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EXPLANATION of a VIEW of the CITY OF CALCUTTA, exhibiting at the PANORAMA, LEICESTER SQUARE.



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DESCRIPTION
OF A
VIEW OF THE CITY
OF
CALCUTTA;

NOW EXHIBITING AT THE
PANORAMA, LEICESTER SQUARE.

PAINTED BY THE PROPRIETOR,
ROBERT BURFORD,
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PANORAMA, STRAND.

CALCUTTA.

THE metropolis, and seat of the supreme government of the British possessions in India, is situated in the province of Bengal, on the east bank of the Bhagarutty, or Hooghley river, at the distance of about one hundred miles from the sea. The site of the city, as well as the surrounding country to a great distance, is a perfect level of alluvial, marshy ground, which 150 years back was covered with stagnant pools, and thick jungle, infested by various wild animals. The banks of the river, from Fort William to the village of Cossipoor, a distance of six miles, now present to view one of the most magnificent and thickly populated cities in all India. Although the present Panorama embraces but a part of this great extent, yet it includes nearly the whole of the European division; and from the Esplanade, whence the View is taken, it appears equal in splendor to any city in Europe, the immense space so named being surrounded by magnificent buildings, which, from their vast size and palace-like appearance, command admiration, and present striking specimens of oriental luxury. Amongst the most prominent are Fort William, the palace of the governor, the bank, supreme court, and other public buildings; together with the princely dwellings of Chowringhee, erected in the Grecian style, and profusely ornamented with colonnades, verandahs, &c.; entirely hiding, by their superior height, the bamboo huts and mud dwellings of the more northern part, or Black Town. Towards the west a considerable opening discloses the river, at this part about a mile and a quarter broad, covered with vessels of various nations, intermixed with the budgerows, pancheways, bholios, and other gay and singularly formed boats of the country. Beyond the city, on every side, as far as the eye can reach, is an immense extent of beautiful and fertile country, intersected by numerous artificial and natural canals, tanks, &c.; interspersed with thickly populated villages, surrounded by orchards and gardens, enclosed with hedges of aloes and pineapple, vast plantations of rice, bamboo, tamarind, plantain, cocoa, jack, &c.; presenting every possible variety of the most luxuriant and beautiful foliage: there not being the slightest elevation for miles, it is to this combination of wood and water, and to the majestic growth and richness of the vegetable creation, that Calcutta owes its principal beauty; the whole illumined by a flood of dazzling light from a blue and cloudless sky, forms a scene scarcely to be exceeded by the brilliant conceptions of the most vivid imagination.

The British, as well as other European nations, had factories established in Bengal as early as the sixteenth century; but it was not until

the year 1690 that Mr. Job Charnock, the Company's agent, obtained permission, from the Mogul, to erect one at the village of Caly Cutta, (so called from its containing a temple dedicated to the Hindoo goddess Caly;) which may be considered the first step to the establishment of their present very extensive empire in Hindoostan. Six years subsequent, during the rebellion of Soubah Sing, the "Old Fort" was erected; and, in 1698, the Prince Azeen Ooshan granted the Company a perpetual lease of Calycutta and the adjoining villages of Chuttanhutty, and Gobindpoor; about which time, the factory was dignified with the name of Fort William, in honour of his majesty William III. In 1756, the Soubah of Bengal, Surajah Dowla, in revenge for the imprisonment of an Indian merchant, or rather attracted by the supposed riches of the inhabitants, attacked the factory with an immense army. On his approach Governor Drake abandoned the fort; but it was maintained for some time by Mr. Howell, several merchants, and a small garrison: being forced at last to surrender, they were all, to the amount of 146 persons, male and female, crammed at dusk into a small prison, called the Black Hole, a room eighteen feet square, having only two very small windows for the admission of air; after passing a night of horrible and unparalleled suffering, when the door was opened at six in the morning, twenty-three only of that number remained alive. The following year the fort was retaken by Admiral Watson and Colonel Clive; the victory of Plassy followed; the inhuman Soubah was put to death, and the inhabitants indemnified their losses. Since this period, the British have gradually obtained an immense extent of territory; the city has kept pace with their successes, and has now become a capital worthy so magnificent an empire.

