

*brown*

THE  
**EAST-INDIA GAZETTEER;**

CONTAINING

**Particular Descriptions**

OF THE

EMPIRES, KINGDOMS, PRINCIPALITIES, PROVINCES, CITIES, TOWNS,  
DISTRICTS, FORTRESSES, HARBOURS, RIVERS, LAKES, &c.

OF

**HINDOSTAN,**

*AND THE ADJACENT COUNTRIES,*

**INDIA BEYOND THE GANGES,**

AND THE

**EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO;**

TOGETHER WITH

SKETCHES OF THE MANNERS, CUSTOMS, INSTITUTIONS, AGRICULTURE,  
COMMERCE, MANUFACTURES,  
REVENUES, POPULATION, CASTES, RELIGION, HISTORY, &c.

OF THEIR

**VARIOUS INHABITANTS.**

---

By **WALTER HAMILTON.**

---

*SECOND EDITION.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

**VOL. II.**

---

**LONDON:**  
**PRINTED FOR PARBURY, ALLEN, AND CO.,**  
**LEADENHALL STREET.**

---

**1828.**

province of Malwa, division of Killeepoor, which in 1820 contained about 2,000 inhabitants; lat.  $24^{\circ} 12'$  N., lon.  $76^{\circ} 40'$  E.—(*Malcolm, &c.*)

**PURANTEIJ.**—A pergunnah thus named in the province of Gujerat, part of which formerly belonged to the raja of Eder. In A.D. 1820 it contained about 6,000 inhabitants, one-third Mahomedans and two-thirds Hindoos; the land revenue 50,096 rupees.—(*Public MS. Documents, &c.*)

**PURKASSA.**—A town in the province of Candeish, division of Nunderbar, situated on an elevated bank of the Tuptee, eighty-four miles E.N.E. from Surat; lat.  $21^{\circ} 29'$  N., lon.  $74^{\circ} 22'$  E. This was formerly a large town, but in 1816 was almost in ruins, the number of houses being only 600, and very few of them occupied. The inhabitants were mostly Brahmins, and the remains of many pagodas attest their former importance.—(*Sutherland, &c.*)

**PURKHYAL.**—A peak of a ridge of mountains in Northern Hindostan, which separates the Spiti from the Sutuleje river; lat.  $31^{\circ} 53'$  N., lon.  $78^{\circ} 43'$  E., elevation above the level of the sea, 22,700 feet.—(*Hodgson and Herbert, &c.*)

**PURNEAH** (*Purinya*).—A district in the province of Bengal, situated principally in the north-eastern quarter, but comprehending also a portion of the Mogul province of Bahar. On the north it is bounded by the Morung hills and woods; on the south by Bogliipoor and Rajeshahy; to the east it has Dinagepoor; and to the west Bogliipoor and Tirhoot. Its greatest length is 155 miles, its greatest breadth ninety-eight, and its total superficial contents about 6,340 square miles.

The form of this district is tolerably compact, but at the south-east corner it stretches out to a narrow wing; where it is intermixed with Rajeshahy and Bogliipoor. Previous to the late war the whole northern frontier also, which confined on the Ne-

paulese territories, was ill-defined, and occasioned many disputes between the two powers. In the northern corner of the district towards the Mahananda there are a few small hillocks of earth; and at Manihari, near the banks of the Ganges, there is a conical peak about 100 feet high, but, generally speaking, Purneah may be described as a flat country, gradually sinking as it approaches the Ganges. The inundated land occupies nearly one-half of the whole, and where the soil is good is tolerably well cultivated.

The only rock that has been discovered in the country is a small detached hill at Manihari, where a calcareous mass reaches the surface and is of considerable dimensions. It appears to be an aggregate rock composed of many small pebbles or nodules united by a common cement. In many places the stone has been reduced to a white substance like chalk, usually disposed in large beds, with galleries as it were formed in the stone four or five feet wide, and as many high, perforating the mass in very irregular directions. A man rents the privilege of digging for this substance, which is afterwards made up into little balls, and sold all over the country to women employed in spinning cotton, who rub it on their fingers. It contains not the slightest trace of vegetable matter or of animal exuvia. The nearest rock to it, on the opposite side of the Ganges, is about seven miles distant. On the northern side there is no other rock within the British territories.

