



birthday of Gaurama, or Kodoma, as they call him, but of the month and year of his birth they are ignorant. Their principal feasts are on the full moon of Asarh and Asin. The common people worship both Kodoma and the Hindu goddess Debi or Durga, but they are not the followers of any Goshain, and they employ in her service their own priests, instead of Brahmans. The priests of Debi are called Poma, while those of Kodoma are called Thomon (*Assamese* bāpu). Fowls, pigs and buffaloes may be offered to Debi, but not a duck nor a goat; the service of Kodoma consists of floral offerings only. The worship of Durga, like the custom of burning their dead, is said by themselves to date from time immemorial, but it seems more probable that both practices have been adopted from the Hindus with whom this little colony has been thrown so intimately into contact. The Khamtis of Sadiya, in Colonel Dalton's time at least, used not only to bury their dead but to preserve the graves with particular care. The chief man of the colony, who has adopted the Hindu name of Mani Ram, is the grandson of the old Sadiya-khoa, whose office was taken away in 1839. He belongs to the noble family, or sept, of Lungting, while the common folk of his village are Mānchi, Lung-ya, and Lungthar.

Their clans.

Other septs in the Sadiya country are Man-phai, Man-Sai, Matun and Lung-pong.

143. From the foregoing account it will be understood why the Khamtis are found in the Lakhimpur District only. They numbered

Khamtis found in the Lakhimpur District only. 1,562 in 1872, and are 2,383 now, including Kamjangs and Phakials. Twenty-one Khamtis were numbered in the Sibsagar District in 1872, in whose place 275 people are now returned as Shans, and these are probably Abonias.

144. Miri, Daphla, and Abor are names which have been given by the Assamese to three sections of one and the same race, inhabiting the mountains between the Assam

Valley and Tibet, and settled also to some

number (especially the Miris) in the valley itself, where they follow a system of migratory cultivation. Their principal crops are summer rice and mustard, maize, and cotton, sown in clearances made by the axe and hoe in the forest or the jungle of reeds. Their villages, usually placed on or near the banks of a river, consists of a few houses built on platforms raised four or five feet above the naked surface of the plain, presenting a strong contrast to the ordinary Assamese village with its orchards of betel, palm, and plaintain and its embowering thicket of bamboos. Under the houses live the fowls and pigs which furnish out the village feasts, and the more prosperous villages keep herds of buffaloes also, though these people, like so many of the non-Aryan races of Assam, eschew milk as an unclean thing. The language spoken by all three sections of the race is practically one and the same. In geographical order, beginning from the eastern frontier of Bhutan, the succession is as follows:—Akas, a tribe closely akin to the Daphlas, but who have hitherto made no settlements in the plains; then Daphlas; next the hill Miris; and finally the Abors, at the eastern end of the valley. In point of importance, however, the Miris rank a long way first.

145. The Miris are much the oldest settlers and the most numerous. They are divided into two mutually exclusive sections, which

(1) The Miris.

are respectively known as Barahgam and Dolham or the twelve-clan and ten-clan Miris. These Assamese names give no clue to the origin of the distinction, but it seems probable that the Barahgam Miris are the older settlers. Their tradition is that their

(2) Barahgam Miris.

ancestors, to the number of twelve-score ladders (the ladder standing for the house to which it is the means of access) came down from the hills under their king Buruk Chutiya, who was himself one of the clan, and hence the Barahgam Miris call themselves Raibansi. A third appellation of theirs is Chutiya, which, they say, was given them by the Ahom kings, and which seems to denote that they were found resident in the Chutiya dominions at the time of their conquest by the Ahoms, and are thus to be distinguished from more recent settlers. They explain their subjection to the Ahoms by the fact that the ancestor of the Ahom king came down from heaven by a ladder of gold, while the clan of king Buruk originated in a person who came down by the humbler means of a ladder of bamboo, and was therefore destined to occupy an inferior position on the earth. Their king was entitled, however, to sit on the throne of the Ahoms for a day and a half in the year. The Barahgam Miris have only two phrōs, or clans, Pegu and Dore, both of which are exogamous, so that a Pegu man must marry a Dore woman, and vice versa. They say these are the names of two brothers



the ancestors of the tribe while yet in its native seats. The list of their *kheles* appears to be the following:—

