we all, fifty-six, set out on the road to the Deccan; and arrived at Hurda, where we passed that night. Thence we proceeded, by Singeea Deo Boregow and Asseer, to Borhanpore, and encamped outside of the town, in a grove where there was a Muth (Gosaens lodging). We halted there the next day; and about noon, a gang of fifty-six other Thugs, under the following leaders, came up from their homes, and joined our gang:—

“Purshaud Lodhee, hung at Saugor, with ten followers. Purusram Jemadar, and Sirawun his brother, at large, with fifteen. Munohur Partuk Jemadar, who lately cut his throat near Jhansee when he found the guard from Jhansee coming up with him upon the open plain, and died on the spot. Khooman Brahman, brother of ditto (at large),



large), number of followers not remembered; and Mahraj Patuck, who drowned himself in the lake at Dhamanee, on his way to Saugor under an escort, 1832.

“ We all amounted to 112 persons.

“ From this place we set out on the road to the Deccan. On reaching the bank of the Taptee river, we sat down; and while we were talking and smoking, two Mussulman travellers came up, on their way from Bhopaul to Aurungabad. Roshun Jemadar acted as Sothae, and won their confidence. They sat down with us, and smoked the hookah; and Roshun gave them some food to eat, as he was himself eating. After resting here some time, we went on with the travellers, and reached Tankolee, a village six cose south from Borhanpore, and encamped on the bank of the river on the north side of the village. After we had taken our dinner, about two ghurries after sunset, we sent some people of our gang to converse with the travellers; and while they were engaged in talking, they were both seized and strangled upon their beds, by Khoda Buksh Mussulman and Bukhut Brahman, both at large, assisted by others as Shumshees, who were sitting near them. We got from them one hundred and fifty rupees in cash, two matchlocks, one tattoo, and some other articles. In the division, we got one rupee each.

“ After



“ After this affair, the next morning, we proceeded on the road to the Deccan, and reached Edulabad, about ten cose south from Borhanpore ; and encamped outside of the town, at a Fakeer’s Tukeea under some trees. The same day, eight Rokureeas, of whom six were armed with matchlocks, and two camel-drivers, came up with Tippoo Sahee rupees (Spanish dollars), from Dunraj Seth’s house at Bombay, on their way to Indore, and lodged in a shop in the bazaar. We sent Khoda Buksh (at large), and Molloo Jemadar, as tilhaes (spies), to watch them : they went and put up in one of the shops near them. The next morning the Rokureeas set out, and both our spies followed them. We conjectured that they would probably encamp at Tankolee that day ; and, as we had already committed a murder there, we did not think it advisable to follow them to that place : we accordingly went on to Chaund Devec. The Rokureeas did not, however, go to Tankolee, but to Borhanpore, on the following morning. Khuleel, Mahraj Patuk, Purusram, Zalim, and Bukhut, jemadars, with fifty select Thugs from the gang, set out for Borhanpore, thinking that the Rokureeas would arrive there from Tankolee. The remainder of the gang returned from this place to Deoleea, in the Bhopaul district, having appointed to re-join them there after perpetrating the murder of the above Rokureeas. About one watch before sunset,



sunset, our party arrived at Borhanpore, and encamped outside of the town, towards the north. Here both of the spies brought information that the Rokureeas had put up in the bazaar. On this, we sent Molloo and Ghureeba, jemadars, to make inquiries; and on reaching the bazaar, they found three other camels lodging there, but not the Rokureeas we were in search of. They returned, and reported; and we sent off Khuleel and Monohur, jemadars, and Mudara Thugs, to trace them, offering to give them one hundred rupees' reward, over and above their share of the booty. They were to proceed to Asseer, and thence on to Boregow; where we would wait for them. These three men arrived at Asseer about midnight; but could not discover the Rokureeas, although they were at the time lodged in the bazaar. The next morning we reached Asseer, without finding any trace of the Rokureeas; and sent Ashraff (at large) and Monga (who died in Saugor jail) to the bazaar, to purchase some flour, &c.; and went on to a nullah about one-half cose distant from Asseer. Soon after we had sat down at this nullah, these two men returned, and told us that they had seen the Rokureeas settling the duties at the Custom House. On learning this, we were much gratified; and leaving Moonga and Ashruff, as tilhaees, to watch their movement, we went on to Boregow. A little after our arrival there, the spies brought information,



tion, that the treasure-bearers would not pass that way, having gone to Punchpuhar. On hearing this, we immediately set out for Punchpuhar; but could not find the Rokureeas. We passed that night there; and in the morning we sent six other active Thugs, in different directions, to trace them; two to Asseer, two to Boregow, and two to Sherpore, on the Indore Road; while the main body halted at Punchpuhar. About a watch before sunset, the two men from the Sherpore came back, and told us that the Rokureeas had lodged in the bazaar at Sherpore the preceding night; had set out on the road to Indore that morning; and intended to put up at a village about eight cose from Sherpore, name not remembered. They got this information from the people at Sherpore, and it was correct. Here the four other men rejoined us also. On learning this, although we were all much tired, we immediately set out for that village, leaving Sherpore on the right: we arrived there at midnight, and encamped outside of the village, under a large Peepul-tree. The next morning, when the Rokureeas set out from this village, we followed; and about a cose from the village we were detained by the chokeedars of the Custom-chokee; and during our detention, the Rokureeas went on, out of our sight: we paid the chokeedars one rupee four annas, and went on. During this interval, the treasure-bearers had, we found, crossed the Nurbudda at
Burwaha-



