



As the Court were about to conclude their proceedings, Rukbur Singh, the brother of one of the Rajpoots thrown into the well near this place, made his appearance ; and was directed by the Court to state what he knows of his brother's death.

Rukbur Singh accordingly deposed as follows : — “ My brother Arjoon Singh, a Dufadar, served with Captain Tucker, at Aurungabad. He left at Aurungabad a Byragee who usually lived with him there, and proceeded towards Ellichpore. This Byragee started some time after my brother, and came to Ellichpore ; where he informed me, that one month and five days had elapsed since my brother left Aurungabad, and he was surprised that he had not reached Ellichpore. I got leave from Major Seyer to come down this road, to look for my brother. I arrived at Chickly, and found some of the individuals of the gang there. I also met them at Jafferabad and Dubbaree. The old man, Fakeer Mahommed, asked me where I was going. I said that the Sahib log had sent me to perform a duty, which I was engaged in. I kept moving about, and returned to Jafferabad. I found the horsemen conveying the Phansigar taken at Chickly by the Jhalna hurcaras to Dioraee, to apprehend the Phansigars that lived there. They gave me a full account of my brother's murder, and his servant Khoobas' murder ; and pointed out the well into which they had thrown their bodies. I
went



went there, and found five skulls close to the well, and eight skulls in the bottom of the well; into which I dived repeatedly, and took up all the bones I could find. As it was impossible to distinguish my brother's skull and bones, I collected all the bones, and placed them, with the thirteen skulls, on a pile of wood, which I prepared agreeably to the rites of my caste, and burnt them all together. I made the Phansigars shew me the spot where they had buried the Mogul and his two servants, as he belonged to Major Seyer's Russalah: they pointed out the spot, which I caused to be dug up; and I found the skeletons of the Mogul and his two servants, all together, and quite perfect."

The articles found upon the individuals already mentioned were then produced; and Rukbur Singh, Mungul Singh, and Maun Singh, relations to the deceased, were directed to examine them. They recognised a considerable quantity, as having belonged to the murdered person.

The finding of the Court of Inquiry proceeds as follows:—

"From the evidence of Rukbur Singh, and the acknowledgment of the individuals of the gang who have been confronted with him, and who allow that they killed his brother and the other Rajpoots, as well as the Mogul and his servants, there is not
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the slightest degree of doubt, in the minds of the officers composing this Court, of the guilt of all the persons taken up by the police, and implicated originally by the confession of Sied Ally, and subsequently by the articles found upon them, and recognised by Rukbur Singh.

“ The prisoners have just sent, from the Cotwal's choultry, a Peon, to inform the Court that Rukbur Singh has taken more articles from the property exposed before him than were actually taken from his brother and his servant killed by them and thrown into the well near this place. They merely mention this circumstance, and leave it for the consideration of the Court. This incident has had so powerful an effect upon the minds of the Officers of this Court, that they cannot, however trifling it may appear, omit bringing it forward in these proceedings ; as it corroborates, in a powerful degree, the opinion already expressed of these murders ”

In a Letter subsequently written, Capt. Sherriff says :—

“ In the gang lately apprehended, we have very fortunately got hold of two natives of Hindostan who served with the northern gangs under Assault Khan and Ghasee. They describe these gangs to be more formidable and better organized than the Deccanee *geroos* or gangs. They seldom move in less numbers than thirty or forty, and sometimes



amount to 300. In travelling, they generally have nothing but a stick, and a bundle on the end of it, over their shoulder. The Subahdar or Jemadar is always respectably dressed and mounted. The Brahmins, who are leaders, make a display of great ceremony and preparation at their meals; and they will not permit a Mahratta Brahmin, on these occasions, to come near them.

“In coming to a town, they look after all the travellers; and sometimes detach as many as four parties in four different directions, to destroy and plunder them. The tricks and wiles practised by these men, in the destruction of their own species, are as numerous and abundant as the victims which fall under their diabolical practices.

“Seo Deen, now in custody, a native of Hindoستان, after solemnly asserting that he repents of his past sins and murders, states:—

“‘About ten years ago (which corresponds with 1813), Assaulut Khan Jemadar, Ghasee Subahdar, and Himmud Laul Jemadar, collected from thirteen villages in the Zillah of Calpee—five of which are, Sayndoos, Murnee, Bhadrwah, Degumunpore, and Rampoorah, the others I do not recollect—a gang of 300 men, who all assembled at Sangor.

“‘We committed ravages along the roads, and killed many travellers and other people, horse and foot, who were decoyed from their homes by

Assaulut



Assaulut Khan and Ghasee, under a promise of being employed in Bajee Row's service at Poonah. We forwarded this deception set forth by our leaders, and assured these deluded villagers that we were going to serve Bajee Row.

“ ‘Assaulut Khan gave some of these people money, to get their horses and baggage ready, and to defray their expenses.

“ ‘On the road to Poonah, the gang moved from Saugor, by Jubulpore and Ramsuck, to Nagpore, and thence to Oomrowtee. At a small village in the jungle near Oomrowtee, called Manah, the gang got seven camels, and killed the merchants that attended them.

“ ‘On reaching Poonah, we sold these camels. From Poonah we went to Kulleanee; and returned thence to Beergaom, where eight travellers were killed; and we carried their bandy and bullocks towards Aurungabad.

“ ‘A man near this place recognised the bandy; and we gave it to him, and said that it had been found, without a driver, between Aurungabad and Jhalna. We fell in with six tattoos laden with merchandize, going to Jhalna, and attended by some men. We killed the men; and carried on the tattoos and their loads, which consisted of a great variety of articles; such as, pearls, beads, combs, looking-glasses, &c.

“ ‘At Jhalna we put up in the tope between



Jafferabad and Chickly, and killed eight men, who had eight tattoos, and 200 rupees in money. We moved to Akoalah by Balapore. After leaving Akoalah, we went to Boregaum, and exposed for sale the articles taken between Aurungabad and Jhalna. It so occurred, that a robbery had shortly before our arrival taken place at Boregaum; and, as we offered the articles at a very low price, the Puteel looked upon us as the thieves that had plundered his bazaar: and, as he had no force at hand to apprehend so large a gang, he accompanied us to Ellichpore, where he informed Salabut Khan that we were robbers. Fatty Jung Khan sent Mun-gul Khan, with 300 men, to apprehend our gang: 250 were secured, and the remaining fifty escaped.

“ ‘ Fatty Jung Khan put us in confinement; and having taken all our plunder and cash, which amounted to a large sum, let us depart for our own country, after being one month in prison: at this period, Captain Singh Sahib was at Ellichpore. The gang returned to Hindostan, and I remained at Oomrowtee.’ ”

Thus ends the confession of Seo Deen. Captain Sherriff proceeds:—

“ I shall now propose the plan of operations, which has been partly suggested by the captive Phansigars, for the discovery and apprehension of all these villains; who will soon be in motion, for
an



and within his Highness the Nizam's territories. The Phansigars, like the Pindaries of old, sally forth immediately after the Dessurah.

“ It is proposed to station one of those Phansigar prisoners at each of the under-mentioned places, through which those plunderers must pass. A small guard of ten horsemen, added to the local assistance to be had at the several places enumerated, will be quite sufficient to secure the prisoners that may be made.

“ As the prisoners have pledged their lives to discover and detect all the Thugs and Phansigars that they may pass along these roads, the arrangement and preparation required to ensure success may be left to their own adoption and approval. A pair of loose trowsers, to conceal a light form of chains on their feet, is all that they require, with a decent-looking jacket and turban.

“ They intend taking post at some of the chowkies where Customs are collected ; and they can be attended by two or three horsemen on foot, who will allow the Phansigars, who may be pointed out in the first instance, to pass the chowkies, and afterwards apprehend them.”

More than one person named Sahib Khan being spoken of, some confusion is likely to arise from this circumstance. The following extract is from the deposition of one of the parties bearing that
appellation,



appellation, before Lieut. Elwall, at Sholapore, in September 1835. The deponent is the person described in the narrative of the first Sahib Khan, as Sahib Khan of Kabrin.