There are no mines or mineral springs. Common springs are numerous, but among the natives are not in request, most of them rising in bogs or marshes, curdled with frogs and snakes'-spawn, and stinking aquatic plants. By digging wells water is usually found at no great depth. In many parts, especially in old mango groves, the earth would seem strongly impregnated with muriate of soda, as the cattle are fond of licking these soils, and a culinary salt is extracted by filtration and boiling.

Near Gondara there is a saline earth used by washermen in bleaching of linen, the chief ingredient of which is, probably, carbonate of soda.

Since Major Rennell composed his Bengal atlas great changes have taken place in the rivers of Purneah, so that the maps are little applicable to their present state. Their nomenclature also among the natives is, to the last degree, perplexed and inaccurate, scarcely two persons giving the same name to a river or to the mart on its banks. The names of the principal are the Cosi, the Mahananda, the Conki or Kankayi, the Puarabhoba, and the Ichamutty. The lakes and morasses formed by the old channels of rivers which have lost all connexion with the main stream are numerous but shallow. The most remarkable marshes form a long chain, passing with some interruptions from Gondwara to Malda, and seem to be a congeries of broken narrow channels, winding among low lands, which probably have at one period been the channel of a great river. Near the largest streams the soil of the inundated lands undergoes great changes: the same field is one year overwhelmed with sand, and the next covered with a rich and fertile mud; but on the whole the lands watered by the Mahananda and its branches are by far the richest, while those watered by the Cosi, especially towards the north and east, are rather poor and sandy. The lands exempted from inundation are partly clay, partly free-soil, and partly sandy. In favourable seasons the high lands of a mixed good soil are very productive of all kinds of grain, especially cruciform plants resembling mustard, which are reared for oil, and are the staple commodity of the district.

In every part of Purneah the cold of winter is greater than in Rungpoor or Dinagepoor, and when strong westerly winds blow during that season for two or three successive days, hoar-frost is found in the mornings, which occasionally is so extreme as to injure some crops, espe-

cially the pulse. In spring the hot winds from the west are usually of longer duration than in Dinagepoor; but towards the Morung frontier they are little known. The prevailing winds are north in the winter, and south in the rainy season. From March to June the winds incline to the west, and from August to December easterly winds predominate. The violent squalls of the spring come as often from the east and north-east as they do from the north-west; the rainy season is of shorter duration than further east, and earthquakes, but not violent ones, are common.

Purneah having many advantages of soil and climate, has always been considered one of the most productive in the province. Rice and other grains are raised in large quantities; but plants reared for oil, although greatly inferior in aggregate value, are the great objects of commerce, and the source from whence the rents are mostly paid. The European potatoe was naturalized in 1810. Of plants used for dyeing, indigo is the most important. Cattle here are an important article of stock, and it is from hence Bengal is supplied with a great proportion of the carriage bullocks; but the fine cattle that drag the artillery are not bred in this district, although usually termed Purneah bullocks, being from further west. The Company's cattle are allowed a certain quantity of grain per day, which they do not always receive; but when kept up and fed for slaughter, equal the best English beef. The herds of cattle and buffaloes are here so numerous that all the resources of the country would be unequal to their support, were it not for the adjacent wilds of the Morung. The natives of Purneah are almost entirely supplied with butter by the buffalo; and a considerable quantity of ghee, or buffalo's butter clarified, is annually exported. The northern part, bordering on the Morung, is thinly inhabited, and covered with immense woods of saul and other timber, which during the rains are floated down the rivers to the building yards at Calcut-

ta. Cotton wool is imported from the west, betel and coco-nuts from the south. The quantity of English broadcloth used is a mere trifle. The district is, on the whole, well provided with water carriage; and the natives possess a great variety of boats, adapted to different purposes. Within the whole district there are reckoned to be 482 market-places, but the following are the principal towns: Purneah, 6,000 houses; Nantpoor, 1,400; Kusbah, 1,400; Dhamdaha, 1,300; and Matauli, 1,000 houses.