The extreme length of the city is six miles; the breadth in most parts is inconsiderable, but in some, approaches nearly to two: it contains three churches of the established religion, one of which is the cathedral, also a Scotch church, a meeting house, two Portuguese, a Greek, and an Armenian church, several small and pretty mosques, and many pagodas, none of which latter are very striking. The public buildings generally display great architectural beauty, and although wholly of brick, (there not being stone of any kind found in this part of India,) have the appearance of Portland stone, being covered with a shell cement of particular hardness, called chumam. In the European division the streets are wide, regular, and well formed of pukka or pounded brick; and the houses, on a large scale, stand isolated in a considerable space of ground, the entrance being by magnificent flights of steps under projecting porticoes: in the interior, the rooms are of large dimensions, the principal suite often consisting of ten in number, well calculated to display the luxury of the proprietor, and to ensure that greatest of all blessings in a hot climate, a free circulation of air. The walls are plain, without either paper or cornice, nor have they ceilings, that the depredations of that most destructive of all insects, the white ant, may be seen and prevented; no hangings are seen, but the musquito curtains to the beds; the necessary furniture is plain, the ornamental consists of splendid mirrors and cut-glass chandeliers, large punkahs, or fans of coloured cotton, are suspended from the roofs, by which the air is gently agitated, and the windows and many of the doors are furnished with shillmills, or large Venetian blinds; in the hottest weather, tatties or mats, formed of kuskos, a sweet-scented grass, are set before

them on the side the wind blows, which are constantly kept wet by a *bihisitee*; birds fly in and out at pleasure, and cockroaches and other insects abound: no part of the buildings are below the surface of the ground, and the lowest floors are only used as offices or storerooms. The Black Town consists, like all Indian cities, of long, narrow, crooked, and dirty streets, with numerous tanks and pools of water; small huts of bamboo, covered with mats or mud, and thatched; a few brick bazars; and occasionally, a large gloomy-looking mansion of some wealthy baboo or squire: these houses are generally square, with an open court in the centre, surrounded by two or three galleries, according to the height; the upper apartments are appropriated to the females; and whole generations reside together, until their numbers become so great that the house will not contain them.

The number of inhabitants in Calcutta and its immediate environs, is estimated at 900,000; and taking a circuit of twenty miles round, at above two millions, a census taken in 1822 gives in round numbers (probably even at that time far short of the number,) as positive residents, 200,000, and persons daily occupied in the city, 100,000. The Europeans form about one sixteenth of the population, foreigners another sixteenth, and the Hindoo and Mahomedan natives the remainder. The public walks and streets exhibit at all times a striking and interesting mixture of European and Asiatic manners, equipage, dress, countenance, and figure; but, on the celebration of the *Poojabs* or festivals, particularly that of *Doorga*, in October, and the Mahomedan *Mohorum* which immediately follows, the *Esplauade* and other parts of the city present a scene difficult to describe, and certainly not to be equalled in the world: coaches, *phætons*, and buggies, of Europeans, intermixed with the palanquins, hackeries, *tonjons*, and other carriages of the natives, attended by a crowd of *Syces*, *Chauprassies*, *Ch'hatu* bearers, and other useless servants; military in their rich uniforms, Mahomedans in graceful and flowing costume, resplendent in all the gorgeous hues of China, and princely-looking Persians clothed in silk and brocade: forming a singular contrast with the white muslin *Doubgah* and *D'hotée* of the upper classes of the Hindoos, or the slight and active forms of an immense crowd of idlers, the only covering on whose black skins consists of the *Langally*, or cotton covering round their loins; processions in honour of the Deity, attended by bands of native musicians, playing on singularly formed instruments; wedding processions of young children in open palanquins, shining in crowns and jewels, and shaded by immense umbrellas, covered with talk and foil; dervises and fakirs undergoing severe self-imposed tortures; jugglers performing extraordinary feats of skill; groups of natives, from the villages, with the produce of their orchards and gardens; others smoking the *hooka* with the most imperturbable gravity; in fact, the whole male population appear, on these occasions, to leave their dwellings with one consent to mix in the busy throng.

No. 3.—*Bank of Bengal.*

Established in 1808, with a capital of fifty lacks of rupees, ten of which were subscribed by the government, and the remainder by individuals: the building is handsome, and the interior well adapted for business.

4.—*Supreme Court.*

A building of a very massive description, with an enormous colonnade, giving the whole a very heavy and graceless appearance. The jurisdiction of the three king's judges extends over all British subjects, but in respect to natives, is limited to those resident in Calcutta.