“ About eight or nine months after this time, deponent and Mukhdoom Sahib, Sahib Khan Ruhmutwallah, and Mooheeodeen Jemadar, with forty followers, set out on a Thuggee expedition towards the Carnatic, and halted for the night at the village of Gornullie. On the same day, Sheikh Ahmed Arcottee Jemadar, with Guffoor Khan his brother, and Osman Khan Jemadar, with their followers, arrived at the village of Goburargee, about two cose from Gornullie: and both parties, starting in the morning, met on the road to the Carnatic, and went on together; and after four days arrived at Jubulpore in the Company's territories, where we passed the night; and, having consulted together, agreed to divide into two bodies; and it was settled, that, from my followers, Mukhdoom Sahib Jemadar, Sahib Khan Ruhmutwallah, and Mooheeodeen Jemadar, and sixteen sepoy, should accompany the Arcottees; and Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar, and sixteen Arcottee followers, accompanied me towards Poonah; while the other party went towards the Carnatic. After three days, deponent arrived at Eroor, on the Krishna river, when there was a fair. Deponent staid there; and Sheikh Ahmed went on towards Jokul, and about two cose from Eroor
fell



fell in with two Hindoo jewellers who were seated on the bank of a stream, drinking water. Having found out what the travellers had with them, they strangled them, and buried the bodies carelessly. Deponent arrived while they were burying them. We got from the murdered travellers a dabba of pearls and other jewels, which were of large value ; and sent them home, in charge of four of our men. We arrived ourselves in three days at Sangolee, on the Punderpore road, at the same time with four Hindoo traders with a pony load of cloth, who were going from Jhalna to Kolapore ; and Sheikh Ahmed, having insinuated himself into their acquaintance, went on with them to Walmurra, where they halted, near a Hindoo Dewul. Deponent also came there, and joined Sheikh Ahmed in the evening ; and we staid the night there. In the morning, Sheikh Ahmed and the others went on with the Beiparies ; and about a mile from the place, in a dry nullah, strangled the travellers, and buried their bodies. I came up after the murder. We got from the travellers the following property :—thirteen embroidered doputtas ; nine silk scarfs, embroidered ; forty-five rupees' weight of gold thread ; and 156 turbans ; which we sent home with six men, and went on to Mirich Taj Gaon, when the fair of Khoja Shumna Meerun Sahib was being held. We saw the fair ; and then went towards home, and arrived at a village on the Krishna river, where



where four Hindoo traders, in the service of some Saokar, with three bullocks laden with silk, had put up. We staid there; and the next morning the Jemadar Sheikh Ahmed went on with the Beiparies; and about a cose from thence, in a dry nullah, murdered and buried them; and, taking the property, went towards home. Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar took half the silks home with him to Chilmullah, in the Nizam's country; and the rest I took with me.

“The other party, which separated from us at Jaulpar, and went towards the Carnatic, having reached Anegra in the Dharwar district, halted there. At this time, in the cantonment of Hooblee, a Decoitte had taken place; and the police, seeing the Thugs there, suspected them, and they were immediately seized and taken to Dharwar. The Aumil then inquired concerning the Thugs; and one of the Arcottee followers, named Mahommed Khan, confessed, and told that Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar lived at Chilmullah, and Sahib Khan Jemadar (deponent) at Kakurmullah; and that the persons seized were the followers of the two Jemadars. I, hearing that search was making for me and Sheikh Ahmed, left my home, and went and staid at the village of Neem Nullie. In the mean time, the Sircar's people, by order of Mr. J. Munro, came to my house, and ordered my brother Meean Khan to tell where I was; he said that I had left the village.



village. They, thinking he was speaking falsely, began to kick and beat him, till he said he would tell where his brother was; and taking the police people with him outside the village, into a garden where there was a baolee, he watched his opportunity, threw himself in, and was drowned. My other followers, being frightened, fled the village, and came to me at Neem Nullie; and about fifteen days afterwards, the police, having got information of our being there, came and seized us, and took us before Mr. John Munro at Mungolee. The under-mentioned property was seized in my house, and sent in by Gobind Sobhajee Pundit, and Dewan Ramchand Rao, Moonsifdar of Koolkunundghee:—

Silk	bundles	3
Gold thread, or Kullabuttoo	ditto ..	4
Buttooah, weight several stones		1
Dabba with pearls		1
Horses		3
Daul		5
Swords or tulwars, &c.		14
Musquets		2
Doputtah		13
Silk scarfs, or Sowla		9
Turbans		156

The three horses were sold, and the price was given to my father and family; and afterwards Nursing Ba Resaldar was ordered by the Gentleman to give them their ornaments and brass vessels, &c., as also a quantity of grain of different sorts,



sorts, of the value of about 100 rupees: about this time, Mr. John Munro was shot at the fight at Kittoor; and the Resaldar sent myself, my brother Sheikh Dawoll, and Sona Khan, Sheikh Imam Sahib, and Sheikh Hossein, followers of Sheikh Ahmed Arcottee Jemadar (in all five persons), to Pando Rung Subahdar at Beejapore; but the jewels &c. were not sent. We were kept twenty days there; and then sent to Sattara, where we have been imprisoned for twelve years. When we had been there about three months, Aproop Khan, Mean Khan, and Gurd Sahib Khan, living at Naghnee, were seized, and sent to the Rajah by the Resaldar at Mungolee. About six years after this, Mooheeodeen, a relation of Gurd Sahib Khan, living at Naghnee, in Ulmullah, procured the release of the six others, by paying 600 rupees to the Rajah's people; and I and my brother remained in prison till we were sent here."

The great *Sheikh Ahmed*, from Arcot, is a person of too much consequence to be passed over slightly. It appears that he was obliged to leave his native province by a hot pursuit kept up by Mr. Wright, an active magistrate. Sahib Khan (the person whose narrative is the first in this chapter), says of Sheikh Ahmed:—

"Sahib Khan of Kakurmullah told me, that while he and his gang of sixty men were one day cooking



cooking their food on the bank of a river near Kukurmullah, they saw these people come down to the river to fish. They soon perceived that they understood their mystic terms, and got into conversation with them. The two Chiefs had an interview, in which Sheikh Ahmed explained how he had been obliged to leave Arcot, and seek an asylum, which he did not much like, in a village in the neighbourhood. Sahib Khan prevailed upon him and all his party, with their families, to come with him; and having introduced him to the Rajah of Shorapore Bedur, as a great Thug leader, the Rajah got them established in his neighbourhood, in the town of Chichurmulla. Sheikh Ahmed is the wisest man I know. He has great wealth, but he keeps it concealed in the woods. When danger approaches, he scatters his gang; and wanders alone, with his wife, till it is past, or till he finds another secure abode, when he transfers his wealth to the woods about it. His followers have wonderful confidence in him, such as I have never seen in the followers of any other leader."

The following Extract from the Deposition of Sheikh Sahiban, arrested at Hingolee, shews that the Arcot Thugs enjoy a great reputation:—

"The Arcottee Thugs are proverbially wary and alert among all the Thugs of the Deccan, and their rules and regulations are very strict. They do



do not allow of indiscriminate strangling. The stranglers are regularly instructed in the use of the handkerchief; and no one is permitted to use it until he has practised, and until the omens which are looked for at his initiation are considered favourable. The Arcottees will not strangle women, nor shoemakers, dthers, barbers, goldsmiths, or washermen. If the first travellers met with on an expedition have a cow with them, they are spared, even if it is known they have treasure in their possession. The Hindoostanee and Deccanee Thugs, by not attending to these rules, and strangling shoemakers, barbers, and all sorts of people, have brought down retribution on the heads of all the Thugs in India. All the Arcottee Thugs, that I have met with, adopted the dress and appearance of Sepoys of the regiments of Infantry and Cavalry. They wear the chequered loongees and short jackets, like Sepoys; carry canes in their hands; and, being very fond of betel-nut and paun, every man has a small bag in his possession for holding the ingredients. They frequently represent themselves to be Sepoys, going on leave, or removed from one station to another; and even make themselves acquainted with the names of European Officers, in order to pass more easily through the country. They make themselves *knapsacks* (the word made use of by the deponent), and carry their clothes in them. The Jemadars take on themselves the semblance



blance of merchants, and pretend to make purchases of goods, or to be conveying merchandize for sale. They always have four or five of the gang in personal attendance on them, to give them the hookah, cook their victuals, and clean their ponies. These men march in company with the Jemadar; while the other Thugs move along the road in twos and threes, and only collect on the occasion of the perpetration of a murder. They can only be arrested by having parties of approvers stationed on all the great roads of the Carnatic. The police, though it is very vigilant, has not the means of preventing cases of Thuggee; and even if Thannahs of police peons are posted along the roads, the Thugs will manage to murder close to them. I will give an instance in proof of this. Sheikh Ahmed Arcottee Jemadar came into the southern Mahratta country, and strangled some treasure-carriers in charge of 16,000 rupees, at the Salpa Ghât. There is a Chowkee placed on the ghât now; and if the peons are asked, they will state the Chowkee to have been placed there in consequence of this murder. But this has not had any effect in diminishing the number of murders perpetrated at this very ghât, where I am sure a hundred skulls of murdered travellers might be dug up any day. The Thugs will be first to go out, beg the protection of the Police Chupresses on the roads they travel on, pretending great dread of robbers, and then will perpetrate a murder



murder close to the road which the police is supposed to guard.