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Dambukujal. | 7. Bonakual. |
| 2. Saengia. | 8. Tanaragoya. |
| 3. Moienyiyal. | 9. Jongoya. |
| 4. Oenial. | 10. Pangoya. |
| 5. Lasong-goya. | 11. Panti-pau. |
| 6. Dohutiyal. | 12. Yorang goya. |

It is not clear whether these 12 *kheles* correspond with the 12 clans of the Barahgam, but the clans are probably of much older origin, while the *kheles* chiefly take their names from places in the Assam Valley, only Oenial, Saengia, and Moienyiyal appearing to be genuine Miri names, and these three are claimed also by the Dohgam Miris. The Doham, or Oringam (as they call themselves, *oring* being the Miri word for "ten"), are divided into

(1) Dohgam Miris.

the exogenous *phoids* of Nora, Mili, Paien Kardiho, Konan, Pogak, and Siute. The story which the Dohgam Miris tell of their coming to Assam is that one of the Ahom kings established three depôts (*phorals*) of salt, dried fish, and cloth, wherewith he tempted them to come down and aid him against the Khamtis (whose invasion of Sadiya occurred in the last twelve or fifteen years of the 18th century), and that their original settlements were in Abhaipur, a tract of country between the Naga Hills and the Disang, which seems to have been assigned by the Ahom kings as a dwelling-place for more than one tribe of uncivilized allies.

146. Whether late or early immigrants, the Miris have hitherto preserved the parity of their race, their language, and their religion.

Physical aspect and customs.

Colonel Dalton describes them well as being "of the yellow Mongolian type, tall and powerfully framed, but with a slouching gait and sluggish habits." The beardless cheek and obliquely-set eyes of the Mongolian may be recognized in any Miri village. The strong well-nourished appearance of men and women alike is due, no doubt, to the animal food (beef excepted) which forms a large portion of their diet. Another point in favour of the race is their custom of marrying only at adult age. Betrothal may take place at childhood, but marriage is deferred until the young couple are able to set up house for themselves. Often the bridegroom-elect has to serve for his wife, perhaps several years, in the house of his father-in-law. The women weave their own petticoats of coarse cotton cloth in stripes of gray colours wrought with dyes obtained (as they say) from the Khamtis. Another article of domestic manufacture is the Miri rug (*jām*) made of cotton ticking on a backing of thick cloth. Upon the men alone devolves the labour of first clearing the jungle or felling the forest, but the use of the long Miri hoe is familiar to both sexes, and the women certainly take their full share of field labour.

147. The religion of the Miris is of a very rude and vague character, *Nekiri Nekiran* (or *Mekiri and Mekiran*) seem to be the

Their religious belief.

departed spirits of their male and female relatives, who require to be propitiated on the occasion of any small or great mischance. They also reverence the sun (*doinga*), the heaven (*talang*), and the earth (*mohashin*). The intermediary between these deities and mankind is the *Mibi* or *Mimbua*, a kind of sacrificial priest or medicine-man. The function is so far hereditary that one of the sons of a *Mimbua* will usually be a *Mimbua*, but the election depends upon the deity, who may just as easily choose an outsider. The process of vocation is thus described: About the age of eighteen the favourite of the god is driven by the spirit into the jungle, where he remains for many days unsupported by any food but what he finds there. At the end of the time he comes home a changed person, perhaps wearing snakes coiled harmlessly round his neck, but at any rate able thenceforth to commune with the invisible world, and to answer all manner of questions by intuitive knowledge; he also possesses the gifts of prophecy and of healing by prayer. Sometimes these gifts develop themselves only after the lad's illness on his return from the jungle, in which case a *Mimbua* has to be called

in to plead between him and the afflictive hand of the god. The Barahgam Miris, as

older residents of the valley, are partly fallen away from their old religion. *Nekiri* and *Nekiran* serve them well enough for small domestic occasions, but in public worship (*bōr kheve*) they invoke Sankar and Parameswar, and though it is still the *Mimbua* who officiates, the ordeal of vocation has been



dispensed with or forgotten. Whatever the deity, the essentials of worship are the same, consisting of the sacrifice of a fowl, a pig, or, on great occasions, a buffalo, and the drinking of rice-beer.

