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ART. X.—*Notes on the Ruins of Wallabhipura.* By A. K. FORBES, Esq.

[*Read 4th June, 1853.*]

ON the western shore of the Gulf of Cambay, a few miles to the north of Bhaonagar, among a range of granite hills which, lying in a country level as an immense unruffled lake, appear like a cluster of islands floating on the waters, nestles the little township of Chamardi. Overhanging this village on the eastern side is a rugged peak dedicated to Mátá Kodiar, at almost the pinnacle of which a huge boulder of granite, bearing at a distance some resemblance to a kneeling human form, is worshipped by the rude villager as the image of that potent goddess. To the summit of this hill it is proposed to conduct the reader, who may be inclined to contemplate the prospect which thence meets the eye of the observer.

Immediately below him, amidst many other such cavities apparently hollowed out by water, and countenancing the traditional belief that the rocks of Chamardi were once washed by the waves of the ocean, is an unhewn cave capable of containing forty or fifty persons, and which the legendary tastes of the Hindus has associated with the rugged champion of Draupadi; similarly some large detached masses of granite below and near to the foot of the hill are believed to have amused the childhood of Bhima and his brothers. About half a mile to the south-east, below another hill—the granite rocks of which, like those of all the Chamardi range, are overlaid with freestone in various stages of hardness, and which bears the marks of the quarryman's labours, lies a collection of miserable huts called "Old Chamardi." To the south of Kodiar's-hill a well supplies the villagers with purer water than that which they can draw from the mason-work bhauli which their town contains; and further westward, in a picturesque gorge, a rock, which has been hollowed out into the shape of a cobra's hood, stands ready to fulfil its traditionary destiny, and overwhelm the bridal procession of some incautious Kansará. Above the roofs of Chamardi, and the villagers' hay-stacks piled on slippery granite boulders, rises another peak, which is still surmounted by the remains of a mosque dedicated to the prophet of Arabia. Southwards

a short interval of ground level as water, affords space for the river Kalumbhar to wind its uncertain streams between the rocks of Chamardi and a conical hill which bears the name of Ishalwo. This hill is crowned by the remains of a fortified building, and, at its foot, a mutilated image, wearing the cap and ear-rings of a Vairagi upon its dissevered head, and buried in the ground up to the waist, reclines beneath the shade of the slow-growing Pilu. Hence, bending northwards, the river runs along a level plain near the base of a hill dedicated to, and deriving its name from, Thápnáth Mahádeo. A temple, containing the symbol of the god with the accompanying Nandi, occupies the summit; and near it are fragments of other religious buildings, and two lingas, which, though hewn out of granite monoliths, have not escaped the power of the destroyer. The houses and huts of a colony of Gosains cluster at the foot of the hill, fringed by the funeral memorial of the sati as well as of the ascetic; and within one of the Gosain's houses is the entrance to a cave, said to be of endless length, which the adventurous spirit of the Rajputs of Chamardi, aided by the religious zeal of the devotees of Siva, has as yet been found inadequate to explore.

At the hill of Thápnáth a Mela assembles yearly on the last day of Shráwan; and when a delay in the fall of rain, or an epidemic raging alarms the inhabitants of Chamardi and the neighbouring town of Walleh, the Raja and Grasias perform a "mantra," or extraordinary worship to conciliate the Bhawo, whose broken image lies at the foot of Ishalwo. Beyond Thápnáth is another island-like hill called Chogat, which is believed to contain copper ore, and which forms the termination of the range.

North and east of the peak of Kodiar, winding not far from the town of Walleh, may be observed the salt-water creek, which is called the Bhaonagar, or "the former" river, and which, passing the port from which it derives its name, and the town of Ghoghá, rushes with great velocity through the channel which separates from the mainland of Katiwar the curious and interesting island of Perambh. This creek is navigable for the craft of the country to a point equidistant between Bhaonagar and Walleh, called Ghelari Bandar, at which the hardly discernible traces of brickwork buildings are still pointed out to the inquirer. Up to this point cultivation of wheat and cotton has faintly struggled on; and near the bandar a few hovels are collected together and dignified with the names of Anandpur and Rajpur; but beyond these little *clachans*, whose inhabitants bring the water which they drink from the neighbourhood of Walleh, the plain, assuming a still more sea-deserted form, stretches onwards, uncultivated and

uninhabited, to the point where it is reached by the high tides of the Gulf. Immediately north of Bhaonagar may be discerned the tall masts of three or four vessels, which still remain the property of the Chief of the Gohils ; and close beside them the receding tide discovers vestiges of foundation-work of brick and stone—all that remains of Dhutar Patan, the “city of cozeners.” A little further seawards, a low hill, scantily clothed with trees, is surmounted by the shrine of Rawapuri Mátá, beside which an overturned *jáládhar* has become a celebrated ordeal stone under the name of the “window of truth and falsehood.” In the creek opposite Rawapuri’s temple is a bank oozing with discoloured water, and with which a legend is connected, bearing testimony at once to her willingness to protect and her ability to destroy. Two warriors, it is said, lived at the ancient village of Wadawá, near Bhaonagar ; they were very wealthy, and trafficked as merchants. On one occasion, returning home with their sons in separate ships, laden with oil and madder, after a prosperous voyage, they had neared the port of Bhaonagar when a terrible storm arose. The women left behind at home, anxiously awaiting the return of their husbands and sons, and terrified at the fury of the tempest, hastened with offerings in their hands to seek the protection of *Adi Shakti* in her temple at Rawapur. The one unhesitatingly vowing to offer her son to the goddess on his safe return, was welcomed with gracious assurances of protection and favour ; but the other, hesitating from “avarice of her child,” received the angry answer, “Why keep you back from me? Your ship is lost, I have taken your son ; depart, childless, lamenting.” The next day the ship which carried him who had been dedicated to the service of the goddess lay safely in the harbour, while its companion, sunk with its cargo in the creek, originated the bank which has been described, and which, continually, oozing oil and madder, remains a standing memorial of Rawapuri’s vengeance.