9.—*Cathedral.*

The church of St. John is a superb and regular building, having a circular range of well-proportioned pillars in front, of the Doric order, the cornice, architrave, &c. being ornamented in good taste, and surmounted by a handsome, but rather short, spire. The interior is particularly neat and elegant, paved with marble and furnished with large cut-glass chandeliers, the gift of a Mr. M'Clintock; on one side of the chancel are seats for the governor general and his family; on the opposite, others, for the bishop and archdeacons. At Christmas and Easter, on the Sacrament being administered, it is customary to make large donations, which, under the direction of the gentlemen of the vestry, is distributed, with great judgment, to distressed Europeans. Calcutta was erected into a see in 1814. The bishop, assisted by three archdeacons, has the direction of all the ecclesiastical affairs of India, the rest of the clergy are chaplains attached to the military.

10.—*Town Hall.*

A very regular and elegant building, erected from the proceeds of the government lotteries; the front is adorned with a fine portico, the columns composing which, are, however, frequently found fault with, for being larger than those of most of the neighbouring buildings; the rooms are elegant and spacious, but scarcely sufficiently so for the climate; the upper apartment, or ball room, is ornamented with a double row of chunamed pillars; at one end is a magnificent throne for the governor general, at the other, the orchestra, with seats below for the directors, &c. On the basement floor is a fine statue of Lord Cornwallis, by Bacon, supported by figures of Temperance and Fortitude; there are, also, several fine portraits of governors, generals, &c. in the building.

11.—*Treasury.*

A very handsome building; used for transacting all business connected with the government, previous to the erection of the new palace: the house adjoining, formerly occupied by the Marquis of Wellesley, was connected with it by a kind of bridge, or covered gallery.

13.—*Palace of the Governor.*

A very noble building of brick chunamed, and coloured, erected by the marquis of Wellesley: it is of the Ionic order, of three stories, the lowest being a rustic basement formed into arcades. The principal entrance, by a handsome flight of steps under a magnificent portico, is towards the north; to the south is a circular colonnade, surmounted by a dome: from the angles of the centre project four wings, connected by circular galleries, so constructed as to catch the wind from whichever quarter it blows; the north-west wing contains the council chamber; the other three are appropriated to the use of the governor general, being superbly furnished, and adorned with many fine pictures: the whole centre of the building is divided into two noble apartments, that below, called the Marble hall, or state dining-room, is singularly beautiful, being divided up the centre by a double row of Doric columns, of Madras chunam, equal in appearance to Parian marble, and paved with fine dark gray marble from China; the ceiling, painted by Creuse, in imitation of basso-relievo, has suffered severely from the ravages of the white ant; the ball room, above, is floored with dark polished wood, adorned with Ionic columns of white chunam, and a painted ceiling, from which are suspended a profusion of fine glass chandeliers. Seated on his magnificent throne at one extremity of this room, the governor general holds his Durbars, or levies of state, a most splendid and interesting ceremony, at which the principal inhabitants of Calcutta, rajahs from various states, vakeels from the Indian princes, travellers, foreigners of rank, &c. attend; when it is customary to present each according to his rank, with a present: to the highest, jewels of value; and Khelâts, or

robes of state ; to those of inferior station, attar of roses, and pawn, a composition formed of the Areca nut, powdered with lime, and wrapped in the leaf of the Betel, chewed by both male and female all over India. The palace stands in the centre of an extensive lawn, and is approached by gateways, much admired for the elegance of their structure.

22.—*Course.*

The road leading from the governor's palace to that crossing from Chowringhee : it is very broad and well paved with Pucka, and kept well watered ; in the cool of the evening it is frequented by all the fashionables of Calcutta, in carriages or on horseback ; in fact, it is their Hyde Park.

24.—*Theatre.*

A well constructed building, suited in every respect to the climate, being very lofty, and exceedingly well ventilated : the accommodation for the audience consists of a pit and a semicircle of boxes, rising one above the other from the front of the stage, the governor general's box being in the centre ; the principal characters are generally sustained by amateurs ; the prices of admission are very high, and the house not remarkably well attended ; nearly adjoining stands the Fives court.