148. Miris bury their dead. They surround the grave with a fence, inside which they set up a piece of cloth at the end of a tall bamboo. During the following days they visit

Disposal of the dead.

the grave and look for the footprints of men or animals in its vicinity, and, if any are seen, they conclude that the person or creature to whom or which they belonged will shortly die.

149. The Miris, like other wild tribes, are distinguished by the Assamese into *bhakatia* and *abhakatia*, according as they are or are not followers of a Goshain. Their

Influence of Hindu Goshains.

Goshains are chiefly those of the Sibsagar District, on the south bank of the Brahmaputra, though the great majority of the Miri settlements are on the north bank in the island of the Majuli, itself the seat of some of the biggest Goshains in Assam. Their connection with the Goshain, however, is rather temporal than spiritual. It is worth their while to secure him as their friend by presents of a few annas yearly and a portion of mustard and pulse according to each man's means and inclination; but they have no Brahmins, nor do they adore any idol. In some places, however, I found that they had been prevailed on to leave off eating buffalo's flesh. That they are sinking into the mass of the Hindu population, however slowly, is proved by the existence of the class known as *wadi* or *gond*. Miris, who have given up their national custom of platform-houses and taken to living on the ground—a change which signifies also a departure from many other national customs, religion included.

150. The religion of the Hill Miris, who come down to the valley with madder in the cold season, is quite as vague as that of the settlers in the plains, but here the place of

(c) The Hill Miris.

Nekiri and Nekirán is taken by the Yápu, a kind of sylvan deity, who suffices for the needs of every-day life, though in critical conjunctures some greater god has to be gained over by the sacrifice of a mithan. A Hill Miri told me how he had once, while a boy, actually seen a Yápu. The character of this god is that he lives in trees, and all the beasts of the forest obey him. My informant was throwing stones in a thicket by the edge of a pool, and suddenly became aware that he had hit the Yápu, who was, sitting at the foot of a tree in the likeness of an old grey-bearded man. A dangerous illness was the consequence, from which the boy was saved by an offering of a dog and four fowls made by his parents to the offended Yápu, who has subsequently visited him in dreams. The hillmen propitiate also the spirits of the dead, called "Orom" in their own language (apparently) and "Mora deo" by them in Assamese. Their tribes are very numerous. I easily obtained a list of some fifty, which are subjoined: (1)

I.—PANIBOTIA MIRIS

(who come down the rivers.)

Bini.
Bottom.
Biku.
Gocham.
Moragán.
Golom.
Ghomoor.
Goda.
Gobha.
Taya.

Lala.
Talen (Talam).
Chimiri (Timur).
Hipo.
Gochi.
Lumai.
Huro.
Duri.
Doomur.
Chilhari.
Nimar.
Meli.
Lidak.
Ducha.

II.—TIBHOTIA MIRIS

(who come across country).

Hondori (Hondan).
Doboni.
Ukar.
Bomrik.
Nidu.
Lie.
Tiera.
Faro.
Bakpo.
Lika.
Sojan.
Kerit.
Kabak.
Tekar.
Dowán.
Tár.
Baba.
Ronga.
Sih.
Phet.
Oh.
Aika.
Mobia.
Mali.
Miba.
Hili.

But these include some *phoids* of the same tribe, i.e., section or families within the limits of which marriage is interdicted. The Timur or Chimiri tribe, for instance, has the four *phoids* of Hipo, Tejir, Tore and Lumo. Over and above this minute sub-division into tribes, there seem to be two main divisions of Tiro and Tane, or the inhabitants of the lower and the higher ranges respectively. The Chutya Miris are said by their hill

(1) I believe, however, that these are really the names of Miri (and in some cases of Abor) villages in the mountains, though possibly each village may also be a clan.



brethren to have belonged to the Tiro, while the so called Anka (or tattooed) Miris, who are distinguished from all others by having for their habitation a spacious well-watered plain far back in the mountains, are of the Tino or Tening (Colonel Dalton's *Tenas*) ; or it may be that the division is the other way, and that Anka and Chutiya Miris are related to each other as *Tine* and *Tare* of the same tribe.