Burwaha ghât, and gone on to the bazaar of Burwaha, a village the other side of the river, and put up in a shop. We followed, and crossed the Nurbudda at the same ghât, and encamped outside of the same village, under a Bur-tree, near the small reservoir. The next morning, the Darogah of the Custom-chokee detained the treasure-bearers, to settle duties on their treasure; and we were detained also by the same authority: but we did not intend to pay them till the treasure-bearers had settled, with the view of following them. The treasure-bearers had great altercations with the people of the chokee, who demanded a high rate of duty from them; when Maharaj Patuck went to the Darogah, and admonished him, and asked why he did not let the treasure-bearers go; as, in the event of any accident happening to their treasure, if they moved at a late hour, he would be responsible for it: on this, the Darogah became alarmed, and took from them whatever they had intended to pay. It was now late, and the treasure-bearers would not move that night. We advanced to a garden about two cose on the side of the road; where we cooked and ate our dinner, and passed the night. The next morning, while we were preparing to move, we saw the camels and the treasure-bearers coming on; and we immediately set out, and went on to a nullah in an extensive bamboo jungle, where there was an uninhabited village. Here we
all



all sat down, after cutting some large bamboo sticks, thinking this a suitable place for murder. While we were smoking, a man on horseback, who had been the companion of the Rokureeas ever since the preceding night, came up, and sat down with us to smoke. Soon after the Rokureeas arrived, and sat down to rest. We surrounded them from every side; and seized and strangled the six matchlock-men; then the horseman; and, lastly, we pulled down the surwans from the camels, with the bamboo sticks we had cut there, and strangled them. We buried the bodies of the whole in the nullah; and instantly made Ghureeba mount on the sowar's horse, and took the treasure-camels by a bye-road through the jungle, leaving the high road to Indore on the left. Going on about two cose from the place where we had committed the murder, we sat down and took the loads off the camels, put them on our tattoos, and turned the camels loose in the jungles. Here we left the Indore road altogether; and took another, in a direction to the east. In three days we reached Sundulpore, and encamped on the bank of a tank. Here we cut the treasure khoorjees with tulwars and knives: and took out the treasure, in which we found 15,000 Tippoo Sahee rupees (Spanish dollars), silver bullion 100 rupees weight, and a small brass box stamped. When we broke open this box, we found in it four diamond rings set with
jewels,



jewels, eight pearls, and one pair of gold kurras or bangles. The whole of these articles amounted to 1000 Tippoo Sahee rupees in value. From this booty, Zalim took out a handful of money, as an offering to Davy, which we intended to give to priests of Bindachul; but not finding an opportunity for doing so, it was left with Zalim. Afterwards we divided the booty, and got about 150 rupees each—Tippoo Sahee rupees (Spanish dollars). The pearls and jewels were divided according to their value, which had been then estimated. The shares of those who left our gang for the Bhopaul district, as before described, were given to their friends and relations. Hurry Singh [at large, adopted by Khoman, died in Jubulpore jail] took the horse, for ten rupees. We passed that night at Sundulpore; and afterwards returned to our homes, by regular stages. A few days after our return home, the part of our gang whom we had left behind at Doolea returned, having heard that the treasure had been robbed at Burwaha Ghât."

Few things are more difficult to a native of India than to tell the truth, under any circumstances; and the confessions of criminals, in all countries, may be expected to contain a mixture of truth and falsehood. The deposition of Moklal is not perfectly consistent with the rest; nor even with another statement by himself, made in conversation with



Captain Sleeman, and drawn forth by the question, "How did you manage the Burwaha Ghât affair?" That statement is here submitted; and the reader must choose between the narratives.

"It (Burwaha Ghât affair) gave us a great deal of trouble, as the doliars were laden on camels. They went fast, and, afraid to appear near to them in a body, we several times lost all trace of them. We first fell in with them at Borhanpore. Ours was only one of three great parties that went from Bundelcund, Gwalior, and Saugor, that year, to Kandeish; and it consisted of about one hundred and sixty Thugs, concentrating upon the treasure party. At Burwaha Ghât, on the Nurbudda river, we found them disputing with the Custom-house officers about the payment of duties, and stating the hardship of being obliged to expose the value of their charge in an unsettled country. We paid duties for ourselves and our six ponies; and, leaving a few scouts, passed over the river, and went on to the small deserted village of Naeen, in the midst of a jungly waste. Here we waited till the treasure party came up; consisting of eight men, mounted on camels, and armed with matchlocks; and a merchant, by name Futteh Alee, who had joined them on the road, in the hope of being more secure in their company than alone. It was about nine o'clock in the morning when they reached the place.



place. The signal was given: we rushed in upon the camels, seized them by their bridles, and made them sit down, by beating them with sticks. The men were seized and killed; some strangled, some stabbed with spears, and some cut down with swords. Futteh Alee was pulled off his pony, and strangled. We transferred the treasure to our ponies; threw the bodies into a ravine; and went on for three days without halting any where, as we knew we should be immediately pursued. After we had got beyond danger, we rested, and divided the booty; setting aside the proper share for the Temple of Davy, at Bindachul, near Mirzapore.