25.—*Sepoys.*

The most numerous, effective, and best disciplined black troops in the world ; they consist of Mahomedans, Raja-poots, Hindoos, Pariahs, &c. : the whole organized, in every respect, as the army of Great Britain, by whom they are scarcely surpassed in the regularity and precision of their evolutions ; they are divided into battalions, each of eight companies, commanded by a British subaltern, under whom are two native commissioned officers, a subidar and a jemindar, and native non-commissioned officers, answering in rank to sergeants and corporals, called havildars and naigues ; the staff, sercant major, drill sergeant, &c., are British ; the uniform is a red jacket, of European fashion, with facings of yellow, and a blue cap, broad and round at the top, the remainder of the dress is Indian, an under jacket of linen, and very short white linen drawers ; they are much respected by the natives generally, are on the best terms with the British troops when called upon to serve with them, and are sincerely attached to their officers and the government. Col. Fitz-clarence, who had much opportunity of observing their conduct during the Pindaree campaign of 1817, speaks in the highest possible terms of their bravery, discipline, steadiness, and the patient endurance of the privations enforced by their religion ; and remarks that, "the finest picked corps of the European sovereigns would not, by the side of the Bengal battalions, appear in size, weight of men, or military respectability, superior to them."

27.—*Palanquin.*

The palanquin or palki, is a frame of wood about six feet in length, half as broad, and so high that a person may either sit upright in it or recline at full length on the mattress and pillows with which it is furnished ; some have windows and a sliding door, others are adorned with a canopy of silk, velvet, or cotton, with fringes, tassels, &c., the whole is fixed in the centre of a long bamboo, borne on the shoulders of four strong bearers. These machines are to be hired at all times, either for a short distance in the city, where they are very generally used, or for journeys ; the number of bearers is then increased to nine, who wear scarcely any clothing, travel at a great rate, often accompanying their movements by a wild native air, and are a most cheerful and happy set of men. The present palanquin contains a person of some consideration, who is attended by his chobdar or macebearer, a useless but indispensable servant, kept for state, who is always furnished with a gorgeous livery, profusely embroidered with gold, and a massive and curiously chased silver staff, his badge of office ; and by a suntoo burdar ; one or two of whom, according to the rank of the party, with rich dresses and short crooked silver maces carried on the shoulder, always precede the palanquin. The number of servants kept by a person of any consequence is astonishing : a civilian with a family, will often have near two hundred, with wages varying from 10 to 100 shillings per month, on which they board themselves ; every room in the house is filled with them, yet, if the master happens to want any thing in the department of one who is absent, he must wait on himself, for no one will perform a second office ; they wear nothing on the feet, and never remove the turban to a superior : of the number, are the khausanmann or steward, the barburdar or account-keeper, the sherabdar or butler, the khidmutgar or waiter, the anbdar or wine cooler, the bewurchee or cook, the hooka burdar for the pipes, the hircarrah or messenger, peons and chauprassies or running-footmen, syces or grooms,

mussalgies to attend at night, the durwan or porter, the ch'hata wala or umbrella carrier, the durzee, both tailor and mantua-maker, and a crowd of mehters or sweepers, and punkah pullers; the females are the ayahs, nurses or waiting-maids, and metronnis or understrappers.

28.—*Hackery.*

The native hackeries are clumsy and disagreeable vehicles, built to hold one or more persons, and having a sort of canopy of coloured cotton; they are sometimes drawn by one horse but more generally by two small bullocks yoked wide apart; the driver frequently stands erect on the fore part of the vehicle. The bullocks of Bengal are a species of the bison, inferior in size and strength to the buffalo; they have a peculiarly formed and rather handsome hump between the shoulders, large falling dewlaps, and clean and sinewy limbs; they are active and strong, both for draught and carriage. The buffalo is equally useful, but not so gentle or handsome; they are of a dirty mouse colour, with very little hair, and large horns, which lie back on the neck, the head being always carried horizontally. The milk and ghee is used by the natives both of the buffalo and cow.

30.—*Tents, &c.*

Within the tents, a party of Europeans are taking their evening repast, attended and served by their khidmutgars; the duty of these is confined to waiting at table; and a person of any consequence never has less than two or three: when his master dines out he always attends, otherwise he would fare badly, for no other khidmutgar would conceive it to be his business to wait upon him; their wages are about seven rupees (16s. 4d.) per month, out of which they frequently find their own livery, consisting of a tunic of cloth handsomely laced, reaching nearly to the ankles, wide plain or printed cotton trowsers, and a cloth turban bearing the crest of their master; they are generally Mahomedans. Near the tents are the bewarees or cooks, preparing the meal. The tents are European, but there is a kind of tent used frequently for these parties, called the sunmiuiana, being simply a flat covering of chintz, supported by poles and stretched by cords.