In this district wild elephants have been very destructive, ruining fields and villages every year, to the great disgrace of the police. In 1810 a rhinoceros made his appearance in the marshy woods of the south; but fortunately he thrust himself on the premises of an indigo planter, and was shot. The jackal and Indian fox are both common. The former is asserted to steal both money and cloth; but for this calumny against the quadruped the natives probably have good reasons, as it serves to account for the disappearance of many things. Except about the ruins of Gour tigers and leopards are not common. By both Mahomedans and Hindoos these animals are supposed to be the property of the Peers, or old Mussulman saints, so that the natives do not sympathize with Europeans in the sport of tiger-hunting. It is probable, also, that where a country is overgrown with wood or long grass, a few tigers are useful in keeping down the number of wild hogs and deer, which are infinitely more destructive to the farmer; and whenever the country is cleared they disappear. Many of the tigers' heads, for which a reward of ten rupees each is paid by the collector, are imported from the Morung and the Nepaulesse territories.

Every where to the north of Purneah town paroquets are in immense numbers, and consume a great deal of grain; peacocks in the southern sections are also a great nuisance. The bagiri of the natives is what the

English in Bengal call an ortolan; and in the spring, after it has been fattened on the winter crops, is very palatable. The bagiri is a bird of passage, and is only found in large flocks during the fair weather, and vanishes when the rains commence. The peacocks, cranes, paroquets, and ortolans make an open attack on the crop during the day, and during the night the farmer is harassed watching his fields against the deer and wild elephants. The galinule, or waterhen, creeps unseen along the marshes, and does more harm than any of the other birds. The swarms of waterfowl to be seen during the cold season are altogether astonishing. This district also abounds in snipes, golden plover, and the floekin, or lesser bustard, all excellent eating, but held in great contempt by the natives. By them the small white heron (vak), of which there is a great variety and number, and the shags and water-crows are much more esteemed, and are prized on account of their having a fishy taste.

In 1789 Mr. Suetonius Grant Heatly, then collector of Purneah, computed the number of villages within the limits of the district at 5,800, from which he inferred a population of 1,200,000 persons. In 1801 Mr. W. E. Rees reported the number of villages to be 7,056, and the estimated total population 1,450,000 persons. Dr. Francis Buchanan was of opinion that during the forty years prior to A.D. 1810, the population of Purneah had nearly doubled, and his computation, the result of a much more laborious investigation, exhibits a total population of 2,904,380 persons, in the proportion of forty-three Mahomedans to fifty-seven Hindoos. Of these last more than half consider themselves as still belonging to foreign nations, either from the west or south, although few have any tradition concerning the era of their migration; and others have not any knowledge of the country from whence they suppose their ancestors to have come. Comprehended in the above population are various classes of slaves, of

which one class costs from £1. 15s. to £2. 5s.; in another a boy costs from £1. 8s. to £2. 5s.; and a girl of eight years from 11s. to £1. 15s. They are allowed to marry, and their children become slaves; but the family are seldom sold separately. One class of slaves are by far the most comfortable description of labouring people, and are seldom sold by their owners, although they possess the power. In 1810 the houses of bad fame were 470. At Jellalghur, ten miles from the town of Purneah, there is a brick fort, built by the nabob Syef Khan, of about 300 feet square, having circular bastions at each angle, and a parapet wall pierced with loopholes for musketry; but the most remarkable antiquity is a line of fortification extending through the north-west part of the district, for about twenty miles, and named MajurniCata.