“ The Arcottee Thugs usually start on their expeditions during the first seven days after the festival of Dewalee and Holee; and if they have had favourable omens, they have no doubt taken to the roads before this time. It is very probable that Dawuljee Jemadar of Binsee has heard of the seizures at Sholapore, and therefore will not come northward this year; and as this is his usual season of setting out, he will certainly proceed towards Bangalore and Seringapatam, or perhaps by Bellary, towards Cuddapah. When I was at Binsee, this time last year, Dawuljee and his gang were intending to make an excursion into the Mysore country. They had a short time previously been as far as Hurryhur, but had turned back in consequence of the omens being inauspicious. The Arcottee Thugs do not now come into the Deccan so much as formerly. Indeed, since the time of the arrest of my brother-in-law, Sahib Khan Jemadar, and his companions, by Mr. Munro, which is about twelve years ago, they have never made their appearance north of Dharwar. When the great arrest of Thugs took place in the zillah of Arcot, by Mr. Wright, during my youth, great numbers of Arcottee Thugs fled from that part of the country, and settled first in the Sorapoor Talooka, under the Hyderabad Government. I have heard that Sheikh Ahmed, Ladeekur



Ladeekur Sahib Khan, Oosman Khan, Chabriah Emaum, Hoonoorgah, and other Jemadars, who were the leaders of the party that came first to Sorapoor, agreed to pay the Sorapoor Rajah 2000 rupees a year for his protection. The party consisted of fifty or sixty Thugs, whose numbers were afterwards increased by stragglers from Arcot, and the families of the Thugs who followed them. All these Thugs remained in the Deccan until Mr. Munro commenced his seizures; when they left their habitations, under the guidance of Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar; and, passing through the Hydrabad country, settled somewhere fifteen days' journey beyond it, toward Masulipatam. They afterwards obtained, on three occasions, 14,000, 7000, and 3000 rupees of treasure, by the murder of the carriers. This is within the last eight or ten years. They then went and settled near Nundyal, in the Cuddapah district. About two years and a half ago, Emaum, the brother of Tippoo Jemadar, a relation of my own, went from Binsee, where I was at the time, to Nundyal, to see Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar. When he returned, he informed us that Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar had a short time previously been out with his gang, and had strangled four Gollah peons, carrying treasure; and that each Thug had received nine tolaks of gold, and 300 rupees, as his share of the booty. During the time of Sahib Khan Jemadar's confinement at Sattara,

Tippoo



Tippoo Jemadar, brother-in-law of Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar, was also detained along with him ; and Arcottee Thugs were in the habit of coming to gain intelligence regarding him and his companions ; and by that means we were kept acquainted with the proceedings of the gangs to the south."

Myan Khan, alias Lungotea, Jemadar of Thugs, lately arrested, taken before Captain Reynolds, at Hingolee, on the 31st of October 1835, gave an account of the dispersion of these worthies ; thus :—

" I will state the names of such of the Arcottee Jemadars of Thugs as I am acquainted with.

" Oosman Khan Jemadar, a man of robust habit of body. I met him last, upwards of four years ago, on the Kurnool road, beyond Hyderabad, with a gang of fifty Thugs. He resides at Mulhar, somewhere in the vicinity of Bellary.

" Sabih Khan Ladeekun Jemadar, a relative of Oosman Khan Jemadar, whom he follows.

" Sheikh Ahmed, son of Dawuljee Jemadar, formerly had a gang of fifty Thugs. I have not seen him since the time Mr. Munro arrested Thugs in the Zillah of Dharwar, but have occasionally heard of him.

" Chabreah Emaum Jemadar, and his brother Hoonoorgah, had formerly a gang of thirty Thugs. I have not seen them since the time of Mr. Munro's arrests ;



arrests ; but within the last two years I have heard that they were residing in the jurisdiction of some Rajah, near Bezwarah, on the road from Hyderabad to Masulipatam.

“Tippoo, the brother of Sheikh Ahmed, in whose company he is. I have not seen him since the time above mentioned.

“In former times, all these Jemadars, with many hundreds of Thugs, resided in the Arcot and other adjacent zillahs ; but about twenty or twenty-two years ago, Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar, with a party of sixteen Thugs and four women, came to the Oorus of Peer Dustgeer, which takes place at the village of Neeloor, in the Pergunah of Goolburgah, where he met me and Khooddoo Jemadar, who had also come to attend the Oorus. Sheikh Ahmed informed us that he was an inhabitant of the Arcot Zillah, and that a great misfortune had befallen the Thugs of that part of the country ; for, as the English Gentleman had commenced arresting them, there was no dwelling-place left for them there : he therefore wished to settle himself elsewhere. We further heard from Sheikh Ahmed, that his father, Dawuljee, Jemadar of Thugs, had been apprehended, and was then in confinement, either at Vellore or Bangalore. In the end, Sheikh Ahmed and his gang went into the Sorapoor district, and had an interview with the Rajah, through the intervention of Khooddoo Jemadar ; and then fixed



his residence in the village of Bullondghee. In the course of a year, nearly 100 Thugs were assembled at Bullondghee and the neighbouring villages, in consequence of the relatives of the others coming up from the Carnatic to settle there. I have heard that they paid large sums of money yearly to the Sorapoor Rajah. Some years after, the Thugs having amassed great wealth, the Rajah demanded a fine from them. They therefore left Bullondghee, and took up their abode at the village of Chinmullah, the Jageer of Raheer Patail, in the Afzoolpoor Pergunah. During this interval, the Thugs used to go out for "*Rozgar*," in the direction of Kurnool and Cuddapah, and on the road to Masulipatam.

"Several years afterwards, Sooltaun Khan Jemadar, the brother of Sahib Khan Jemadar, of Kukermulla, (now an approver at Sholapore,) was apprehended at Annygherry; and a Thug of his gang, named Mahomedaa, confessed his guilt, and pointed out the places of residence of the Thugs. He was sent to Mr. Munro, the Magistrate of Mungolee, in the Dharwar Zillah, who commenced arresting Thugs according to his evidence. Nearly forty or fifty Thugs were seized; from among whom, Sahib Khan Jemadar, of Kukermulla, Chunneeka Sahib Khan, and others, were sent to Sattara; and Mahomedaa, Lumboo Burreah, Giddoo Burreah, and others, to Dharwar, and there detained in confinement.



finement. Dreading lest they should be arrested, Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar, and the Arcottee Thugs, with their wives and families, left their homes in the Deccan, and went to Hyderabad; from whence part of them proceeded on the Masulipatam road, and the remainder on the Kurnool road, and fixed their residence in the vicinity of those places. Since that time the Arcottee Thugs have not again visited the Deccan during their Thug expeditions. They range through the country bordering on the sea-coast, by Masulipatam, Rajamundry, and Chicacole; or move, by way of Madras, up to Seringapatam, and then back again to their own abodes.

“ The Arcottees are generally hereditary Thugs, by caste Mussulmans, are great eaters of betel-nut, usually wear Longies, like Sepoys, and often represent themselves to be in the Company's service, in order to secure themselves from molestation on the road. They bury the bodies of their victims securely, lest the secret of Thuggee should be divulged; and are much more deceitful than the Deccanee Thugs, so that rich travellers and Sahoo-kars place confidence in them on account of their respectable appearance. Their manner of strangling with the handkerchief, mode of burial, and other rites, are similar to those of the Deccanee Thugs; though there is some difference in the slang language of the Arcottees. They generally use the



Hindustanee language in common conversation, though they also speak the Tamul.

“I recently obtained intelligence of Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar, and other Arcottee Thugs, in the following manner. There was an Arcottee Thug named Kasim, who formerly came and resided with Sheikh Ahmed Jemadar, in the Afzoolpoor district. He contracted a marriage in the village of Bullondghee; but when Mr. Munro began to seize Thugs, Kasim and his wife fled the country, in company with Sheikh Ahmed. About two years ago, Kasim's father-in-law, named Ismael, left Bullondghee, in search of his son-in-law. After some time, Ismael returned, bringing with him both Kasim and his wife; and they took up their residence at the village of Gour, in the Afzoolpoor Pergunah, where they were both residing at the time of my arrest, about three months ago; and if they are seized, they will be able to give correct intelligence regarding the place of abode of the Arcottee Thugs. I heard from Ismael and Kasim, that Sheikh Ahmed, Mahomed Hossein, and Emaum Sahib Arcottee, Jemadars, with sixty followers, were living in some villages four or five cose on this side of Bezwarah, on the Masulipatam road, appertaining to some Hindoo Rajah Zemindar, beyond the Hyderabad territory.