31.—*The Hookha Burdar.*

A servant of considerable importance, whose sole duty is to attend with the hookha wherever his master breakfasts, dines, or sups; and to see that this necessary luxury is always in order; his dress is splendid, similar to that of the khidmutgar, and his wages about five or six rupees per month. The hookha is too well known to need description, the bell is usually made of glass or silver, richly chased, and the snake of great length: when called for, it is placed on a rich Persian carpet or skin, some paces behind the smoker; and the tobacco, previously prepared and mixed with spices and odoriferous drugs, being put into the chillum, is covered with fireballs; the smoke, passing through rosewater, is cool and agreeable, and its fragrance much admired by ladies: it is considered a great offence for a servant to step over the snake.

32.—*A Bihishtee.*

A bihishtee or water carrier, who supplies houses with water, waters the tatties, &c.: they are a very numerous body of Hindoos, and invariably dress in deep red cotton cloth, with a turban of the same colour; the mushk, for the panee or water, is slung at his back, it is formed of the skin of the goat, and has a small orifice at one end, from which the water is poured into earthenware bottles, called goglets, to cool, or over the heads of persons desirous of a shower bath on a hot day: a vast number of bihishtees are attached to the army when on service, and are entitled to a share of prize-money, the water is then carried in pacaulies, made of the whole hide of a bullock, two of which are slung across a bullock, or buffalo.

33.—*Sipahees.*

Native troopers, now seldom seen in Calcutta, except in the train of some native prince. The sipahees or sepoy are derived from the Persian spahis.

34.—*A Dhobee or Washerman.*

The women of India never perform the operation of washing their garments, excepting by their not removing them (which is generally the case) whilst bathing; every small village has, therefore, a dhobee, who performs that office, which is hereditary in his family: the linen is carried to the banks of a running stream or margin of a lake, where, after being immersed in the water, it is violently beaten against flat stones, or pieces of timber; this operation soon destroys the manufactures of Europe, but does not injure the Indian cotton.

35.—*Swinging.*

On festivals, it is customary for fakirs or others, to exhibit their devotion by being swung in the air, in the manner exhibited; the upright bamboo is about 20 feet in height, the crosspiece turning in a swivel about 30 feet in length, the rope at one end being furnished with a large iron hook, which, after a few prayers, is thrust, by a Bramin, under the shoulderblade or breast of the devotee, a sash being tied round his body in case the flesh tears away; the people at the opposite end then haul down the bamboo and run round as fast as they can, by which he is thrown out to the full length of the rope, nearly horizontal, where he plays a thousand antics, remaining in the air half an hour, tom toms, kholes, &c. being beaten the while: a preparation of four days is necessary previous to undergoing this ceremony; on the first and third, they abstain from all food; on the other two, eat fruit only, and parade the city, fantastically dressed, with iron rods thrust through their faces, arms, or sides, preceded by music, &c.

37.—*Group of Dancers.*

The baulucks or dancing boys are the only dancers who exhibit in the open air (the nautch or dancing girls exhibit only in dwellings), they are fantastically dressed, their exhibitions being generally pantomimic; they are attended by a small band of Mahomedans, one of whom is playing on the tumboora, a kind of large guitar with three strings made of gut; it produces an agreeable sound, and is much used amongst the higher classes, who sing to it: another plays the pennauk or been; this singular instrument is formed of the shell of a large gourd about fourteen inches in diameter, and half the shell of a smaller, joined by an iron wire; it has seven strings, five brass and two steel; it is played as a guitar, and is capable of great execution, the music is soft and pleasing: on the opposite side is a native playing the tichora or small drum: to the right stands a daec or nurse.

38.—*A Tonjon.*

The tonjon is the body of a gig placed on a pole, and borne on the shoulders of four bearers, in the manner of a palanquin; it is much used by European females, and, having no head, it is constantly attended by a ch'hatta or umbrella bearer.

39.—*A Mohafa.*

This palanquin is used by native ladies only, frequently carrying two; it is made in the usual form, but entirely covered with cuswah or cotton cloth, ornamented round the top: a small opening on the side allows persons in the interior to look out without being seen: they are a very pleasant mode of conveyance, but when covered in, are very close.