“Dhun Raj Seth sent his agent, Bearee Lall, to the Resident at Indore, and the Agent of the Governor-General in Bundelcund, to recover his dollars. He got a good many of the principal Thug leaders arrested: they were sent by the Agent in Bundelcund to the Resident at Indore, who sent them back to the Agent; who made them over to the Native Chiefs in whose jurisdiction they resided, with orders to make good the money. These Chiefs told us to make good three-fourths of the money taken at Burwaha Ghât, by a general contribution. We agreed to do so, and were let go: some paid out of the fruits of former expeditions; others borrowed in anticipation of future success; and those who had neither money nor credit, pledged themselves to pay part of their future earnings.



earnings. To this, Bearee Lall agreed; and sent them on expeditions; retaining Chotee, Bukhut, and other Jemadars of great influence, about his person. He got a good deal of money by procuring the release of all the noted Thugs then in confinement at different places. He got nine thousand rupees for the release of Dhurum Khan Jemadar from Gwalior, on the pretence that he was engaged in the affair, when he had been in prison long before. He had got a great prize of jewels from some men killed near Kotah, and his family could afford to pay. Such was Dhun Raj Seth's influence, that he could get a gang released from prison in any part of India; and for some time, his agent, Bearee Lall, had always half-a-dozen of the principal Thug leaders about his person, and used to attend all our marriages and festivals. What his master got, we know not; but he got a great deal of our money."



CHAP. VIII.

A WITNESS, named Feringeea, whose evidence has been already frequently referred to, gave the following account of an exploit known as the "Dholia and Malagow affair."

"Five gangs concentrated in the village of Jokeer, between Dholia and Malagow, in Kandeish, amounting to two hundred and fifty Thugs, under myself. Makun, who was hung at Indore, 1829; Gunga Deen, who was hung at Indore, 1829; Chotee, approver; Maharaj Partuk, who drowned himself at Saugor; Sheikh Nungoo, dead; Persaud, hung at Saugor, 1832; and others.

"We left Jokeer for Malagow, with two travellers whom we had killed before daylight; and were resting at a well two cose north of Malagow, when we heard, after sunrise, the *Chim mama* on the right. I proposed, according to all the recognised rules of augury, to go back to Jokeer immediately. To this proposal they would not consent; and we went on to Malagow, where I proposed that we should



should halt, and avert the threatened evil by a sacrifice. This was overruled by a party who supposed that it might be as well averted by quitting the high road to Kopurgow, and diverging to the right, upon that of Chandore. I went on with them four cose, to a village whose name I forget; but at night determined to obey the omen, and came back, with my gang of twenty-five Thugs, to Malagow, where I found a gang of one hundred Thugs, under the following leaders: Omrow, hung at Indore, 1829; Bhimmee, approver; Buduloo, hung at Saugor, 1832; Bukut, approver; Kunhey Aheer, killed in Joudpore, 1833; Hinder Benguna, approver.

“They had with them four treasure-bearers from Poona, on their way from Indore, whom they intended to kill on the way to Dholeea. I joined them; and we went on to the village of Jokeer; and were joined on the way by three other travellers, whom we could not shake off. Hinder Benguna's son, Chiddee, had quarrelled with his father; and gone off to join Chotee's party, on the Chandore road, with Gurhoo, who went to see two of his brothers who were with them: and they having let out the secret of the treasure-bearers, Chotee came off, as fast as he could, with Maharaj and a party of forty, and joined us, during the night, at Jokeer.

“Omrow's party was composed chiefly of Ku-boolas,



boolas, fellows of all castes ; whom he had scraped together, to make up a gang for this expedition ; and we insisted upon his sending thirty of the rawest of them in advance from Jokeer, in the afternoon. There were at least two hundred men that night at Jokeer, on their way back from Hindostan to their regiments ; but we watched the treasure-bearers closely ; and when they set out, we followed ; and at a bowlee, a mile or two on, we closed in upon them, and put them to death. We had not been able to shake off the other three travellers ; and were, in consequence, obliged to put them to death also : some of the bodies were thrown into the bowlee, and the others were slightly buried in a field close by.

“ Chotee claimed a share for that part of their gangs which had gone on to Chandore, as well as for that which had come with him ; and Omrow claimed an equal share for all the thirty Kuboolas whom he had consented to send on in advance, that they might not, by their blunders, frustrate our designs upon the treasure-bearers. After a good deal of dispute, it was settled, that those who were actually present should all share alike, without distinction of rank or office ; and that those who belonged to absent parties might share what they got with them, or not, as they pleased. According to this arrangement, each man got, of gold, one hundred and twenty-five rupees' worth. Omrow's
seventy



seventy men afterwards shared with the thirty Kurooboolas; and Chotee's party went and shared what they got with the men at Chandore."

The bones of these persons were subsequently found: but the discovery seems to have been regarded, by the Native Officers, with a great deal of coolness. One of them, Oda Putel, deposed, on the occasion, as follows:—"The Mamlutdar at Malagow asked whether I had gone, upon Dusrut Bheel's report, to search for bodies. I said, that on the 7th March, on Saturday, Dusrut Bheel, of Jherka, came to me, and said, that in the Gya-Pokar field were dead bodies. Papa Bheel told me the same thing. I told the——; and he, I, and Raghoo Putel and Meerab Kulkarnee, and four others, went; and I saw, in a hollow place, bodies with stones over them: animals had devoured part of the flesh: we uncovered, and took out bones, and two or three skulls. About ten cubits from this pit we found bones of two or three other people; but the skeletons were not entire. The hair on the head was about a cubit long; and part being cut off, shewed they were men. We reported to the Court at Malagow."