“There is also a female named Jugdumah, who is a Jemadarnee of Thugs, with a party of upwards of 200 persons, who reside in certain villages belonging



longing to some Rajah, situated three days' journey on this side of Bangalore. The Thugs of her gang proceed on expeditions towards Masulipatam and Chicacole. Jugdumah is about fifty years of age; and has two sons, named Sirdar Khan and Burree Khan, besides her own two brothers. She exercises the authority of Jemadarnee herself, but sends her sons and brothers out in charge of the gang: she has amassed great wealth by the practice of Thuggee."

Female Thugs are not common; but, in many instances, women take great interest in the unrighteous expeditions of these murderers; and one instance, at least, has occurred of active interference. Capt. Sleeman says: "I have heard of only one woman who has gone herself on Thug expeditions; and that is the wife of Bukhtawar Jemadar, of the Soosea class of Thugs. She and her husband are still at large, in the Jypore territory. She has often assisted her husband in strangling; and on one occasion strangled a man who had overpowered and stunned him. Mothers, I know, have often made their sons go on Thuggee, when they would not otherwise have gone; and wives, on some occasions, their husbands. I have heard of one woman in the Deccan who kept herself a small gang of Thugs: but Bukhtawar's wife is, as far as I can learn, the only woman that has gone on Thuggee herself."



CHAP. XVII.

GRATITUDE and good faith are qualities not to be looked for in persons following the profession of Thuggee. It has been seen too, that, like the greater part of mankind, they do not act up to their own principles, but that their practice is even somewhat worse than their creed. Of the murder of women, though strictly prohibited by the Thug Code, the records of the British Government in India contains several examples. In that which follows, cruelty is aggravated by ingratitude. The narrative refers to the murder of the family of Newul Singh, a Jemadar, in the service of the Nizam. One of the party engaged, thus related the circumstances to Captain Sleeman.

“The gang had brought on this family from Nagpore. They were, Newul Singh, a Jemadar in the Nizam’s service, who had lost one arm; his brother, Hurbuns Singh; his two daughters, one thirteen, and the other eleven years of age; the two young men who were to have been married to them on reaching home, Kuleean Singh and Aman;



Aman ; the brother of the two girls ; a boy about seven years of age ; and four servants. The house in which part of the gang lodged at Dhoma took fire ; and the greater part of the gang was seized by the police, but released at the urgent request of Newul Singh and his daughters, who had become much attached to Khimolee, the principal leader of the gang, and some of the others. Omrow Singh Dufadar was a relation of Newul Singh ; and he assisted in getting them released, as he can now tell you. Had the gang been then imprisoned and searched, we must have been discovered ; as they had with them two bags of silk, taken from three carriers, on their way from Nagpore to Jubulpore, whom we had murdered in the great temple of Kamlee, where the Cantonments now stand. On reaching Jubulpore, part of the gang went on. Adhartal and the rest lodged in the town, with Newul Singh and his friends. The merchants at Nagpore finding that the men with the silk had not reached Jubulpore, and hearing of our gangs being pursued, sent to their correspondents at Jubulpore, who got the Cotwal to search those who were lodged with Newul Singh. Hearing of the approach of the police, Khimolee again availed himself of the attachment of Newul Singh and his daughters ; and the girls were made to sit each upon one of the two bags of silk, while the police searched the place. Nothing was found. The next day they set out, and



and passed us at Adhartal; and five days after this, they were all strangled at Biseynnee."

On this narrative Captain Sleeman observes:—"The gang accompanied Newul Singh and his family from near Nagpore, through Seonee and Jubulpore, to Biseynnee, a distance of more than 200 miles; and were with them about twenty days, on the most intimate terms, before they put them to death."

Another crime, equally marked by cruelty, by ingratitude, and by a departure from the ordinary rules of murder as received among Thugs, was perpetrated with regard to the family of a Moonshee who had rendered a party important service, in enabling them to escape justice from the hands of the British Authorities. Like most others, this story rests on the testimony of an accomplice. He says:—

"We fell in with the Moonshee and his family at Chupara, between Nagpore and Jubulpore; and they came on with us to Lucknadow, where we found that some companies of a Native Regiment, under European Officers, were expected the next morning. It was determined to put them all to death that evening, as the Moonshee seemed likely to keep with the Companies. Our encampment was near the village, and the Moonshee's tent was



was pitched close to us. In the afternoon, some of the Officer's tents came on in advance; and were pitched on the other side, leaving us between them and the village. The Khulasies were all busily occupied in pitching them. Noor Khan, and his son, Sadee Khan, and a few others, went, as soon as it became dark, to the Moonshee's tent; and began to sing and play upon a Sitar, as they had been accustomed to do. During this time, some of them took up the Moonshee's sword, on pretence of wishing to look at it. His wife and children were inside, listening to the music. The *jhirnee*, or signal, was given; but at this moment the Moonshee saw his danger, called out murder, and attempted to rush through, but was seized and strangled. His wife, hearing him, ran out with the infant in her arms; but was seized by Ghubboo Khan, who strangled her, and took the infant. The other daughter was strangled in the tent. The Saeses (grooms) were, at the time, cleaning their horses; and one of them, seeing his danger, ran under the belly of his horse, and called out murder; but he was soon seized, and strangled, as well as all the rest."

A further instance of the breach of the rule which extends inviolability to the lives of females occurred in the murder of a Moghulanee, where the pecuniary temptation was comparatively small.

Feringeea,



Feringeea, whose evidence has so frequently been quoted, stated, that this female followed the footsteps of his gang for several days ;—that they were unwilling to kill her, but unable to shake her off. At Lolsont they met with several Mussulman leaders and their gangs, forming a party of about 125, who had just come up from Ameergur. The exploits of these gangs, previously to the meeting, had involved them in some danger. They had reached Ameergur with a single Mussulman traveller, who had joined them during the last stage. “Two shopkeepers,” says Dhoorgha, one of the party, “came up from the Mow Cantonments, and lodged in our camp ; and about nine o’clock at night they were all three strangled : their bodies were wrapped up like bundles of cloth, and taken by five Lughas to the Jheel, to the south-west corner of the Fort. We were encamped on the west side. It was a moonlight night in March ; and some people on the bastion saw them, and came down to see what they were about. Two out of the five men ran into our camp, and three fled in the opposite direction. The four men from the Fort, without examining the bundles, followed the two men into our camp, and demanded the thieves. They were four Meena police-men, and they declared that they had seen five men making off with bundles of clothes ; and as they ran into our camp, they insisted upon our giving them up. I addressed those



those about me in Rumasee, and proposed to strangle the whole four. Punna, approver, and Molloo, lately transported, seconded me; and our roomals were ready, when the Jemadars said that it could be of no use, as others must have seen the Lughas at the same time; and we should have them down upon us, before we could dispose of the bodies. I then told the Meenas, that I could not believe them, unless they shewed me the bundles. They offered to do so: and we proceeded on half way to the spot, which gave the gangs time to get ready to be off; when I pretended that I was afraid to go with them alone, and would go back for my sword and a friend or two. They went on to the bundles, and I returned to our camp. We all made off by different roads, having agreed to re-unite at Chouroo; and travelled all night, and all the next day, as we met a regiment of cavalry soon after leaving camp, on their way from Ajmere to either Neemuch or Mow. We were all re-united at Chouroo five or six days after; and there we rested, and divided the booty. Molloo pretended that he had thrown away, in his flight, all the valuables that he got from the two shopkeepers; but we suspected him. The booty acquired from eight men murdered by our different parties in their flight was here divided, with what we got from the Mus-sulman at Ameergur."