40.—*Group of Natives.*

The most prominent figure in the present group is a gardener, or vender of fruit, an article with which the markets of Calcutta are abundantly supplied: during the months of December, January, and February, the fruits of Europe are to be had in great perfection; the remainder of the year, such only as are indigenous to the soil, such as mangos, plaintains, jacks, melons, pineapples, &c. This class of Hindoos are generally of the lowest caste; their dress is white cotton, with a yellow kupra. Near the gardener stands a brijhasi, a sort of guard or watchman employed by merchants; he is represented in his travelling costume, which is very picturesque. Near him, in yellow drapery, stands a b'haut, or flatterer, a most extraordinary tribe, whose profession is to spread favorable reports of, and to puff and flatter, those by whom they are employed; their dress does not differ much from the lower Hindoos, excepting that they wear a sword and creese. To the right, stands a Mahratta, who, in the distinction of castes, ranks but little above the pariah; and near him, a native of the Burman empire, who has no rank at all in the Hindoo distribution: the dress of the Burman is pretty; it consists of a jacket of cotton, and a piece of silk, or cotton plaid, wrapped tastefully round the loins; the hair, which is coarse and long, is twisted with a strip of white muslin into the form of a turban; the thighs are tattooed; and a hole through the ear serves to carry their segar. By the Burman, stands one of the common, but singularly formed, earthen or brass jars, called chattees. The two persons in blue are European coachmen, who are regarded as superior servants, their place being considered one of trust. To the left, stands a dood-h-wala or milkman, of the sonda caste, whose only covering is the cotton over the loins; he supplies milk, curds and whey, made by acids, butter and buttermilk, which he carries in earthen pots suspended from a bamboo across his shoulder; the surrounding crowd is composed of moonshees or teachers; baulbers or barbers, coolies or porters, dandies or boatmen, lascars, &c.

41.—*Adjutants.*

The *hurgila*, or adjutant, is a singularly-looking bird of the crane species: when full grown they stand six feet in height, and measure from twelve to fifteen feet from the extremity of the wings; the body and wings are of a dark slate colour, and the belly white; the head and breast are partially covered with long black hairs instead of feathers, which, with a large orange-coloured or purple bag pendent from the neck, sometimes a foot in length, gives them a very forbidding appearance: they visit Calcutta in vast numbers in March, and most of them depart in October, during which period they are extremely useful in clearing the streets of carrion and offal; they also destroy serpents and noxious reptiles: when not in quest of food, they remain perfectly still, frequenting the tops of buildings, &c., the governor's palace being their grand rendezvous; a penalty of fifty rupees is imposed for killing one.

42.—*Native Carts.*

The native carts are of very rude construction, but are well adapted to the general state of the roads in and about the city; they are generally drawn by two oxen, or buffaloes, yoked together, and guided by a bridle of rope passed through their nostrils.

43.—*Hindoo Procession.*

The religious processions of the Hindoos are generally composed of a band of the most noisy musical instruments, particularly various tom toms, or drums, such as the *d'hauk*, the *khura*, the *jugo jhumpa*, &c., gongs, sungs and tarys, trumpets, talans or cymbals, &c.; *tazias* or effigies of the idol, and models of various kinds, are also carried; accompanied by numbers of Brahmins, the first caste, who are forbidden all kinds of labour.

49.—*Prison of the Vizier Ally.*

The apartment in the fort in which this unfortunate man was confined for the murder of Mr. Cherry, was built to resemble an iron cage; he lingered in this place seventeen years, dying in 1817, at the age of thirty-six. The mother of the vizier, who was of very low caste, having been noticed at the time she was pregnant, by Asoph-nd Dowlah, nabob of Oude, an eccentric character, he sent her to his palace; and when her son was born, adopted him according to the Mahomedan law: when he died, the whole of his immense property descended to the vizier, who then became nabob. Having several times broken faith with the government, it was judged necessary that he should be removed; he was accordingly placed on a pension of 25,000*l.* sterling, per annum, and ordered to reside near the capital: during his journey thither, being invited by Mr. Cherry, the Company's resident at Benares, to breakfast, at a concerted signal his armed attendants rushed in, cut Mr. Cherry and his assistant Mr. Graham to pieces, and would probably have sacrificed all the Europeans on the station, but for the gallant defence made by a Mr. Davis with a hog spear, until the arrival of assistance; he then fled to the territory of a neighbouring prince, and was only given up to the government on a promise of his life being spared.