Dusrut Putel deposed thus:—"Papa Bheel of Dharureea, on Thursday, came to Maujee Naig while we were together, and said he had seen dead bodies in the field of Gya Pokar, the day before,
while



while hunting. I sent Gurha Bheel with him. He saw them, and returned. I next day, with Dusrut Shikdar, and Oda Putel, and three or four others, went and saw bodies, under stones, in a ditch. There was little flesh upon the bones. At another place, twenty cubits distant, were the bones of two or three people; but the skeletons were not entire, and we could not see the wounds. We came to Malagow Kutcheree, and reported."

Krishna Putel said:—"On the 22d of Cheyt, Saturday, Bhika Bheel, on returning from Aumee to Jhorka, smelt a bad smell; and came to Shikdar, and reported. I and Oda Putel were sitting with him. He said there was a bad smell in the bowlee, and it should be searched. We went; and were joined by Shukaram and Luchmun from Poona, who had just come from Dholia in search of three men who had been sent with money from Poona to Indore. Having arrived at the bowlee, we perceived the smell; and, looking down, saw the body of a man under stones. He had on a white ungarka, with blood about the collar of it. We threw it in again, after looking at it. There was long hair on the head. We concluded he had been murdered by Thugs. We returned home, and reported. Next day, further search was made; but no more were found in the bowlee. Some time before, five or six bodies had been dug up, about five hundred paces from the bowlee, on the Purola road."



CHAP. IX.

ON the 6th February 1829, a robbery of large extent, accompanied, according to invariable practice, by murder, was perpetrated in the Dholee-baree Pass of the Sathpoora Hills. The circumstances of the narrative, as far as they could then be ascertained, together with the steps taken by Government for bringing the criminals to justice, were detailed in a letter from Captain Hodges, acting magistrate, to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay; from which the following is an extract:—

“The persons robbed and murdered were six men; who, together with a seventh, had been entrusted with twenty-seven packages of pearls, a small package of cloth, and a few rupees, by four mercantile houses at Bombay, on whose account they were to have been conveyed to Jeypore. At Malegaon and Parolah, the persons entrusted with these commodities, the value of which is stated by the Gomash-tas of the several houses to be, rupees 72,322, took under their charge some gold mohurs
and



and Venetian ducats ; and it is not improbable, that, from this circumstance, it became known to the gang, by whom they were plundered, that they had such valuable property under their charge.

“ The first intimation of the robbery was conveyed to the Mamlutdar of Chofrah, on the day after it was committed, by Dusrut, the Bheel Naig of the Dholeebaree Pass ; who stated, by letter, that, at about eight o'clock in the morning of the preceding day, seven Beemawallas, of the designation of the persons robbed, had passed by Dholeebaree ; and represented, in reply to his inquiries on the subject, that they were come from Bombay, and were going to Indore ; and had no property of value in their possession. He added, that they were followed shortly after by twenty-two men, with five tattoos ; who had among them two swords, and a dagger ; and who stated, that they had been in the service of the British Government, from which they had received their discharge, and were proceeding to Cawnpore.

“ The circumstance of the robbery became known to Dusrut Naig, in consequence of one of the Beemawallas having proceeded in advance of his companions as far as Gudurghât, about four cose from Dholeebaree ; where he waited for his companions during that day and night ; and afterwards, finding he was not followed by them, returned to Dholeebaree.

“ On



“On his way to Dholeebaree, this person was informed, by a traveller whom he met on the road, that he had seen the body of a murdered man in a nullah near the road; and proceeding himself to the spot where it was reported to have been seen, he recognised it to be the body of one of his companions. From that spot he proceeded to Dholeebaree; and obtaining some of Dusrut Naig's people to accompany him, he returned to the nullah, where the bodies of his other five companions were also found: on one of them, concealed in his clothes, a bag of pearls was found; and on another, a rupee and a half.

“Dusrut Naig shortly afterwards joined his followers at the nullah where the bodies had been found; and traced the footsteps of men and horses as far as a deserted village on the way to a deserted part of country, between two ranges of the Sathpoora Hills, called the Pall Tuppa. From thence, he states, some footsteps were traced in the direction of a village called Chinahpanee, in the Arraward purgunah; but the footsteps of the horses, and the greater part of the gang, were traced to a village named Dhegaum, in the Yawull purgunah. It being, by this time, late in the evening, no further traces could be discovered; and the Naig came to me at Yawull.

“The following morning, every Sowar, whose services were available for the purpose, and several
of



of the Mamlutdar's hurcarahs, mounted on tattoos, were sent out in quest of intelligence of the robbers.

“Three Sowars, and one of the hurcarahs, having obtained intelligence, on the road, that some persons, answering to the description of the robbers given by Dusrut Naig, had been seen at a village called Nahnee, in the Yawull pergunah, proceeded to that village; and one of the horsemen, being in advance of the others, entered the village by himself, and, standing near a Buneeah's shop, met a man, who, on inquiry, described himself to be a Sepoy of the 4th regiment. Upon being asked if he had any companions with him, he said he had two, who were preparing their food at a well near the village. Afterwards, the person addressed accompanied him to the gate of the village, near which he pointed out two persons, whom he stated to be his companions. These two persons, on being called to, stopped, in the first instance; but, after accompanying the horsemen a little distance, ran off. The horsemen gave the man whom he had first accosted in charge to a Sebundy, and went in pursuit of the others; who, he says, ran towards a place called Martunachee Warra; and he observed they were preceded by five other persons, all of whom were running away. The Sowar came up with five of the party, who stood on their defence against him, one of them drawing a sword for the purpose: and, in the end, by the assistance of
other



other persons, the whole five were apprehended. The Sowar stated, that the other two were apprehended also at Fyzpoor, to which place he followed them; but there is not yet sufficient evidence that the two persons who were apprehended there are the same he had seen at Nahnee.

