party held out the last note of their melody for a time, whilst the other party started theirs.[1]

On the following day we reached Sarāhan. It is the ancient capital of the Bashahr State, and the palace here is by far superior to that at Rāmpur. Here we found the Rājā residing. Shamsher Singh, a man of seventy years of age, is the last of a long line of a hundred and twenty Rājās, enumerated in the *Rajowari* of Bashahr, which was first brought to light through Mr. H. A. Rose's exertions. The dynasty claims to have come from Kāñchanapurī (*i.e.*, Conjeevaram) in the Deccan, and to be of Brahman caste Once the throne of Bashahr being vacant, it was prophesied that the Brahman who should enter the palace-gate first, was the destined king. The younger one of two Brahman brothers, Pradyumna, who came from Kāñchanapurī, entered the palace-gate first, and was accordingly made king. The descendants of the elder brother became family priests and are said to be still in office. It is very difficult to believe that the pedigree with its 120 members can be genuine in its more ancient parts. All the Rājās are called by the dynastical name *Singh* (Sanskrit *Siṁha*), but there is no instance of any ancient Indian family which makes use of that name earlier than the 15th century. The family of the Bashahr Rājās, as Mr. Howell, Assistant Commissioner of Kuḷu, tells me, is recognised all over northern India as very ancient and the other rājās are desirous of receiving their caste-mark from the Bashahr Rājā, even if the latter condescends only to put it on their foreheads with his toe.

Shamsher Singh is very favourably inclined to Europeans and wishes to make friends with all of them. Shortly after our arrival, therefore, he announced his intention to have tea with me. He was carried in a litter by several of his subjects, and a small crowd was gathered together near the bungalow to receive him with shouts, "Ho! Mahārāj." His state is of considerable extent, but thinly populated, and has a future before it. The Rājā asked us first to take a photo of himself, and then to go to the other side of his palace and take a general view of it from there. (Plates IV, b and V, a). The palace presented itself at its best from the mountain side, where it showed all its symmetrical beauty. It is one of the finest specimens of hill architecture I have ever seen. Although there are no written records about it, it is evidently of considerable age. The Rājās ought to be urged to keep it in good repair, but not to make any structural alterations. Like all buildings of the hill-type it is built of layers of rubble masonry and beams of cedar wood. The roofs are slanting and slightly concave like those of the Chinese. In the walls of the court, several carved stone images of very rude execution have been inserted. I was told that they represent Kālī and Bhairava.

There is also an ancient Kālī temple connected with the palace which is not accessible to Europeans. It is said to contain a deep pit. There are rumours that human sacrifices were offered here every tenth year, and that they are still continued secretly.[2] The victim is thrown into the pit. If a human sacrifice be not forthcoming at the

[1] A description of this style of music is found in my article, "*Musikalische Studien in West Tibet, Z. D. M. G.*, Vol. LX, pp 91 ff.

[2] *Cf.* Gerard, *Account of Koonawar*, p. 86.