In Purneah the nature of the farms is very much affected by the rank of the tenants. All the high and pure tribes, such as Brahmins, Rajpoots, Kayasthas, Rajpoots, Patans, and Moguls, have a right to occupy whatever land they require for their gardens and houses free of rent, and the same indulgence is granted to men of both religions who pretend that they are dedicated to worship; such as Bairagees, Sanyassies, Vishnuvies, and Fakeers. Although the Mahomedans are in proportion fewer than in Dinagepoor, they have more influence, much more of the land being in their possession, the manners of the capital town are entirely Mahomedan, and the faith apparently gaining ground. Except artists, all the other Mahomedans call themselves Sheik, as deriving their origin from Arabia, but a great majority are not to be distinguished from the neighbouring Hindoo peasantry. In 1810 there were twelve families of native Christians, who are called Portuguese, and who are chiefly employed as writers. A Protestant missionary then resided in the south-east corner of this district, but no intelligence had been received regarding the number of his converts.

In this district it is remarkable that science is almost confined to two of its corners; the old territory called Gour, and a small portion situated to the west of the Cosi. Towards the west metaphysics are much studied, and are supposed to have been first disclosed by Gautama at Chittraban, on the banks of the Ganges, somewhere near to Buxar. The Sri Bhagrat is much studied by the sect of Vishnu; the agam or doctrine of the Tantras is also taught by several learned men in the north and east of the district.

In Purneah there is a great diversity of eras; the eastern parts following that of Camroop; but in the western portion, which formed part of the ancient kingdom of Mithila, the year is lunar, and commences on the first day of the full moon in Assar. They have also an era named after Lakshman, king of Gour, of which the 705th year corresponds with 1810. In civil affairs the solar year is used, and the greater proportion of the revenue is collected according to the era of Bengal; but in the section that belonged to soubah Bahar the instalments are regulated by the fussily year, instituted for the purpose by the sovereigns of Delhi. None of the pundits have sufficient knowledge to construct an almanac, nor do any of them possess instruments for celestial observations. In learning to write, the Bengalese commence with making letters in the sand, after which they write on palmira leaves with ink made of charcoal, which rubs out; subsequently with ink made of lamp black, on plantain leaves, and conclude with the same ink on paper.

In this district the principal object of all native expenditure being to maintain as many dependents as possible, the relative expenses of different families bear a much closer proportion to the respective number of persons each contains than a similar predicament in Europe would indicate. The main contingent expenses are the building of new houses, marriages, funerals, pilgrimages, purifi-

cations, and other incidental ceremonies, one of which occurs almost annually. Such contingencies fall heaviest on the Hindoos, especially those of high rank, and these advertising to the probability of having to provide for them, regulate their expenditure with the utmost parsimony. On the contrary, the Mahomedans of rank are an expensive shewy people, and still lead the fashions at the capital of the district, whereas the Hindoos generally live retiredly, and are in private uncommonly slovenly.

The principal traders, besides the Company's servants, are the Goldar merchants, who keep stores; the Gosain or Sanyassi merchants, who are very numerous, and export almost the whole of the silk cloth, and also deal largely in money, jewels, grain, cotton, and other articles. Some people make a subsistence by buying cattle for exportation; and notwithstanding its opprobrious nature, many of these are Brahmins. There are many bankers, especially at the capital, where the Shroffs exchange gold for silver, and the Foddars silver and cowries. These people, however, are daily losing ground, on account of the plenty of silver and the introduction of bank notes. In a country exceedingly poor, a gold coinage is highly distressing to the lower classes, even a rupee in Bengal is a large sum, for, being a ploughman's wages for two months, it may be considered of as much importance in the circulation of the country as three or four pounds in England. In the present circulation of the country quarter rupees are the largest pieces required for provincial circulation. In 1810 the gold in this district had fortunately disappeared.