“The prisoners, six in number, who were taken at this place (Nahnee), all describe themselves to be persons without employment or connexions in the country; and most of them state, that they have recently come from Hindostan. They all agree that they came to Nahnee together; but give different accounts of the time and place of their first meeting each other; some of them saying it was Dholia, others at Maligaum, and others between these two places; and, notwithstanding they acknowledge they had been travelling together for some days past, they generally professed an ignorance of each other's names.

“A short time after they were apprehended, a Chowdry of the village of Nahnee observed a sword and some other things, without any person near them, in the place called Martunchawarra. He communicated the circumstance to another Chowdry of the village; who, taking a dirk with him, brought the things found there to a Sheikhdar who was in the village; and, upon examining one of the things found, it was discovered to contain two sealed bags, which proved to be two of the bags
of



of pearls of which the murdered Beemawallas were robbed.

“ I cannot obtain any clear and certain evidence that the persons apprehended had been seen in the place where the stolen property was found ; but all the circumstances under which they were apprehended, point them out as the persons in whose possession it had been : and their guilt is further established by the important circumstance of two of them being recognised by one of the followers of Dusrut Naig, as two of the party that passed Dhooleebaree immediately after the Beemawallas ; by which party, there can be no doubt, the murder and robbery were committed.

“ The party of Sowars, whose operations have been described, proceeded from Yawull ; and another party of five proceeded from Russoolpoor in the Rewair purgunah, and went to Borhanpore in quest of the robbers. They there learnt, that some strangers, with tattoos, had just arrived, and alighted in a garden near the city. They proceeded to the spot, and found three men together ; two of whom were in the act of unloading their tattoos, and the third was standing near them with a sword under his arm. Other two were observed at some little distance from them ; who, when they found the Sowars questioning the three men, ran off, and made their escape. The three men were secured by the Sowars. The sword of the
man



man described to have been standing unemployed, was, on examination, found to be stained with blood, from the point to the hilt. Suspended to the neck of the same man was a tobacco-pouch, containing some rupees, gold mohurs, and Venetians;—the latter, the exact number that had been in charge of the Beemawallas. On examining the baggage that had been taken from the tattoos, four of the bags of pearls that had been plundered were discovered.

“The evidence against these three persons appears to be quite conclusive. They themselves, however, deny their guilt; assert that all the Sowars have sworn to is false, and that they know nothing about things pretended to have been found with them. There is not the slightest reason to doubt the truth of the Sowars’ statements, which are perfectly clear and consistent; and, in confirmation of ~~them~~, one of the three persons is recognised to have been with the party of twenty-two persons who followed the Beemawallas at Dholeebaree.

“On the same day, and about the same time that the three persons were apprehended as above mentioned, other four were stopped by some persons employed in the Collection of the Zukat near Borhanpore, and detained until some of the party that had been in quest of the robbers arrived. The four persons are stated to have been going towards the garden where the other three were



were apprehended. They had with them two swords, and two tattoos. Both the swords were stained with blood, and one of them considerably so. The loads on the tattoos were not examined on the spot; but taken to a place where the Sowars were, and there examined. Nothing of value was found with the baggage of these persons: but two brass vessels were found with it, which are recognised, by the Beemawalla that escaped, to have belonged to one of his murdered companions. Of the two tattoos taken with these prisoners, one of them was seen at Dholeebaree, by a follower of Dusrut Naig, in possession of the party of two and twenty men that followed the Beemawallas, and is recognised by him. Two of the prisoners are said to have been seated on the tattoos when the party was stopped by the Zakat Collectors; but, unfortunately, these last cannot point out which of the prisoners were so seated; nor can I ascertain, on satisfactory evidence, from which of them the swords were taken. One man only can swear to one of the swords being taken from one of the prisoners in particular.

“Three of the prisoners acknowledge that the four had been travelling in company together, before they were apprehended; but give discordant accounts as to the time and place of their first meeting. One of the prisoners denies that he had previously been in company with the other three



before he was apprehended; and alleges, that they were merely following him on the road, unconnected with him. One of the swords is stated by the prisoners to have been in the possession of one of his companions; but that companion denies that he had any sword in his possession. The other sword none of the prisoners will acknowledge. One of the tattoos, but not the one which was recognised at Dholeebaree, is acknowledged by one of the prisoners to have been in his possession; but the other tattoos none of them will acknowledge.

“Such is the evidence against the prisoners who have been apprehended on suspicion of having been engaged in this atrocious robbery and murder. I regret, with regard to some of them, it is not so perfect as could be desired; although it appears to me that there is sufficient to warrant the committal of thirteen of them, and to leave little doubt of their guilt. I have in vain endeavoured, by every proper means, to induce some of them, against whom the evidence is least perfect, to turn King's evidence, and merit pardon by a full confession and disclosure of all the circumstances connected with the robbery.”

The thirteen persons referred to were brought to trial. Three were acquitted. One is stated to have been released; but the grounds of the release are not mentioned in the document from which this account



account is taken. One was sentenced to be imprisoned for the remainder of his life, which, however, was protracted for only a few months; six, to be transported beyond seas; and two to be hanged. One only of them suffered the penalty of the law;—the other having evaded it, by becoming his own executioner.