The party then proceeded to Lolsont; where, as
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has been already related, they met with Feringeea and his followers. They proceeded with them to Somp; the Moghulanee following, accompanied by an old female servant on a pony, one armed manservant, and six bearers for her palanquin. This Moghulanee is stated to have belonged to a family of rank, but her conduct appears to have been marked with some levity. She is said to have eloped from her friends, and proceeded to the Neemuch Cantonments; from whence, at the period of the murder, she was on her way to the village of Ateer, near Agra. She seems to have become attached to Feringeea, who is described as being at that time a handsome young man, and having the appearance of a man of rank. He had told her that he was going to her village. The motive for this is not apparent; as before he met with the Mussulman party he became anxious to shake her off; and he subsequently told her, that she must go on without him, as he had met some old friends, and should be delayed. According to his account, she then insisted upon his accompanying her home, under the threat, that, if he refused, she would get him into trouble. His fears were thus excited; and being, as he states, a Brahmin, while she was of Mussulman descent, he was apprehensive that he might be suspected of improper conduct, and turned out of caste. He therefore resolved to get rid of her; and the necessary preparations for the murder were commenced.



commenced. The amount of property to be gained was not more than 600 rupees' worth, and the number of persons belonging to the congregated gangs was large. Several of them alleged, that they should not get more than two rupees each, and that it was the better policy to suffer the unfortunate girl to escape. But Feringeea was peremptory; and among Thugs, though arguments in favour of mercy may be urged without effect, firmness in the advocacy of murder is seldom unsuccessful. It succeeded here. "From Somp," says Dhoorga, "we sent on men to select a place for the murder, and set out with her before daylight; but the Belha, in the dark, lost the road; and we were trying to find it, when the young woman became alarmed, and began to reproach us for taking her into the jungle in the dark. We told Feringeea to come up and quiet her; but dreading that some of her party might make off, the signal was given, and they were all strangled."

It was with reference to this murder that several of the memorable maxims of Thug wisdom and morality, which have been already recorded, were uttered. It was to excuse it, that one, who had acted as a strangler on the occasion, said, "We must all have food; and I have never known any other means of gaining it." It was with regard to this murder, that Feringeea, whose manly beauty



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beauty of person had attracted the partiality of the unhappy victim, consoled himself by the philosophic reflection, "It was her fate to die by our hands." It was the recollection of this murder which drew from the same person the exclamation, "We all feel pity sometimes, but the goor of the Tuponee changes our nature: it would change the nature of a horse. Let any man once taste of the goor, and he will be a Thug, though he knew all the trades and had all the wealth in the world. My father made me taste of that fatal goor when I was yet a mere boy; and if I were to live a thousand years, I should never be able to follow any other trade."

In this case, plunder was not the primary motive to murder; but the facility with which the commission of the crime was determined on, and the coolness with which the determination was carried into effect, afford but too powerful proof (if proof were wanting) of the utter and hopeless depravity of those who have been corrupted by the vile dogmas of an execrable superstition.



CHAP. XVIII.

THE Records of the Zillah Court of Chittoor contain various particulars connected with the proceedings of the Thugs, or Phansigars. The following is an extract from a Letter addressed by the Magistrate of that district to the Register of the Foujdarry Adawlut, in the latter end of the year 1809.

“The Records of Trials before the Courts of Circuit must have given to the Foujdarry Adawlut information respecting those extraordinary associations of persons called Phansigars (so called from the manner in which they put their victims to death), who take extensive journeys, under the disguise of travellers, for the purpose of committing murders and robberies. These associations, which consist chiefly of Moormen, were formerly extremely numerous, particularly in the Chittoor Pollums, and some parts of the ceded district; a gang sometimes consisting of from thirty to forty persons, who used to divide into small parties of about ten or twelve persons, and each party taking different routes. They had fixed places of rendezvous



vous in advance; where they all met and divided their booty, and again prosecuted their journey in the same way. The Phansigars received encouragement and protection from petty Polygars and Headmen of villages, who shared in their plunder: and fathers brought up their children to murder and rob, which constituted a regular profession, by which many families subsisted from generation to generation.

“ The extension of the Company's Government, and the attention paid to the police of the country, has checked, in a considerable degree, this inhuman practice. There are now seldom so many persons in a gang as formerly. The plans of the Phansigars are now less systematic, and they are frequently obliged to change their places of abode; but they are still numerous, and a great number of murders are committed by them, every year, in the Company's territories.

“ The release, within the last three years, of many persons belonging to these associations, from the prisons in the ceded district and the jail of Chittoor, has tended to encourage the Phansigars: they have become acquainted with the form of trial they will undergo if apprehended, and the nature of the evidence necessary to convict them: many of them are now aware, that they have only to deny the crime with the commission of which they are charged, and that they are certain of escaping.

“ I



“ I am particularly impressed with the necessity of some extraordinary means being adopted to suppress these associations, and to bring to justice the members of them : but on so important a subject it is with great diffidence I submit my sentiments to the Court.

“ It is only necessary to consider the habits of the Phansigars, to be convinced of the extreme difficulty of discovering and convicting them, and how inadequate the ordinary measures of police, and the operation of the present laws, are for effecting those objects. The scene of their crimes is always out of their own district, and seldom within thirty miles of their usual places of abode : they are sometimes absent from their homes for several months together, and take journeys of many hundred miles : their victims are generally travellers, with whose circumstances they become acquainted at public choultries : they frequently change their names, and sometimes go by several names—the latter, to prevent detection : they murder their victims at a distance from towns or large villages, in public roads leading through jungles or uncultivated land, in which they bury their bodies : they sometimes take with them some of their children (boys under twelve years of age), the less to attract notice and suspicion : the head man of the gang sometimes rides on a horse ; and they have generally with them some bullocks, or tattoo ponies, to carry



the plundered property ; and by these means they more readily pass for merchants, the character they frequently assume. A gang is always sufficiently numerous to allow of several persons belonging to it being stationed at a short distance from the places where their victims are put to death, to give alarm in case of the approach of danger. They never commit a robbery unaccompanied with murder: they first strangle their victims, and then plunder them."

In 1812, the Magistrate of Chittoor thus addressed the Secretary to Government in the Judicial Department:—

" With respect to the crime of murder by Phansigars, it is not possible for any magistrate to say how much it prevails in his zillah, in consequence of the precautions taken by these people of burying the bodies of the murdered. Soon after my appointment, a large gang of Phansigars (many of whom lived in this zillah) were discovered ; and apprehended on their return to their homes from a journey they had made to the Travancore country, where they had committed numerous murders, and brought home a rich booty, in money, and goods of all sorts. Since that period, particular endeavours have been made to discover any Phansigars residing in this zillah: a few have been apprehended, some convicted, and others have left the zillah. Many
of



of the Phansigars who have been brought to trial here were not inhabitants of the zillah. At present, I say with some degree of confidence, that there are now living in the zillah very few, if any, Phansigars, who have lately committed offences; but that murders are occasionally committed by Phansigars in this zillah, as in every other in the country, cannot be doubted. In 1810, the bodies of three Hindoo merchants were accidentally found buried a short distance from Vellore, which they left one morning very early, on their way to Salem, where they lived. From information received, there is reason to believe the Phansigars followed them from Madras (where they had been with merchandize), before they found an opportunity of murdering them. It may be generally said, there is no discovering Phansigars while travelling; though, a few months ago, a gang of eleven persons were fortunately apprehended travelling through the zemindary of Calastry, one or two of them having been recognised by a police Thanadar, as having been before in the jail of Chittoor for the same crime. Pardons, which have lately been given by Government to several of these people, have had a most beneficial effect. About forty Phansigars are now in this jail, of whose guilt (though they have been acquitted) not a shadow of doubt exists: many more have been apprehended in Cuddapah zillah, and many have fled from it: many have also



escaped from Salem into the Mysore country; where I have lately had some reason to suppose that a good many Phansigars, who have left the Company's territories, have taken up their temporary residence.

“ It is not possible to conjecture, with any degree of accuracy, what number of persons have annually fallen victims, in the Company's territories, to the barbarous practices of Phansigars. That, for the last four or five years (to 1811), they have amounted to several hundred each year, I have no doubt; but it is certain that, formerly, a much greater number of persons were annually killed by Phansigars. This account will not perhaps appear exaggerated, if it be admitted (and the fact has been proved) that there are many considerable gangs of these people, who live by murder and robbery. If it should be objected, that we seldom hear of persons being murdered or missing, it must be recollected, that it is only in cases of large sums of money being lost (as when Lieut. Blackstone's people, seven in number, were murdered, and a thousand pagodas taken) that inquiry is excited respecting missing people. It is travellers only who are murdered; and many of them poor people, whose disappearance is probably never mentioned out of their own families, who may not attribute their death to the true cause. They murder even Coolies, Palanquin-boys, Fakeers, and Byragees: no one escapes whom they have an opportunity of murdering:



dering : the chance is, that every man has a rupee or two about him in money or clothes, and with them the most trifling sum is a sufficient inducement to commit murder. The property of the eleven persons lately murdered by the gang apprehended in the zemindary of Calastray did not exceed in value thirty pagodas ; and though several of their bodies were found, none of the friends have been discovered."