A man of rank here marrying a low girl pays little of the marriage expense; but many rich men of low caste ruin themselves in procuring women of high rank for their children. A man of high rank is often hired when toothless, and even when in a dying state, to marry a low child, which is afterwards left a widow, incapable of marriage, in order to raise

her father's family, and render her brothers more easily marriageable. In common practice many Brahmins marry more wives than one; but these are mostly men of high rank, who are hired to marry low-born women, of whom their fathers take charge; few, however, keep two wives in one house. In Mithila all marriages are made in the month of Ashar, while in Bengal, Phalgun is the usual time selected for performing the ceremony. Except those of Brahmins, Rajpoots, Vaisyas, Bhauts, Kayasthas, and some of the Banyans, all widows of pure Hindoos can live with men as samodhs or concubines, and among all tribes of Mithila that admit of concubines, when an elder brother dies, his younger takes his widow as concubine. Children born of women kept privately, are called Krishna Packhsa, or children of the wane of the moon, darkness being considered favourable to intrigue.

Among the Rajpoots are a few of the Surya sect, who worship the sun, many of whom, for three months of the year, abstain from eating while the sun is above the horizon, which is considered as a compliment to that luminary; and some who are extremely devout, for the same reason, during that quarter of the year do not sit down all Sunday.

The higher ranks of this district certainly have an aversion to Europeans, whom they never wish to see, but in many cases this probably originates from the dread they feel of having their oppressive conduct to their tenantry and poor neighbours exposed. They, however, plead for their excuse the difference of manners, such as the eating of beef and pork, and the whole conduct of European women, which they consider as totally destitute of decency, which it certainly is, according to their notions of female propriety.

The worship of Satya Narrain among the Hindoos, and of Satya Peer among the Mahomedans, is very prevalent. Although these words imply the "true God," the worship weans neither sect from its absur-

dities, each continuing to follow its old system of mummery; indeed this object of devotion is chosen only in cases of little importance, because this deity is supposed to be very good natured, and to concede trifles with much alacrity.

It is remarkable that in this district a large proportion of the Hindoos allege themselves to be of foreign extraction, especially in Mithila and Gour. It is also remarkable that there is scarcely a great native tribe of those who cultivate the land, and who in India usually constitute three-fourths of the population. These tribes of cultivators, such as the Cooch of Camroop, and the different kinds of Wocol of Karnata, may, in general, be considered as the original inhabitants of the country; but in the two above-mentioned portions of this district, the greater part of the cultivators appear to have been eradicated. In the many parts of Bengal the greater part of the cultivators would seem to have embraced the Mahomedan faith, but in the western tracts of Purneah this has not happened, yet even there a small proportion of the cultivators consist of any tribe that can be considered as aboriginal.

During the Mogul domination this was a frontier military province, under the rule of a foudjar, subordinate to the soubahdar or viceroy; but exercising a high jurisdiction, both civil and military. Syef Khan is the most famous of these provincial rulers, and governed until his death in the Bengal year 1159, under the successive viceroalties of Jaffier, Shuja, and Aliverdi Khan. In 1139 Bengal style, he extended the limits of the province beyond the Cosa, and in A.D. 1738, added a considerable portion of productive territory on the side of the Morung. He was succeeded by Soulet Jung, on whose death the foudjary was usurped by Shouket Jung, otherwise named Khadim Ali Khan, but this rebellion was easily quashed, and terminated in the death of the pretender. When Lord Clive acquired the Dewanny, in

1785, the foudjary of Purneah was occupied by Raja Suckit Ray, the sixteenth foudjar; the seventeenth was Razi ud Deen, the eighteenth Mahomed Ali Khan, who was succeeded by the English magistrate Mr. Ducarel.

Before and since the acquisition of this territory, the most prevalent crime within its limits has been that of gang robbery, frequently attended with murder; but in 1814, the superintendent of police was decidedly of opinion that these atrocities had experienced a great reduction. Much good has resulted from establishing a chain of police stations along the frontier, the officers of which were instructed to pursue offenders into the adjacent province of Morung, belonging to the Gorkhas of Nepal. In 1815 the continued unhealthiness of the towns of Purneah and Dinagepoor left little doubt that the necessity of removing the civil authorities to more healthy stations would ultimately be considered unavoidable; and it appeared desirable that the measure should be effected before the construction of new gaols, or the repairs of the public buildings commenced. All expenditure for these objects was in consequence suspended, and the government endeavoured to obtain the most accurate information of the causes of the insalubrity that prevailed to so dreadful an extent in these towns, with the view of forming a final decision on this important question. Prior to the above date the acting magistrate had recommended the removal of the head station to Jelalghur, which he described as elevated, open, and at a distance from jungle, while the walls of the old fortress might be turned to account in the construction of a safe and commodious gaol.—(*F. Buchanan, J. Grant, Colebrook, Thornhill, Rees, &c.*)

