

LAHORE.

The city of Lahore, formerly "*Lohawar*," was founded between the first and seventh centuries of the Christian era by a Rajput colony. No Hindu remains have been discovered in evidence of the architectural pretensions of this period. The present buildings are those of the reigns of Humayun, Akbar, Jahângîr, Shâh Jahân, and Aurangzib.

During Akbar's residence at Lahore (1584-1598 A.D.) he enlarged the fort, and round it and the city built a wall, portions of which still exist. The Akbari Mahal shown in the plan (see Plate 77) in the east portion of the fort was a work of his time, but now demolished. He also built a Throne-room. The present hospital occupies an old Hammam and part of a hall, which is probably a portion of the Throne-room. The gateway leading from the Huzuri Bagh is also of Akbar's time.

Jahângîr fixed his court at Lahore in 1622 A.D., and built the Greater Khwâbgâh on the north face of the fort. It consisted of a large quadrangle, with a colonnade on three sides, of red sandstone columns, carved with bracket capitals of the figures of elephants, griffins, and peacocks, resembling the ornamentation of the Jahângîr Mahal in the Agra Fort. On the centre of the fourth side, which overlooked the river Ravi, was a lofty pavilion, and on each side, at the corners, two chambers, with elaborate Hindu columns. The buildings have undergone complete alteration for military purposes. In the centre of the quadrangle was a garden, and beneath the pavilions and colonnades, underground apartments for refuge from heat. The Moti Masjid was Jahângîr's work, and, although of marble, has been converted into a Government treasury. The style of its architecture is plain, but of an interesting transitional period.

In the reign of Shâh Jahân the palace was enlarged. A smaller Khwâbgâh was erected, west of that built by Jahângîr. The building still exists, although altered to suit the purposes of a chapel. The garden and surrounding buildings also remain, but the latter have been converted into quarters, greatly to the detriment of their marbles. In front of the Khwâbgâh is the Arzghah, where the Omra assembled every morning to receive the Imperial commands. Left, or west, of the Khwâbgâh were erected two buildings known as the Shish Mahal (or Saman Burj) and Naulakka Pavilion. The Shish Mahal, with its sparkling mosaics of glass, is celebrated as the place where the British sovereignty of the Punjab was formerly recognised by Ranjit Singh. The Naulakka Pavilion is a costly marble erection, inlaid with "*pietro duro*." A new gate was opened into the Shish Mahal for the Emperor's private use, called the Hati Pul gate (or Hathiya Paur), now the only entrance to the fort. In the centre of the fort enclosure Shâh Jahân erected the Diwan-i-am; the columns of marble and stone, and throne of the interior, are *in situ*, and the rooms at the back (with their marble dados and coloured frescos, considerably damaged by whitewash) are parts of the original structure. The northern front of the palace extended some 500 yards along the banks of the river, which in Shâh Jahân's time flowed under its walls. The whole wall surface was covered with elaborate designs in "*Kashi*," or tile mosaics, forming one of the most striking features of the fort. The designs include figures of men and animals, representations of the sun and zodiacal signs.

The Mogul buildings in the fort were used by Ranjit Singh: the Shish Mahal became a reception room, and he added a number of buildings, not improving its appearance. He also made the Huzuri Bagh outside to the west, and in its centre erected a marble pavilion, which was originally the central feature of Jahângîr's tomb at Shahdara. Moorcroft visited Ranjit Singh at Lahore in May 1820, and his description of the fort runs as follows:—

"Lahore is surrounded by a brick wall, about 30 feet high, which extends for about 7 miles, and is continuous with the fort. The latter, in which the Raja resides, is surrounded by a wall of no great strength, with loopholes for musketry. A branch of the Ravi washes the foot of its northern face, but it has no moat on either of the remaining sides. The palace within this enclosure, called the Saman Burj, which is of many storeys, is entirely faced with a kind of porcelain enamel, on which processions and combats of men and animals are depicted. Many of these are as perfect as when first placed in the wall. Several of the old buildings are in ruins; others are entire, and throw into shade the meaner structures of more recent date. Ranjit Singh has cleared away some of the rubbish, and has repaired or refitted some of the ruined temples of Jahângîr and Shâh Jahân, but his alterations have not always been made with good feeling or taste."

The number and extent of the ruins which surround the present walled city show that Lahore and its environs covered a circle with a radius of about three miles. The whole area between the Shahlimar gardens and the river Ravi is filled with the remains of tombs, mosques, and numerous gardens, which during the reign of Shâh Jahân must have formed a vast and picturesque group worthy of an imperial city.