Various depositions were, about the same period, transmitted to the Magistrate of the zillah of Chittoor. The following is a Declaration by Sheikh Madar of Goottapaliam, in the Talook of Vauvelpauddy, of the district of Cuddapah.

" My father, named Futteh Mahommed, was employed as a Cuttoobady peon, for a long time, by Paupe Naick, Polygar of the said Goottapaliam. I went to Seringapatam ; and was employed, in the service of the Sultan, in a battalion, for about five years : after which, on that country being taken possession of by the Company, I was discharged ; and returned to my father at the village of Goottapaliam. Afterwards, I and my father cultivated land, and attended to Cuttoobady duties. About six years ago, my father died. Mr. Munro, who was Collector of that country, jufted (resumed) the Cuttoobady lands, and we became cultivators in that village. About five years ago, Gidda Bada Khan,



Khan, one Daudavala Bada Khan, one Fakeerah, one Ooneyah, four persons with their families, came from Cullore to the said village of Goottapaliam, for the purpose of living there, and asked the Polygar, Paupe Naick, to give them some ground for building houses upon; telling him they were merchants and traders: he, accordingly, gave them some ground in a little village called Gollapully, attached to Goottapaliam, where they built houses and resided.

“ Being on very friendly terms with them, they asked me to borrow four pootties of grain any where, and to give it to them: and as I considered them, from their appearance, to be merchants and creditable persons, I borrowed the grain from an inhabitant named Gheregreddy, and gave it to them.

“ About three months after, these four persons prepared for a journey; saying, they were going to trade in the Hyderabad country. I asked them for the price of the grain which I had borrowed on their account: to which they replied, they would give it as soon as they returned. I consented; and they went off; and returned to the village after three months absence, and paid me the money which was due to me. After remaining there for about three months, they again made preparation for a journey; telling me they were going towards Bellary, for the purpose of getting employment. They called me; and said, ‘ The women are living in our
houses ;



houses ; and if you will lend whatever they require for their expenses, we will repay you as soon as we return.' I accordingly, during their absence, lent the women two pootties of grain. About four months afterwards they returned to the village : when I asked them for the price of the grain ; and they said they were unable at present to give it, but would pay me by and bye. They delayed doing so for three months, and I continued to importune them for payment. At this time, a Jemadar, named Fakeer Mahommed (who is not present) came to them, from Nerrabayeloo ; and seeing me pressing them to pay, promised that he would pay for them : and for this purpose he took me with him to a village called Nerrabayeloo ; and after that to Jemadar Madar Sahib, son of Chargul Emaumboy, at a village called Coley Muttoor, in the district of Durmapoory ; where I and Fakeer Mahommed remained in his (Madar Sahib's) house, for fifteen days.

“ Tippoo Gaudoo, Zimmo Gaudoo, Paud Khan, Sahib Khan, Deena Gaudoo, Condacara Futteh, and ten other persons (whose names I do not recollect) of Coley Muttoor and other villages, and Fakeer Mahommed of Nerrabayeloo, united into a gang, in the house of Jemadar Madar Sahib : and Fakeer Mahommed told me, that ‘ he, and Jemadar Madar Sahib and the others, intended to go to the Trichinopoly country, for the purpose of procuring property by killing people by Phansee (strangling) ;
and



and promised, that if I would go, and obey their directions, I should be paid monthly four rupees.'

" Having consented to what he proposed, we all assembled the next day ; and at three o'clock A.M. left the said Coley Muttoor : and passing Durmapoory, on the road to Trichinopoly, we arrived at a choultry situated near a village called Deevettyputty, in the Talook of Salem. The day before we arrived, Mahommed Khan, his son Hossein Khan, both of whom are now before the Court, and Causeeram, Chengooram, Mancram, Parasooram, Lutcheram, and five or six persons whose names I do not recollect, and who are not present, came and halted at that choultry : afterwards, Fakeer Mahommed asked the said Hossein Khan where he had been, and what he had procured ? To which he answered, ' We killed two *Committies* near a village called Vaurahamullah, in the country of Madura ; and have brought 300 Sauvara Causooloo (or pure gold coin) ' :—this I heard.

" The two gangs of Phansigars remained together there that night ; and after lamp-light, a Brahmin, with some things upon a white horse, came to the choultry, on his way from Seringapatam to Trichinopoly. The said Hossein Khan, Nerrabayeloo, and Fakeer Mahommed, advised him to halt ; as we also were all going to Trichinopoly, and would accompany him in the morning : to which he consented, and halted there. During the night,

Hossein



Hossein Khan, Fakeer Mahommed, and Chingooram, killed the Brahmin; and took the horse, twenty star-pagodas, and sundry other articles found upon him: and the two gangs having divided the property, gave me one rupee, telling me it was on account of my wages. Afterwards, two or three persons (whose names I do not recollect) of Mahommed Khan's gang took the corpse, and went away, saying they would bury it in the inner part of a tank situated near Deevettyputty. After their departure, I went to sleep; and, the next morning, these three persons told me that they had disposed of the body, as proposed, in the tank: after which, Mahommed Khan's gang went away, saying they were going to Nerrabayeloo.

“ We set out from thence: and proceeding on the road to Namacull, with the intention of going to Trichinopoly, halted in a choultry near a little village situated about four or six miles distant, on the other side of Namacull; where another gang of Phansigars, consisting of Cala Emaum, Harala, and Hossein, who are now before the Court, and Allem Khan, Esmall Khan, Vencataramdoo, and three persons whose names I do not recollect, and who are not present, joined us. Fakeer Mahommed asked the said Cala Emaum, what country he had visited, and what he had procured? He answered, ‘ We have been towards Madura, and procured nothing.’ Fakeer Mahommed said, ‘ We are going towards



towards Trichinopoly; come with us;' to which Cala Emaum, and the other persons attached to him, consented: and we remained there that day. The next morning, three Canara people came to the place, and Cala Emaum inquired their destination. They said they were coming from Madwarow Tuh-seeldar of Bangalore, for the purpose of going to Caroor Caungayem. We proceeded with them about eight miles to the other side of Namacull; but as we had not an opportunity of strangling them within that distance, we returned again, and halted in a choultry situated near a tank near Namacull, and remained there three days. The three Canara people returned by the same road; and we saw, and followed them. They stopt in a choultry situated round a church of Mauree Annah, in the village of Taurooputty; and we went to them, and told them that we also were going to Bangalore; and all lodged together, on very friendly terms.

“A minute afterwards, two Sepoys, one of them a Moor, and the other of the Balja caste, came and lodged in the same choultry, on their way from Hydrabad to Auttumputty. The Canara people, Sepoys, and ourselves, remained there that night: and at three o'clock in the morning, Cala Emaum and Harala Hossein, who are now before the Court, and Allem Khan, Sahib Khan, Condacara Futteh, and three others whose names I do not recollect,
and



and myself, got up and awoke the Sepoys, telling them we were going to Auttumpatty, and asked them to go. They accordingly set out with us; and proceeded as far as a dry water-course near a Buttee garden, in the neighbourhood of that village; where we stopt, and proposed smoking our hookas; to which they agreed. Shortly afterwards we strangled them, and took cloths, three gold rings, and twenty star-pagodas in ready cash found upon them; and having buried them in a dry water-course, we returned to the remainder of our people, who were in the choultry at Mauree Annah near Tauroopatty. When we were about to set out from thence, the three Canara people left that place; and we followed, joined them, and went as far as the inner part of a lake near Agraharum, which is situated between Taroopatty and Deevettyputty; where we strangled them, and took four or five seers of turmerick, five or six rupees, and clothes; and tying the bodies as bundles in blankets, we carried them to a Hanomuntaroy's church in a jungle, near Tapoor Canama (or Pass), where we buried them.

“ From thence we went to a little village on this side of Andavund Cottah, and halted; when Cala Emaum, and Harala Hossein, who are now before the Court, and Allum Khan, Sahib Khan, Esmall Khan, Vencataramdoo, and three others whose names I do not recollect, took their shares,
and



went away; saying they were going to their village, Gootacul.

“ From thence we went to Eradoo; and from thence along the road leading to Satteamungalum; when three Baljavars, with 100 rupees, who were proceeding from Seringapatam to Trichinopoly, came up: we joined, and went with them as far as a dry water-course near Chiuna Mala; where we strangled them, took the 100 rupees, clothes, and a bullock, found upon them, and buried the bodies in the water-course.