151. The accepted explanation of the name *Miri* is that it is an Assamese word, signifying a go-between, and that it was applied to this section of the northern hill-

people as their special character as traders and interpreters between the mountains and the plains. We find the same thing on the south side of the valley, where the Nagas of the nearer ranges enjoy the monopoly of trading, and are ready to defend it by force of arms against the tribes of the background. The plains-dwelling Miris, less fortunate, have been pushed down from their hills by the pressure from behind. The common story is that they were slaves to the Abors, and they themselves, while not actually confessing this, admit that hostilities with the Abors (whom they claim as near relations) were the cause of their leaving the hills. One of their settlements on the Dikrang is known as that of the *khulas* or freed Miris. It must always be borne in mind, however, that the name *Miri* is merely an Assamese term applied at random. Hill Miris and Plains Miris speak almost exactly the same language, while the language of the Hill Miris is said to be identical with that of the Abors.

152. The mountain region occupied by the Miris is situated midway between the country of the Abors on the east and that of the Daphlas on the west. The Assamese word

(2) The Abors.

abor means independent (*bori* mean "subject or dependent" and *bor* is the root of the verb meaning "to submit or own allegiance"), and the Abors may have been so called by way of contrast with the vassal Miris. So closely are Abors and Miris connected that the names of some of their tribes (Rotom, Beni, Talen, Lepu, Laha and Chumir) are the same, but the Abor branch of Chumir is said to be distinguished by the custom of eating dogs; in fact, they are cynophagists. Occasional intercourse is still maintained between them and Miris long settled in the plains. In one of the houses of a Miri village of the Majnah, I found a young Abor girl who had been purchased from her parents for Rs. 60 by a Miri on a trading visit to the hills. He had brought her up as one of his family, but she was easily distinguishable from them by her fairer complexion and more strongly marked Mongolian features. The Abors have only just begun to settle in our territory, mostly between the inner and outer lines of frontier, and consequently beyond the limit of the census.

153. The origin and meaning of the name Daphla are not known. As pronounced in Lakhimpur, it would be written Dompila.

(3) The Daphlas. Meaning of the name.

They call themselves *Niso* or *Nising*. The Miris they call *Bodo* and the Abors *Tegin*, but this last word seems to be merely the name of a tribe common to the Abors and Daphlas. The Daphla name for the natives of the Assam Valley is *Haring*.

154. The Daphlas, like the Abors, are recent settlers. Of late years they have been coming down in small communities of five or six families at a time, driven by scarcity of

Their history and customs.

food or by the oppressions of the Abors. Some of these little colonies suffer terribly from sickness, and a Daphla hamlet too often presents a sad array of tenantless and decaying houses. The Daphlas are less laborious cultivators than the Miris. Their villages are not so well stocked, nor so comfortable, nor are the men so tall as the Miris, though the eastern Daphlas are physically very fine fellows. They bring the hair forward, wind it in a ball over the forehead, and stick a skewer of wood or metal through it (a silver arrow in the case of a chieftain). A habit of slightly contracting the brows gives them a singularly proud and stern appearance. As one goes westward, however, the race degenerates in physique and in the outward appearance of prosperity, and the westernmost Daphlas are squalid and dirty. Yet they regard themselves as superior to the Miris, with whom they will acknowledge no relationship—a fact which seems to bear out the tradition of Miri vassalage.

155. Daphla and Miri speak practically the same language, and their deities, Yapun and Orom, are the same. The Yapun are male and female, and exist in indefinite num-

Their religion.

bers. A white goat or fowl is their appropriate victim. The Daphlas also count the sun among their deities, but their great god, who requires a mithan to propitiate him, is called *Hi* or *Wi*, of whom no Daphla cares to speak much for fear of incurring his displeasure. His character may be guessed from the Assamese equivalent of his name, *Yoni* or *Yama*, the god of the infernal regions.



156. In contrast to their repudiation of the Miris, the Daphias are very ready to

claim close relationship with the Abors, who

seem to be the most powerful of the three

sections of the race. Though separated by the whole breadth of the Miri country as marked on the map, the Daphias and Abors have a number of tribes in common, speak the same language, and are free to intermarry. The following is a list of Daphia tribes:—

Tina	Tanggö	Bato
Toku	Tobu	Chiri
Tachu	Aya	Pamá
Teri	Nabum	Tikhak
Kára	Pá	Talak
Yávö	Táde	Hölung
Höin	Tángö	Táphu
Nári	Rafa	Tesin
Chuhu	Tábiyá	Teghing
Tening	Beta	Tabang
Tochi	Gohing	Táo
Táde	Obubor	

Marriage between members of the same tribe is forbidden, as also between members of tribes which are regarded as having a common ancestor.