The spectator still supposed to be standing on the summit of Kodiar’s-hill, would, on turning to the south, behold an outline diversified by mountain ranges. A few miles inland, and somewhat to the south of Perambh, rise the *Khokhra* hills ; nearer, and further to the west, a rocky range encircles the “lion city” *Sehore* ; and still westwards in the distance, the noble form of the sacred mountain *Satrunjaya*, crowned with a rocky upper-hill, covered with palatial buildings, rises above the towers and minarets of *Palitana*.

Far different, however, is the view which meets the eye on turning to the north. From the base of the *Chamardi Hills* a vast and level plain of black soil, covered annually with crops of wheat or

cotton, and broken only by the streams which vainly struggle to force their way eastwards along its surface, extends in monotonous uniformity to the horizon and, far beyond it, to the town of Dhandhuka and the head of the Gulf of Cambay. In this plain, a few miles to the north of Chamardi, lies the modern town of Walleh, and the remains of the ancient city of Wallabhipur, and further on, as if to complete the historical interest of the scene, a tall minaret shows the town of Loliyánah, where for many years the lieutenants of the Mussulman padishahs collected the revenues of the province, while, close beside the fallen mosque, the vulgar Maratha has built his snug temple, and placed upon its front the following badly spelt and rudely engraved inscription—

“ The impress of Siva’s foot, with
Assiduity, Damaji Gaikwar
Worships continually.

Samwat, 1794. Jeshitshud 3.” [A.D. 1737.]

The town of Walleh belongs to a younger branch of the house of the Gohils, who have given their name to this portion of Sorat. It contains, on a rough computation, a population of about three thousand souls. A jungle of Pilu trees of considerable extent lies on the western and northern sides of the town. It is traversed by roads in various directions, and includes the principal part of the remains of Wallabhipur, which are exposed to view. Numerous excavations have been made, some of which are fifteen feet in depth, and which exhibit the foundations of walls, frequently four feet and a-half wide, constructed of large burnt bricks and earth. There is no *chunam* used, and hence the bricks readily separate from each other, and little difficulty is experienced in extricating them in a perfect state. The largest measure one foot four in length, ten inches in width, and three in depth. The trenches in some places assume the form of mines, and are carried down occasionally to water which is found to be salt. From many of these pits bricks have been removed until the depth of the excavation becoming inconvenient it was abandoned for another which could be worked with less labour. In this jungle, as has been remarked, are the principal remains which are exposed to view, but similar brick foundations are occasionally discovered on all sides to within a distance of two kos around Walleh. On the north of the town the site of a tank, which bears the name of Ghorardaman is pointed out, and to the south-south-west is a large flat space, covered in the colder months with a rich clothing of green wheat, which is called the “Ratn Talao,” and of which the sur-

rounding mound may still in some places be traced. In the excavations at present made but little character can be discovered, they afford no clue which could assist in tracing out the streets and mansions of the devastated city; the miners dig down to the walls merely for the purpose of taking the materials from them, so that their labours are in fact purely destructive, every basketful of bricks which they remove from the ruins diminishing the chance of future success in examining the remains.

Round the outside of the Pilu jungle runs a stream, which from its frantic movements during the monsoon, is called "Ghelo" or insane. It alters its course frequently, and has been the most active agent as yet employed in the discovery of the remains of Wallabhipur, in which task it has however been considerably assisted by the occasional streams formed, for the time being, during the rains, by an accumulation of water struggling to find for itself a means of escape in this level soil.

Within the space occupied by the Pilu trees, and in fact on all sides of Walleh, are to be found numerous emblems of Siva and of Nandi, his attendant, formed of granite and considerable in point of size. One of these, which is sunk in the earth so that the top only being visible may be mistaken for a granite globe, is called "Batheswar Mahádeo," and is supposed by the Hindus to be enabled to defy all attempts made for its removal. Near Batheswar is a large bull of granite, wanting the head and split across the body into two pieces which are lying close together. It is exceedingly well executed, and unlike more modern figures of Nandi is placed in the true position of a sitting animal. Further west of this is another linga, called "Nandeswar Mahádeo." It is a single granite stone, commencing with a square pedestal two feet high, surmounted by a cylinder rounded at the top, which is three feet in height and eight and a-half in circumference.

There are near Walleh many other such symbols of Siva similar in form and size, some of them, however, ascending from the square into an octagon, and thence into the cylinder. The lingas are themselves mostly entire, but in every instance the Nandi which accompanies them has been broken. Amid some ruins which a streamlet has laid bare, on the verge of the jungle, is Vaynath; on the south of the town are Ramnath, Kamnath, Bhatnath, and Ratneswar; on the east Bed-Bhanjan; on the north Wankeswar and others.

No great distance from the Hill of Thapnath, on the left hand of the road which leads from thence to the village of Pate, is a mound called Ishwar Timbo, upon the summit of which there is a granite

linga, called Ishwari Mahádeo, and a Nandi smaller than, but equally well executed with, that at Batheswar. The linga is in a square jaladhar, and close beside it lies another of these pedestal stones, which resembles exactly the ordeal stone at Bhaonagar. A monsoon-formed streamlet hard by has laid open a corner of stonemason work which is about six feet wide, and of which about fifty feet in length is visible.