“ We then returned towards Eradoo; and arrived at a choultry in a tope on the side of the village of Chittadoo, where we remained three days. On the evening of the third day, two Baneyan merchants and silver-belted peons came and halted in the choultry, on their way from Bavanegoodul to Coimbatour, and remained there that night. The next morning they set out; and we proposed accompanying them to Coimbatour, for the purpose of purchasing cloths. After proceeding a short distance, we came to a dry water-course; where we strangled them, and took Veeraroy faniams amounting to about star-pagodas 2500, some cloths, &c., and the silver belts; burying the bodies in the dry water-course. Setting out from thence, we arrived at Baljarputty, where they divided the residue of the property; and Fakeer Mahomed paid me the wages which were due to me.

“ Afterwards,



“ Afterwards, all the persons, except myself, went away to their respective villages. I remained in the house of Esmall at Deevettyputty, for a period of two months. Mullock Khan, and Futteh Khan, who are now before the Court, and Essool Khan, and Sahib Khan, who are not present, came to Deevettyputty, where I was. I asked them where they had been? They said, ‘We have been to Trichinopoly, and procured property by Phansi-garee: we are now returning to our village, Nerrabayeloo: come with us to your village.’

“ We then set out in company: and coming near a tamarind tope and well in the jungle near Tapoor Canama or Pass, saw a Brahmin sitting; whom we killed, and buried in an old well near that place: we found on him, tumballs, cloths, and eight rupees in ready cash, which we divided: and from thence proceeded as far as Durmapoory; from whence Mullock Khan, and others who were with me, went to their village. And when I was returning, by the road leading to my village, I saw Sahib Khan, Esmall Khan, Munja and his wife, in all four persons, of Bada Baljurputtoo, coming near Chinna Baljurputtoo; and I asked them whence they were coming. They answered: ‘We have been to Royacottah: returning from thence, we met a Brahmin of Benares, carrying a Cauvedee to Ramaswarum; whom we killed, and found upon him 380 aushrafee (gold coins), which we took; and are
now



now going to our village.' They went away to their village accordingly.

"The persons who used to go with the gang of Nerrabayeloo are about twenty in number, living in villages of Podala, Podakaners, Hoppene, and Gollaputty, in the district of Combom.

"Besides those Phansigars who are now before the Court, I can seize many others; and produce them in the Court, with proofs.

"The wife of Fakeer Mahommed of Nerrabayeloo, who is not present, told me, that her husband, and some others of that village, killed three Sowcar's people in the road leading from Conjeve-ram, Pondicherry; and brought Pauvele, or new double pagodas, of seven rupees value each.

"About three years ago, a person named Fakeer Naeckoodoo seized Modeen, who is now present, Akemen Khan, who is dead, Azza Khan, Emaum Cawn, Sheikh Emaum, and Mahommed Hossein, who are now in confinement in the jail of the Court of Cuddapah, and about ten other persons whose names I do not recollect, and myself, and carried us to the Court of Codecondat. In the mean time, as that Court was abolished, and included in the Zillah Court of Cuddapah, we were sent to that Court; and when we were examined, as we did not declare the truth respecting our having been concerned in the Phansi trade, some of us were released.

"About



“About twenty days ago, when I went to Gotta-paliam for the purpose of discovering Phansigars, I heard that the gang of Daudavala, Bada Khan, and others of that village, had gone towards Bellary, by way of Cuddapah, for the purpose of Phansigaree.

“And I also heard that part of a gang of Phansigars of Nerrabayeloo had gone towards Bunder, or Masulipatam, for the same purpose.”

The above deposition is dated February 1814. At the same period, the following declaration was made by a youth named Yerrogaudoo. He appears to have been thrown in the way of the Thugs, by one of those terrible instances of famine not uncommon in India: but, judging from his narrative, neither the novelty nor the atrocity of his employment made much impression upon him.

“When my mother and father died, during the famine which occurred about four years ago, I went, in search of a livelihood, to a village called Nerrabayeloo, in the Talook of Goorumcondah, attached to the zillah of Cuddapah; and lodged, during the night, at the house of a pot-maker named Moosalanah. The next morning, Mahommed Khan (of Nerrabayeloo), who is now before the Court, saw and asked me who I was, and from whence I came. I told him how I was situated, and that I came there in search of employ; and he promised me
clothes



clothes and maintenance. I accordingly remained with him, and worked as he directed me.

“ Some time after, Mahommed Khan, his son Hossein Khan, Sheikh Hussen, Sheikh Hossein, Sheikh Futteh, Sheikhjee, his son Goodooboy, Yacoob, Sied Emaum, his elder brother Sied Modeen, Ullah Buksh, and Madar, who are now before the Court, and Aub Khan, Sahib Khan, Emaum Sahib, and some other persons, about seven in number (whose names I do not recollect), and who are now run away, of the village of Nerrabayeloo, assembled, with the intention of going to the Tauteputree country.

“ Mahommed Khan desired me to go also ; and, as I was employed in his house, I took a package with him. We all set out from Nerrabayeloo ; and were going along the road leading to Tauteputree, when we met a palanquin-boy in the road, whom Mahommed Khan questioned as to where he was going : to which the boy replied, ‘ I came with a gentleman’s palanquin ; but being seized with fever, and unable to walk, I am going slowly towards Gottee, in the hope of meeting the gentleman there.’ Mahommed Khan said he would go also : so we all set out, and arrived at a river’s side, situated near Tauteputree ; where they killed the palanquin-boy, and took three rupees, cloths, &c. found upon him, and threw the body into the river. We all went from thence to the town of Tauteputree ; and
were



were proceeding from thence along the road leading to Cuddapah, when we saw a Moorman with a bullock, who was going along the road near a village called Padatoor. We went with him a short distance, and they killed him by Phansee (strangling); and, taking the bullock, one rupee, and clothes found upon him, buried the body in a dry water-course, which was near.

“ We then left the Cuddapah road, and went along the road leading to Bundur (or Masulipattam); when we were joined by about ten persons who were concerned with another gang of Phansigars. Shortly afterwards we saw two Rajpoots, near a village called Paretaul, who were going to Bundur, from Hyderabad. From thence, the two gangs of Phansigars accompanied them as far as a village called Ebrampetten; where they killed them by Phansee, and took a large red mare, twenty or thirty pieces of cloth, four pagodas, 100 rupees in ready cash, two silver finger-rings, two swords, two firelocks, four chemboos, one tambalum, and two tapalies: the bodies were buried in a river which was near. Of these things, one sword and one tambalum are now before the Court: the other things were proportionably divided between the two gangs of Phansigars. We all went from thence to Rajamundry, and arrived at a choultry and a tank (about four miles) on this side of Bundur, where two Gollars and one Moorman had halted: we

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went



went to them, and from thence proceeded together as far as the sea-side, when they killed them by Phansee, and took 1000 rupees found upon the Gollars, 100 rupees found upon the Moorman, and ten or twenty pieces of jacket-cloths; and buried the bodies in a hole. The pieces of jacket-cloths were tied in this square wax-cloth, now before the Court. As the village at which the Gollars and Moorman were expected to arrive is but one day's march from the village which they had left, fearing that a search would be instituted by their relations, we left that road without going to Bundur.

“After this, all, except myself, went towards the Hydrabad country; but Mahommed Khan told me to go back to the village. I accordingly returned to the village of Nerrabayeloo, and remained there for one month; at which time a person named Emaum, who is not present, prepared to go off, with the intention of joining Mahommed Khan and his gang: and Mahommed Khan's wife asked me to go with Emaum, for the purpose of dressing her husband's victuals.

“I accordingly went with him, and joined Mahommed Khan near a village called Pedoogooraloo, situated in the road leading from Bundur to Madras. Where they went, or what they procured by Phansee, after I left them, I know not.—From thence we all went towards Madras; and fell in with three Mogulvalloos (or Moormen), who were going to
Madras



Madras with cloths, &c. from Hyderabad. We went with them a short distance, and then killed them by Phansee. Some valuable white cloths, one keenkhaub jule, a bed, a large horse, and about 100 savnaraesaloo (or pure gold cashes) were found upon them; these we took; and buried the bodies in a dry water-course. Of those things, the keenkhaub jule is now present in the Court.

“After this, Sied Emaum, and his elder brother, Sied Modeen, took five or six men out of those who are now before the Court, whose names I do not recollect, and went towards Bundur. I remained with Mahommed Khan and others, at a village situated near the place where the Mogul-valloos were killed; and at this place the other gang separated from us, having first received their just share of the stolen property.