157. The total numbers of Miris, Abors, and Daphias in the Assam Valley (within the inner line) in 1872 and 1881 is shown in the subjoined table—

MIRIS.							ABORS.	DAPHIAS.			Grand Total.
	Kamrup.	Darrang.	Nowgong.	Subagar.	Lakhimpur.	Total.	Lakhimpur.	Darrang.	Lakhimpur.	Total.	
1872 ...	107	2,048	225	6,651	4,896	13,917	None	263	155	418	14,335
1881 ...	...	3,113	...	10,836	11,087	25,036	821	339	210	549	27,006

The Abors, it will be seen, are quite recent settlers. Daphias are found in the western part of North Lakhimpur and the eastern part of Darrang. They once had a settlement so far west as Hakomata, within 27 miles of Tezpur, but it was abandoned some years ago for sites further east. The number returned by the census has since been augmented by new colonies of immigrants in 1882 and 1883. The increase among the Miris is remarkable, and must be ascribed chiefly to immigration.

158. Two remarks are due to the reputation of these tribes. Colonel Dalton says

Reputation of certain customs.

that polyandry is common among the Daphias.

To me, however, they repudiated the practice with horror, and declared that it would be visited with death. The Miris of the Majhuli, again, utterly denied that their boys and girls were ever allowed to come together in the manner which "Colonel Dalton" describes as a festival which few of the uninitiated even hear of."



179. It is doubtful whether Matak (Moran) should have been returned as a separate caste at all. Matak is the name of an old division of Upper Assam lying between the

(37. Matak (Moran).—(1) Matak.

Noo Dihing, the Brahmaputra, and the southern mountains, and thus including nearly the whole of the present Lakhimpur District on the south bank. The common designation of the people of this country would be Matak (a word which Robinson says is of Khamti origin), but what the term now denotes is not a resident of the country, but a follower of the Matak Goshain, and this latter distinction again, whatever may have been its effect in former times, does not now avail to constitute a separate caste. The original Matak, or Moamaris Goshain was a Kolita, who taught the doctrines of the Vaishnava school, which he had probably inherited from Sankar, and whose disciples, comprising the great bulk of the inhabitants of Matak country, may have been bound together by community of worship into a single religious body, in which caste differences were for the moment sunk. The tradition, in fact, is that the Mataks were converted by Sankar. They are characterised by Robinson and others as people of the lowest castes. The Lakhimpur census returns explain what this means, for they show that two-thirds of the population of Matak consists of non-Aryan tribes, while among the Hindu portion the two respectable castes of Kolita and Keot constitute barely one-fifth. The Assamese of the lower districts regarded the Goshain and his medley following with some contempt, which they expressed by the term Moamaris, or catchers of the *Moafish*, in allusion to the fishing carried on by his Dom disciples in the lake on whose bank the Goshain had his seat. This was in the Majhuli, a large island in the Brahmaputra between the Sibagar and Lakhimpur Districts, and the name of the first Goshain who resided there is said to have been Aniruddha. The Shattri was subsequently transferred to the vicinity of Gorhat. Towards the middle of the last century an Ahom queen, jealous of the honour of Goshain (Kali), the goddess of her own Pantris Goshain, compelled certain Moamaris and their Goshain to do homage to the goddess by rubbing the sacrificial blood on their foreheads. Such an insult, the extremity of pollution for a Vaishnava, was not forgotten, and some thirty years later the Moamaris rose in open rebellion, and obtained possession of the capital, whence they were not finally expelled until after several disastrous conflicts, which shook the Ahom kingdom towards its fall. In their own country they maintained their independence, and remained a tributary state under British rule until 1839, when their chief was deposed, and they were absorbed into the rest of the province. As religious body, however, they never recovered from the effects of the bloody struggles around the Ahom capital, in which the Goshain had been killed and his most devoted followers dispersed. Forty years ago they were still to be found, under the name of Moamaris, in all parts of the Assam Valley, but the nickname has since fallen out of use, and its former synonym Matak is now heard only in Upper Assam, where it may mean either an inhabitant of the Matak country, or a follower of some Kolita Goshain who claims to represent the historical Moamaris. In the latter sense the bearer of the name is usually careful to distinguish himself as a *purana bhagat*, or old believer. But this, as remarked above, is not a caste distinction, though it may happen that the followers of such a Goshain are mainly drawn from some one caste, such as the Doms.