Feringeea, who was an actor in this, as in so many other tragedies of a similar description, gave the following account of it to Captain Sleeman:—

“We were a gang of about 150 Thugs from Hindostan, in the month of January 1829, near Chopra, on the bank of the Tuptee river—under Khoseeala, alias Rynwo, executed afterwards, at Dholia in Kandeish; Bhujjoo, executed at Saugor in 1832; and Perraud Mussulvu, executed at Indore in 1829—when the seven treasure-bearers came up, on their way from Bombay to Indore. We followed them, with a select party from all the gangs, on to Dhoree; and thence through the Dholeebaree Pass, where they spoke with Dusrut Naig, the officer of the police-guard stationed at that pass. While they rested here, one of the seven, without our scouts perceiving it, went on in advance towards Godurghât, which is about four cose distant. When they had left the guard, we continued to follow; and, on passing the guard, we were questioned by Dusrut Naig; and we told him that we were



Government servants, on our way home, on furlough. About half way between this pass and Godurghât, we came up with the treasure-bearers, and strangled them; but, to our surprise, we found only six, instead of seven. Heera and three others were instantly sent on after the other; but they could not find him; and we hastily threw the bodies into a nullah, and made off with the booty.

“The man who had gone on in advance, finding that his companions did not come up so soon as he expected, returned to look after them; and met a traveller, who told him that he had seen some dead bodies in a nullah by the side of the road. Going to the place described, he found that they were the bodies of his companions; and reported the circumstance to Dusrut Naig, who sent information to Captain Hodges, the acting magistrate in Kandeish, and set out with all his men in pursuit of us. Captain Hodges, with his mounted police, succeeded in seizing thirteen or fourteen of our party, who had separated and lost their road in the jungles. They had with them the greater part of the booty, which we in consequence lost. Of these men, four contrived to get released; and the rest were either hung at Dholia, or sent to the black water. Only three of the bags of pearls were brought off: one by Purumma, who honestly shared it, on his return, with the rest of the gang who escaped; and two by Bhujjoo, alias Sooper Singh



Singh and Rae Singh, who were lately hung at Saugor, and who could never be prevailed upon to give up any share."

Thus it appears that "honour" is sometimes wanting, even "amongst thieves."



CHAP. X.

IN 1816, an act of Thuggee, upon rather a large scale, was perpetrated at Shikarpore. It is thus related, in the records of the Nagpore Residency:—

“ This day, Bukshee Chitara, the vakeel of the Punah Rajah, came and presented an Urzee, stating that twenty-five persons had been murdered on their way from Jubulpore, by fifty robbers, near the Pass of Shikarpore, in the Punah Rajah's territory; and that six or seven of them had been wounded, and four taken by the people of Row Burjore Singh, a relation of the Rajah's. The vakeel stated, that Omrow Zemindar of Bumhoree was present, and would be able to give further information; and his deposition has accordingly been taken;—and, as it may lead to the discovery of their associates, the four robbers arrested are to be demanded from the Rajah, who will also be desired to take care of the property for the heirs of the murdered people. The Rajah is at the same time to be thanked for his exertions on this occasion: and as these robbers may pass through these territories, the following Chiefs are to be written to, and conjoin to aid in



in their arrest:—Gwalior, Bijawur, Tehree, Jhansee, Dutteea, Kour, Sonee Sa, and Kour Purtab Singh."

The following is the Urzee of Bukshee Chitara referred to:—"Row Burjore Singh, a Jemadar of my master, in the purgunah of Powae, writes to me, that near Shikarpore, about five cose south of Powae, near the pass, in the middle of Phagun, twenty-five travellers, on their way from Jubulpore, a district of the Nagpore Government, were murdered by fifty robbers, and their property taken off. That, after the murder, the robbers came to Powae, and purchased food at the Bunees' shops; but, without sitting down, went on. The Bunees asked who they were, from whence and whither going; and they said they were from the Deccan, on their way to Banda: saying this, they went on. That, contrary to their professed design, they took the road to the west, and rested at the village of Chowmooka, in my master's territory; and left the place again at midnight, for Tighurra, in the Jytpore territory. As soon as Row Burjore Singh heard these circumstances, he sent on twenty-five of his soldiers after them; and they came up with them within the boundary of Tighurra; and, unable to prevail upon them to surrender, they wounded six or seven of them, and took four out of the number into custody. They secured seven ponies; and brought them, with other things, to Burjore Singh. Unable to stand
against



against the sepahees, the robbers sought shelter in Tighurra; and the villagers came to their support, and escorted them to Simareea in Jytpore; and the holder of that village entertained them one day, and the next dismissed them, but took from them all their property; first understanding that it amounted to ten or twelve thousand rupees. Burjore Singh wrote to the Simareea man, and desired him to keep them in custody; but he would not."

A deposition was, at the same time, made by Omrow, Zemindar of Bumhoree:—"I heard that twenty-seven persons, male and female, had been killed, on their way from Jubulpore to Chutterpore, by fifty or sixty decoits, and all their property taken off;—that they had gone, after the murders, to Powae, and thence to Tighurra in Jytpore;—and that Row Burjore Singh had sent after them twenty-five of his followers; who seized four, and two more that had been wounded, and brought them, with seven ponies, to Powae, to the Row, who still has them. An action took place between the Row's people and robbers at Tighurra; but the people of that place came to the aid of the robbers; and, as night came on, they effected their purpose, and escorted them to Simareea. Burjore Singh's people sent a message to the Thanadar of Simareea, by the Zemindar of Pourneea, to say that the Tighurra people had sent the robbers to him, and he

must



must secure them. The robbers remained there all night, till noon the next day, and then took the road to Deoree in Huttah. I heard that all the property they had with them was taken by the Zemindar of Simareea in Jytpore. I hear that the four taken confess they are from Gwalior; and that the robbers had with them twenty-five matchlocks, and the rest had bows and arrows, and were all dressed differently, and talked like people from the West."