50.—*Garrison Church.*

A very handsome Gothic building dedicated to St. Peter, erected in 1825. It is adorned by a magnificent stained window by Collins, of the Strand.

51.—*Fort William,*

The citadel of Calcutta, is erected on the most scientific principles of military architecture and fortification; and is the largest, strongest, and most regular fort in India: it was commenced, by order of Lord Clive, immediately after the battle of Plassy in 1758; the engineer was Colonel Polier. The plan is an octagon, five of the sides being quite regular, the remaining three form a large salient angle, the faces of which enfilade the course of the river, the guns being capable of bearing with great effect on ships in every direction; on the land side, the glacis is so well constructed that the ramparts are not visible from the city, although the elevation of the whole is inconsiderable: there is no spot in its vicinity that can command it: the whole expense has been estimated at two millions sterling, and it would require at least 15,000 men, and 600 pieces of cannon, to defend it. The buildings in the interior, appropriated solely to military purposes, are handsome, and kept in excellent order; they consist of several ranges of convenient barracks, a gun foundry, and an arsenal, on an extensive scale, well supplied with all kinds of stores; over the six gateways are excellent quarters for the different commanders, and the open squares are covered with grass, intersected by rides and walks shaded by avenues of fine trees.

62.—*The Hooghley,*

The western channel of the Ganges, or Gunga, and the only one that is navigable for vessels of a large size, from the number of sandbanks continually shifting their situations: the navigation is difficult, and vessels drawing more than seventeen feet water, cannot ascend higher than Diamond Harbour, sixty miles below Calcutta; the bold and beautiful reach opposite the city, is called Garden Reach; above which, for many miles, the banks on both sides abound in villages, groves, plantations of rice and grain, &c. About 600 vessels of various descriptions arrive and depart annually, and an equal number sail up the river into the interior, giving employment to above 300,000 boatmen; the medium rate of the river is three miles per hour, but there frequently occurs a singular and sudden rise of the water, called the "Bore," an immense wave heading the springtide, and travelling at the rate of eighty miles per hour; it commences forty miles below Calcutta, and ranges along one bank crossing to the opposite at every considerable bend: the swell is prodigious, and causes an instantaneous rise of five feet. The Hooghley is the most sacred of all the branches of the Ganges, by having the most direct communication with the sea in a southern direction; its waters are frequently carried 2,000 miles by devotees to bathe the idols, and the banks are constantly lined by Hindoos performing their religious ceremonies, or bathing, which they do, male and female, indiscriminately together, retaining all their garments in the water; persons in a dying state are also brought down, that they may expire on the banks of the sacred stream, and frequently their last moments are embittered by having its mud forced down their throats. On the festival of Doorga (the goddess who has deified the Ganges, and who is supposed to live at the bottom,) images richly decorated, after being exposed in the houses of the rich for three days, are carried to the river and thrown in.

66.—*Chandpaul Ghaut.*

The principal landing-place in the city, for passengers and merchandise: to the right, a very handsome brick quay, two miles in length, has been constructed, against which vessels to 600 tons burden find secure moorings; to the left, as far as the fort, is a promenade shaded by fine trees, much frequented in the hottest season. A little after sunrise, Chandpaul Ghaut presents a busy and interesting scene, from the vast numbers of Hindoos at that time performing their devotions, consisting of ablutions, and touching various parts of the face with coloured earths; numerous Brahmins are also seen sitting under the trees, reading prayers, telling their beads, and receiving trifling marks of respect from the passers by; in the evening the river sparkles with innumerable small candles floated down the stream by pious devotees.

67.—*Saupareahs or Snake Dancers.*

The snakes used in this exhibition are the cobra de capello, hooded, or spectacle snake, called by the Indians, by whom they are much venerated, Naàg, or Nagao; they are from six to twelve feet in length, and are very beautiful; their bite is venomous, and generally fatal in three hours. The Indians, however, are supposed to possess a secret method of charming them; they are carried about in baskets, which are seen standing near. At the sound of a few notes from a kind of pipe, they erect themselves about half their height from the ground, expand their hood, and advance and retreat, accompanying the music by a graceful undulation of the body. When the music ceases they are immediately covered in their baskets. Dr. Forbes mentions an instance of one not being immediately covered, who darted at the throat of a female spectator, inflicting a wound which she survived only half an hour.

