

appointed time, a terrible voice is heard calling from the depth of the pit. We received a full written statement about these practices from a native of the place.

We travelled from Sarāhan to Taranda on the 24th June. In the pass above the village and bungalow, there is an ancient deserted Dēvatā temple of the ordinary hill type with slanting but straight roof, in ruins. It contained two beautifully carved columns and other wood sculptures. In front of it, there are several stone slabs with rude carvings of human figures. They look exactly like the slabs put up in commemoration of the dead in Manchad (Lahul) or like very ancient *Satī*-stones in Kuḷū. I was informed that here also, they were erected in commemoration of the dead.

We proceeded to Paunda on the 25th June. Below the village, on the road to Taranda, we saw the first Tibetan *maṇi* wall, *i.e.* a stone wall covered with inscribed slabs of stone, bearing the inscription *Om maṇi padme Hūm*. The characters employed here were mostly Lañṭhsa. Near the wall was a gate with modern Lamaist frescoes on the ceiling and a prayer flag on the top. These signs of Lamaism do not, however, indicate that the population of this district are believers in Lamaism. In fact, in spite of many inquiries, I could not ascertain that there were any Buddhists round about. I believe that these Buddhist structures were erected by Tibetan travellers on their way to the Rāmpur market.

On the 26th June, we marched from Paunda to Urni. Between Paunda and Nachar is the village of Sungra, a little below the road. It is famous for its ancient wooden Mahēśura (Mahēśvara) temple (Plate VI, a). It is a fine specimen of hill architecture, and reminds one of the famous temple of Hiḍimbā at Manālī in Kuḷū which was built by King Bahādur Siṅgh in the 16th century.<sup>1</sup> While the temples of Nirmaṇḍ have the shape of an ordinary rectangular house with a single gable roof, the temple at Sungra has a square ground-plan and three slanting roofs, one above the other, the lower one being the largest, and the top one the smallest of the three. While the two lower ones are square, the top one is round, of the shape of a funnel. The four corner beams of the lowest roof end in wooden figures of walking lions, almost life-size (Plate VI, b). The temple contains a *lingam*. There are no inscriptions round about. In the temple yard we saw two very rude specimens of *śikhara* stone temples.

On the road from Sungra to Nachar we noticed the first Lamaist *mchod-rten* (*stūpa*). It was only about 6 feet high, and contained some dried apricots and a leaf or two of a modern Tibetan printed book with a text half Tibetan, half Sanskrit.

The temple of Nachar has also a certain fame on account of its wood carvings. We did not, however, visit it.

From Nachar the road took us down to the Satluj by a long descent, and at Wangtu we crossed the river by a beautiful modern bridge. There was already a wooden bridge in this place when Gerard travelled here in 1817.<sup>2</sup> This bridge is an important

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *A. S. R.* 1905-96, p. 26. There are three temples of this kind in Kuḷū; that of Hiḍimbā (or Hīṛmā) Dēvī at Dhungrī Manālī, near that of Tripura-sundarī Dēvī at Nagar, the ancient capital, and that of Tiryug Nārāyaṇa at Dhār opposite Bajaurā.

<sup>2</sup> It was destroyed by the Gurkhas in 1819 and replaced by a rope bridge.