The Superintendent, Mr. Wauchope, subsequently recorded this minute:—"On the 7th March, a Purwana was addressed to Burjore Singh, to require the arrested robbers, by whose gang the twenty-seven persons had been murdered at the Pass of Shikarpore. This day (18th April 1816), Bukshee Chitura, the Punna vakeel, has presented a Hindoo letter from him in reply, with a list of property, and stated that the four arrested men are present—Husun Khan, Imam Buksh, Shumshera, and Bahadur. These men have been examined; and they declare that they were not concerned in the murders, and state that they were innocent travellers. The vakeel states, that the men who took them have not come with them, but are with their masters at Powae;—that among the things taken from them was a phansee or noose, and one of the Row's sepahees took it to draw water from a well;—that Bahadur, one of the four taken, had confessed that



that they murdered the people in the nullah; but Shumshera, who calls himself also Kuramut, forbade him, and said he would get hung if he confessed; and he remained silent. Although they deny the crime, still it is clear that they are men of bad character, and the suspicion is very strong against them. They are to be sent to the magistrate, with the rest of the Thugs taken with them; and Burjore Singh is to be thanked for his meritorious conduct, and to be requested to send the other evidence required."

Nothing appears to have been then done towards punishing any of the apprehended persons; but some of them were, at a later period, hanged.

Two distinct confessions, by an accomplice, were taken several years afterwards by Captain Sleeman. As each contains some particulars not found in the other, both are here appended. One of them proceeds thus:—

"About fifteen years ago, in the year when Mr. Jenkins, the Resident, went from Nagpore to Banda, I was with a gang of one hundred and twenty-five Thugs, under Nathea, Noor Khan, Bhudae, Gholab Khan, Hyput, Jemadars, at Sehora, in the district of Jubulpore. We heard of Mr. Jenkins's approach from Jubulpore, and waited a day for his party; and when they came up to Sehora, we joined them, and made acquaintance with the travellers. Some pretended



pretended to be on their way home from service, others to belong to the Resident's camp. They went on to Cowreea; and we continued with them, and went on the second day with them to Belhree, where we inveigled, to join us, twenty-seven of the party, including five women, and two boys about three years of age each. We persuaded them that they suffered much loss and inconvenience by travelling with so large a camp—that food was much dearer, and often not to be got for money—that the water was always scarce and muddy—and that we should escape all this, by leaving the camp, and taking the road by Powae. To all this they agreed and assented; and the next morning we left the camp, which was going by way of Lohargong, and took the road through Powae. We reached Shikarpore, in Punna, which is three cose on this side of Powae, and encamped in the grove; and in the afternoon, we sent on Kurhaea and Mutholee, to select a place for the murder of this party. They chose a place on the bank of a river between Powae and Shikarpore, where the jungle is thick and extensive; and about midnight we set out with this party. As soon as we reached the appointed place, we recommended them to sit down and rest themselves, as a good deal of the night still remained. About half of them sat down, and the other half remained standing: and the signal being given, twenty-five of the party were strangled.

Jowahir



Jowahir took one boy: and the other boy was taken by Kehree. The bodies were thrown into a dry pit in the nullah; and some stones and branches of trees thrown in upon them, to conceal them. The boy whom Jowahir had taken, on seeing the bodies thrown into the pit, cried loudly; and Jowahir dashed him against a stone, and killed him. We concealed the bodies of all, but that of the boy, which we forgot to throw in upon the rest: and it lay by the stone, exposed. We went on to Powae, and purchased five rupees'-worth of goor; which we took on with us to a village whose name I forget. In the morning, a bearer going to the river to fish, saw the body of the boy, and gave information to Burjore Singh, the Thakur of Powae: and he went to the place with his people, opened the pit, and took out the bodies; and proceeded in search of the murderers. He searched all day and the following night in vain: and the next day he came up with us, at a river where we were washing our hands and faces, after having left the small village, where we had eaten our goor. He had before him two matchlock-men; and, suspecting his design, we formed into a close body, and proceeded on our road. They ran upon us; but we kept waiting, with our matchlocks ready, and pointed towards them: but they had some horsemen with them, and they charged in upon our body; and they wounded Hyput, with a spear, in the breast; and

Bhugwan



Bhugwan on the face, with a sword: and, finding it vain to attempt resisting any longer, we dispersed and fled. They each seized his man; and, after possessing themselves of what property they found upon them, let them all go, except Hossein Khan alias Kunheya, Roshun, Khoosalee, and Kureema, whom they sent to Bandah; where they were kept in confinement four years, and then released.

“The boy's name who was saved was Gunesh: and he was taken by Kehree Patuk, who brought him up as a Thug; and he died about three years ago.

“Our gang consisted of 125 Thugs; under Noor Khan, hung this year at Jubulpore; Bhudae, lately arrested at Kotah; Gholab Khan, hung at Saugor, 1832; and Hyput, approver.