68.—*Group of Natives.*

The present group consists of various native tradesmen exposing their wares for sale; the most prominent is a morley, or flower seller: the cultivation of flowers affords subsistence to numbers in the surrounding villages, who flock into the city on festival days, and find a ready sale for their produce. To the left, is a native smoking the hookha in use amongst the lower classes, formed of the shell of the cocoa nut: reclining on the ground are two chonkee-dars, or foot-police; they are a most efficient body of men, ready at all times to render assistance when called for; they wear but few clothes, and are armed with a long cutlass, and round shield made of buffalo hide; they have regular guardhouses stationed at convenient distances: beside the government police, many individuals employ private armed watchmen, also called chonkee-dars: near them sits

a girl stringing flowers; these strings, or wreaths of gaudy flowers, are hung in festoons and fanciful devices over the doors and windows of houses on holidays; offering of flowers are also made to the various idols: at Christmas, the houses of the Europeans are made perfect flower gardens by the offerings of their Hindoo servants. Near her stands a servant, whose business it is to keep flies, and other insects, from annoying his employer; this is performed by flourishing his chowree, or fly-flap, made of the tail of the Thibet cow, kusa grass, or peacock's feathers.

69.—*Fakir.*

There are four sects of Fakirs or wandering devotees in Hindoostan, some of whom go entirely naked, with their bodies frightfully painted. The Yogees of the Senassee tribe travel over all India, and sometimes unite in large armed bodies in pilgrimage to sacred temples or rivers; many are devotees of the strictest order, remaining buried in holes, or under banyan trees, their whole life in one position; some drag heavy burdens, others crawl on their hands and knees, or roll themselves on the ground half over the empire; some swing, tear their flesh out piece-meal, hang by the heels, or rub themselves with sugar that insects may torture them; they all however agree in one point, collecting alms for the avowed purpose of building a pagoda, sinking a well, &c.

70.—*Europeans attended by a Ch'hata Wala.*

During the day it is imprudent for Europeans to encounter the heat of the sun without being provided with a ch'hata, or umbrella. The ch'hata wala is always at hand, and are engaged for a mere trifle; the ch'hata is formed of silk, or red or blue curwah, on a frame of bamboo.

71.—*Procession of an Indian Prince.*

The state of the native princes, who retain any power, consists principally in the number of their elephants, camels, horses, armed and other attendants; and on the occasion of their visiting a durbar of the governor general, these used to be displayed with great magnificence. This useless parade has, however, been for some time on the decline, and is now nearly dispensed with; indeed, excepting on very especial occasions, elephants are not permitted to come within five miles of the city. Tippoo Sultan kept 7,000 elephants, 6,000 camels, and 11,000 horses. The Vizier Ally, who ended his days so miserably in the fort, had 1,200 elephants, and 3,000 saddle horses. The largest elephants are sometimes eleven or twelve feet in height, but the general average is nine: their natural life is about 120 years, and they are nearly half that time before they attain their full growth. The Indians are very fond of them, and they return this attachment in a remarkable degree: when very well trained, their value is about 5 or 6,000 rupees, and they have been known to fetch 20,000; the howdahs, or seats, are of various forms, and generally made to hold two persons; sometimes they have canopies in the fanciful form of birds, &c., particularly the peacock; others are of silk or velvet. Those used by Europeans when hunting, are in the form of the body of a gig, with a high splashboard to lean against when firing. The mahoot or driver, sits on the neck of the animal, and directs his movements by a short spiked iron; the assistants on foot keep continually talking to him, telling him to be careful where to tread, &c.

The camel is the most patient and serviceable of all the animals in India. They are fit for burden at three years of age, and seldom outlive twenty-five. Their burden is usually from five to six hundred-weight, with which they travel at the rate of three miles per hour, and are content with the coarsest food, and very little water.

The dogs used in hunting are of a breed peculiar to India, and are very ferocious. They are not allowed at large in Calcutta, and are therefore always accompanied by the doorea-a, or keeper.

The cheeta, or small leopard, forms also a part of the hunting establishment of a great man; care is, however, always taken, to have raw meat at hand, to appease their ferocity, in the event of the game escaping; hawks and falcons are also kept, and the sport much followed. The remainder of the procession consists of armed Sipahes in various costume, innumerable servants, and their assistants, &c.