**PURNEAH.**—A town in the province of Bengal, the capital of the preceding district; lat. 25° 45' N., lon. 88° 23' E., 125 miles N.W. by N. from Moorshedabad. This town, which oc-

cupies a space of nine square miles, equal to more than the half of London, contains only 40,000 inhabitants scattered over this great extent, and might rather be described as an assemblage of villages than a single town. Within these limits there were, in 1810, one hundred dwelling houses, and seventy shops, built entirely or in part of brick, and 200 that were roofed with tiles, besides which there were ten private places of worship for Mahomedans, and five for Hindoos. As frequently happens in India, this station had so deteriorated for many years in salubrity, without any perceptible cause for the alteration, that in 1815 the Bengal government considered a removal of the civil authorities to some other station unavoidable.—(*F. Buchanan, &c.*)

**PURRUAH** (*or Peruya*).—A town, or rather the ruins of one, in the province of Bengal, district of Dinagepoor, twelve miles north from the ruins of Gour; lat. 25° 28' N., lon. 88° 14' E. In A.D. 1353 this was a royal residence, the capital of Ilyas, the second independent sovereign of Bengal, at which time it was besieged and taken by the emperor Feroze. During the reign of Raja Cansa, the Hindoo monarch of Bengal, who died in 1392, the city of Purruah was much extended, and the Brahminical religion flourished. His son, who became a convert to the Mahomedan faith, removed the seat of government back to Gour again. Some of the ruins of this city still remain, particularly the Adeena mosque, and the pavement of a very long street; the first, the most remarkable Mahomedan monument to be found in the lower provinces.

In all this vicinity there are very extensive ruins of mosques and other religious buildings, Purruah having long been the focus of the Mahomedan faith in this quarter of India. By far the most conspicuous places of worship are the monuments of Muckdoom, Shah Jelal, and Kotub Shah, who were the two most distinguished religious persons during the early

part of the kingly government in Bengal. Numerous pilgrims repair to these monuments at all seasons of the year, and from all parts of the province. Both places have endowments which are expended in keeping the buildings in repair, in the support of mendicant vagrants, and of a numerous establishment. These illustrious personages are said by the inhabitants to have been kings of the place, as it was only according to their pleasure that the temporal kings could reign. Peruy is said to be a corrupted vulgar name, the proper appellation of the city being said to be Panduya or Panduviya, from Pandu the father of Judhester, who, according to legend, was sovereign of India 5,000 years ago.

On the establishment of the Mahomedan sovereignty in Bengal, independent of that of Delhi, the seat of government was transferred from Gour to Purruah, on which event Gour appears to have been plundered of every monument of former grandeur that could be removed, on which account, on the buildings that still remain, there are very few traces of Hindoo sculpture. Purruah in its turn was deserted, and the seat of government seems to have been replaced at Gour by Nuzzer Khan, who had a long reign of twenty-seven years. Most of the present ruins, however, are attributed to Hossein Shah, the most powerful of the monarchs of Bengal.—(*F. Buchanan, Stewart, Rennell, Fullarton, &c.*)

**PURRUAH** (*Peruya*).—A town in the province of Bengal, district of Burdwan, thirty-one miles E.S.E. from the town of Burdwan, and thirty-nine N. by E. from Calcutta. Here, among other Mussulman antiquities, is a mosque built of dark stone, the roof of which is supported by a treble range of pointed arches, giving the interior the appearance of a gothic aisle. Near the mosque is a lofty round tower, which commands a fine view of the country, but for which, no other obvious use can be assigned.—(*Fullarton, &c.*)