“Other Jemadars and myself were encamped in the grove near the town of Sehora, in this the Jubulpore district, in March 1816, when the Resident of Nagpore passed on his way from Nagpore to Bundelcund*. We had heard of his approach with a large escort, and determined to join his party, in the hope of picking up some travellers; as in the time of the Pindaries, travellers of respectability generally took advantage of such opportunities to travel with greater security. Our gang separated into small parties; who mixed themselves up with the

* This was Major Close, on his way from Poona to Gwalior, to take charge of his office as Resident, in 1816.



the Resident's parties at different places along the road, without appearing to know any thing of each other; and pretended to be, like others, glad of the occasion to travel securely. When the Resident reached Belehree, some of our parties stated, that, as the Resident was going the western road by Rewah, they had better go the northern by Powae, as there was no longer any danger from Pindaries; and, by separating from so large an escort, they should get provisions much cheaper;—that water was now becoming scarce on the western road, and was always made dirty by the elephants and camels. Other parties pretended to argue against this, but at last to yield to the strong reasons assigned. We had by this time become very intimate with a party of travellers from Nagpore, consisting of eighteen men, seven women, and two boys. They heard our discussions, and declared in favour of the plan of separating from the Resident's party, and going the northern road, through Shikarpore and Powae.

“On reaching Shikarpore, three cose this side of Powae, we sent on Kunhee and Mutholee, to select a place for the murder: and they chose one on the bank of the river, in an extensive jingle that lay between us and Powae. We contrived to make the party move off about midnight, persuading them it was near morning; and, on reaching the place appointed, they were advised to sit down and rest themselves. All our parties pretended to be as
much



much deceived as themselves with regard to the time ; but not more than half of the travellers could be prevailed upon to sit down and rest in such a solitude. The signal was given ; and all, except the two boys, were seized and strangled by the people who had been appointed for the purpose, and were now at their posts ready for action. The boys were taken by Jowahir and Kehree, who intended to adopt them as their sons ; and the bodies of the twenty-five persons were all thrown into a ditch, and covered over with earth and bushes. On seeing the bodies thrown into the ditch, Jowahir's boy began to cry bitterly ; and finding it impossible to pacify him or to keep him quiet, Jowahir took him by the legs, dashed out his brains against a stone, and left him lying on the ground, while the rest were busily occupied in collecting the booty. Going on to Powae, we purchased five rupees' worth of sugar, to celebrate this event ; and, without halting, we went on to the village of Choumooka, in Punna. After resting till midnight, we went on to Tighurra in Jytpore, where we ate the sugar, and then set out the same day for Huttah.

“ A fisherman going to the river to fish, soon after we had left the scene of the murders, found the body of the boy lying by the stone against which his head had been beaten ; and he gave information to Thakur Burjore Singh of Powae, who proceeded



proceeded to the place with some of his followers, and discovered all the other bodies lying in the ditch. He collected all the men he could; and following our traces, which were still fresh, he came up with us as we were washing ourselves in a stream within the boundaries of the village of Tighurra. We formed ourselves into a compact body, and retired upon the village of Tighurra. The Thakur repeatedly charged in upon us; and seeing Hyput Jemadar pierced through the chest with a spear, and Bhugwan receive a sabre cut in the face, we dispersed, and made for the village of Tighurra in the best way we could. The villagers all came to our support, and defended us against the Thakur; but he had already secured Hossein Khan, who afterwards died at home; Imam Buksh, alias Kosula, who was hung in Kandeish in 1829; Shumshera, who was hung at Saugor in 1832; and, Bahadur, who is now in service at Hingolee.

“The Tighurra people, tempted by the promise of part of our booty, protected us all that day and night; and in the morning escorted us to Simareea, where a promise of all the booty that we had left secured us a safe retreat till the pursuit was over, in spite of all that the Thakur could say or do.

“The Thakur took all his prisoners to the Governor-General's Agent, Mr. Wauchope; before whom Bahadur confessed, and stated all the circumstances as they occurred: but being afterwards
told



told that it was the practice of the English to hang all who confessed, and to release all who denied, he soon denied stoutly all that he had said, and pretended to know nothing at all about the murders : and being made over to the magistrate, they were all released, for want of evidence. Ram Buksh Tumbolee came from Nagpore to the Agent, Mr. Wauchope, in the hope of recovering his child, who was the boy that was killed by Jowahir."

Jowahir appears to have been a Brahman, who was hung at Saugor in 1832 : he had settled on the Nurbudda river. Kehree was the father of Sewa, approver ; and he was hung at Jubulpore in 1831. He, it is stated, named the boy Gunesha, and kept him at home to look after his cattle. " Ba-hadur," said the accomplice, " was, about ten years ago, a sepahee in the 1st battalion of a brigade of five Bahulwas, at Ourangabad : he had given up Thuggee, and never, that we know of, returned to it ; but he was still our friend."



CHAP. XI.

AN atrocious act of Thuggee, which took place either in 1809 or 1810, excited at the time great sensation; but, like many others resembling it in enormity, it gradually almost ceased to be recollected, and no definite information on the subject was obtained until the year 1834. An accomplice then made the following deposition:—

“In 1810 or 1809, we were 200 Thugs, at a village near Suhajie in Nagpore; when we met forty persons, some from Ellichpore, and some from Gwalior, and Jhalna, and Aurungabad. We came on with them seven stages; and, in a jungle between Choree and Sutrunju, we killed them all, and buried their bodies under stones in the bed of the river: one was a subahdar, a Brahmin, belonging to the regiment of Sulabut Khan and Behlal Khan, Newabs: one was a Brahmin Tewaree, with two daughters; he was going home, to get married: they were murdered with their mother and father. There was another Tewaree Brahmin, with an old woman, his wife, and a young daughter. The old woman was killed; but the daughter was preserved,
and