“A few days after this, Sied Emaum and others returned; when I heard Sied Emaum tell Mahomed Khan, that they had killed a Mogul-man near Hyderabad, and obtained Mahataubee topies, a white horse, and ten rupees found upon the boy. Of those things, that white horse, and two Mahataubee topies or caps, are now present in the Court.

“After this, Sied Emaum and ourselves assembled, and went from thence towards Madras: and, on the road to Madras, we saw a Baljavur man with a horse, one servant, and two Brahmins, who were going from Madras to Hyderabad: this was about



one day's march from Pedoogooralloo : they killed them by Phansee, buried them in a dry water-course near that place, and took two jamakanahs, one black horse, five jumballs, one coosoomba or red turban, one patunchoo dovatee or cloth, one patunchoo red cloth, one patunchoo black cloth or sie cloths, 100 Hyderabad rupees, and one wooden box. I was present when all those things were taken ; of which the two jamakanahs, and one patunchoo cloth, are now before the Court : I know their description.

“ We afterwards went and remained at Madras one night ; and were going to Pondicherry, whither three persons, belonging to a Sowcar, were conveying Pauvele (new double) pagodas in two purses, and passing near a choultry situated upon a sea-cauree's (salt-river's) side between Madras and Pondicherry ; where the gang killed them by Phansee, and took the pagodas and cloths, &c., found upon them, and buried the bodies on the spot.

“ About six months ago we returned to the said village of Nerrabayeloo. Besides those things which were divided before, they divided, in the said Mahommed Khan's house, all the other cloths, horses, and ready cash, &c., which were procured by killing persons by Phansee ; but did not give me any share.

“ When they were dividing the property, two Pauvele pagodas fell down ; which I took up, and gave into the hands of Coommara, or Polmaker
Moosalenna



Moosalenna of Nerrabayeloo, with the intention of giving them into the hands of my elder brother.

“ I will point out, as far as I am able, the things which are deposited with such and such persons, by these persons now before the Court ; but I do not recollect the names of the persons who keep the things.

“ Subsequently, Goodooboy and Madar, who are now before the Court, Mahommed Khan's son-in-law, Laul Khan, and six persons whose names I do not recollect, and who are not present, assembled, and prepared for a strangling expedition. This was about a month ago ; when Mahommed Khan told me to take and carry the package of the said Madar : and having taken the package, we all left Nerrabayeloo, and went, by way of Channel Ghaut, a little distance eastward ; from whence Madar and Goodooboy returned, the omens not being favourable. I also returned with them. The other persons proceeded with the intention of going to the Pondicherry country, by way of Arcot. When we were returning towards Nerrabayeloo, Emaum Naick, the Thanadar, seized us in Naugapulla Channel Ghaut, and asked us to point out the Phansigars ; to which I, and Gadamanepully Madar Sahib, who is now before the Court, consented ; and pointed out the Phansigars who are now brought to the Court : the others, about sixteen in number, ran away.

“ The



“ The Phansigars who joined us when we went in the Bundur road, as above mentioned, and those who were concerned with these gangs, are living in four villages called Padala, Patacanoor, Hebelly, and Gollaputty, in the Talook of Cambom, attached to the zillah of Cuddapah. They now and then used to join the said Mahommed Khan, his son Hossein Khan, and others, who are now before the Court, in their strangling expeditions; and divided the property thus procured. Their names are, Caudavala Hossein Sahib, Oonegagaudoo, his younger brother Emaum Sahib, Aub Khan, and about twenty persons whose names are unknown to me. I am ready to point out all those persons.

“ When some of the people of the Cambom gang joined us as aforesaid, I heard Oonegagaudoo tell Mahommed Khan and others, that ‘they had killed one Subahdar, one Jemadar, and one Havildar, and a dog which was with them, within one day’s march of Ellore, and took the bullock, cloths, and some ready cash found upon them; and that news of these murders having spread, a search has been instituted for the murderers.’ They therefore advised us not to visit that part of the country.”

The same witness subsequently made a second Declaration, to the following effect :—

“ Four persons were passing near Paretaul in
the



the road to Ebrampetten, on their way from Rajamundry to Golocondah, when the Phansigars strangled, and buried them in a dry water-course which was near; and took some doodies, and dooganies, and cloths, found upon the bodies.

“ Two Committies and one Moorman were passing a village called Nagaracul, on their way from Madras to Hyderabad; when the Phansigars followed them a little distance, to a dry water-course situated between Nagaracul and a village called Huttaralagam; there killed them by Phanse, and buried them in the water-course. A black-and-white-coloured jamakanah, a silk paundam (a purse to keep betel-nuts in), two rupees in ready cash, two patunchoo (or silk-bordered) cloths worn by them, and one white cumbly, some tapalies, and chemboos (or pots), were found upon the bodies. Of those things, the black-and-white-coloured jamakanah is present in the Court.

“ A person was passing along the road about one mile on this side of Nagaracul, coming to Hyderabad: the Phansigars killed him; and took one Gungasagarum dhotie (a sort of cloth), one pistol, twenty rupees in ready cash, and two black cumblies, found upon him; and buried the body in a dry water-course which was near. Of those articles, one fine black cumbly is present in the Court: the pistol is at Nerrabayeloo, in the house of Ya-coob, who is now present.

“ I forgot



“ I forgot to mention these circumstances in my first Declaration.

“ The white bullock which was found with a Moorman who was killed near Touteputree is now at Nerrabayeloo, in the house of Mahommed Khan, who is now before the Court.

“ It is customary for the Phansigars to pretend friendship for travellers, and, going with them a short distance, to strangle them with their dhoties. When the cloth is thrown round the neck, the travellers are seized by their legs. Their dead bodies are cut open, and the limbs divided, to prevent their swelling, and emitting a smell through the crevices formed in the ground. This smell would attract jackals; and they would dig down upon the bodies, which would thereby be discovered. It is also the custom of the Phansigars to select a man especially to cut the corpse so, and to give him an additional share of the plundered property.

“ The red horse with a white spot in the face, found upon two Rajpoot men who were killed near Ebrampetten, is a mare; and she is now present in Court.

“ The said Mahommed Khan's cultivating servant, named Nullo Hossein, who is now living at Nerrabayeloo, was with the gang of Phansigars with whom I went. I forgot to mention his name in the first Declaration given by me.

“ It is the custom of Phansigars to shew signs
by



by the hands, and speak *bundoocuttoo mautiloo* ('words unknown by any others'): for instance, if the hand is put upon the whiskers, the meaning is, 'Be courageous; do not fear: you must not reveal: I shall not.' The meaning of the word *aukada* is 'one thousand.'

"I said before, that when the gang of Phansigars went a second time, Goodooboy and Madar Sahib left them, and returned to their village, in consequence of an *apascoonum* (bad omen); these omens were, a black crow sitting upon a dead tree, and, without making the usual noise with his nose, called '*keer*'; and Goodooboy's turban touched the branch of a tree, and fell off. If they had paid no attention to these two omens, they supposed, that though they might escape in one place, they would lose their lives in some others. I heard them when they were conversing in this manner.

"The horse which was found upon three Mogulmen, who were killed at a place four days' march from Madras, is of a red colour, a male; and is with one of the gang of Phansigars, named Oonegagaudoo, in Padala villages attached to the district of Cambom.

"A Yagoyepareetum (or holy string) was worn by one of those persons killed between Madras and Pondicherry.

"The black horse which was found upon the
Balja-



Baljavur men who were killed near Pedoogooraloo was a mare, and had a colt ; and as soon as they were brought to a village called Madataroovoo, they ate *moste aukoaloo* (poisoned leaves), and died.

“ It is the custom of the Phansigars, before they march, in order to ascertain whether or not success will attend them, to keep the Vegraham, or the image with brass things, which are now before the Court ; and to worship a god named Anyee ; and to bring a sheep and wash it, and afterwards to kill it ; and to place the head before the god, and to place a lamp upon the head ; and to pray ; mentioning, at the same time, the names of the four quarters (east, north, south, and west) : and if the nose of that head tremble at the time when they mention the name of any quarter, they go in that direction ; and if it does not tremble, they do not go, at that time, any where.

“ I stated, that the Phansigars kill the people with dhoties which they wear on their hips : it is the custom of the Phansigars to keep dhoties, like the one now before the Court ; which was worn by Madar Sahib, who is now before the Court.

“ I do not recollect some places, nor do I exactly know other places, in which all the people murdered by the Phansigars, mentioned in my declarations, are buried ; but I am able to point out the places in which the four persons who were murdered near Paretaul, in the road to Ebram-
petten,