The few Mataks shown in the census returns are characterized as Moran. The meaning of the word Moran is not very clear.

(2) Moran.

It was the name applied to the upper portion of the Matak country, and is now used to designate the extensive tract of waste land to the east and north-east of Dibrugarh, where several Goshains still have their residence. A follower of one of these Goshains would call himself Matak Moran, but the distinction is one neither of caste nor nationality. In Pemberton's *Report on the Eastern Frontier*, and in other early works relating to Assam, the Moamaris, Mataks, or Morans are spoken of as a distinct tribe or nation. The Morans are mentioned in Assamese history as having been subdued by the Ahom invader in 1251, A.D. Robinson says that the word *Mora* means "inhabitants of the jungles"; and the occupation assigned them by the Ahom conqueror, namely that of wood-cutters, consorts well enough with this derivation. In a list of divisions of the people according to the service exacted from each class under the Ahom system of government, grass-cutters are mentioned as *Habungia* or Moran, the former of which words certainly means "frequenters of the jungle" (*habu*). The distinctive nationality of the Morans, whatever it may have been, has long since disappeared. I suspect that 220 persons returned in the present census as



Matak (Moran) are all inhabitants of a single village in North Lakhimpur, and in that case they are Ahoms. The census of 1872 shows 14 Matak in Kamrup, 84 in Sibsagar, and 113 in Lakhimpur.

187. With regard to the non-Aryan languages, the chief authorities are Mr. Brian Hodgson's Essays, in which he gives a vocabulary and grammar of the "Bodo, Koch, and

Thimal tribes," with a dissertation on their origin and history; and (in the 2nd volume) comparative vocabularies of a number of tribes in the eastern part of the Brahmaputra Valley. Colonel Dalton, in his *Ethnology of Bengal*, gives short descriptions of most of the hill and aboriginal tribes of Assam, with specimens of vocabularies; and comparative lists of words have been compiled by Sir George Campbell in 1874, and by Dr. W. W. Hunter. Colonel McCulloch, in his account of Manipur, gave a series of vocabularies of Naga and Kuki dialects, and the late Mr. Damant also published a pamphlet containing vocabularies in a great number of languages between the Brahmaputra and the Ningthi.

The non-Aryan languages may be grouped as follows:

I.—*Bodo or Boro*, the language of the great Kachari race (Koch is merely the tribal name of Kacharis who have given up their native speech and adopted Bengali), under which come Mech and Rabha (it is doubtful if they differ materially from Kachari), Lalung, Chutipa, Garo with its offshoot Hajong, and Tiperah; Mikir is perhaps an outlying member of this group. The vocabulary is very different, but the grammatical structure is said to be similar.

II.—*Aka, Daffa, Mici, Ahom and Mishmi*.—These five tribes live on the Himalayan slopes to the north of the British frontier, and are said to be all more or less mutually intelligible. The Mici of the valley are said by some authorities to speak a different language from the hill Mici (in Dr. Hunter's *Comparative Dictionary* they occupy a separate place), but is generally thought that the speech is the same.

III.—*The Shân languages*, which are nearly identical; their members in Assam are Ahom, which is said to be lost as a current speech, but to survive among the Deoris or priests, and Karbi, Phakial and Aitonni, which are distinguished from Ahom by the fact that the two former tribes had been converted to Buddhism before their advent in Assam, and their vocabulary has been affected thereby. The Aitonias are of mixed descent, and are said to speak a language compounded of Khamti and Assamese. Extensive libraries of religious Shân books in manuscript exist in most large villages of these races in the house of the bāpu or monk.

IV.—*Thibetan*, the language of Bhutan, whether independent or subject to Lassa; the Bhutan Bhutias, Thibetia Bhutias and Towang Bhutias all come down to trade in Assam, but rarely to settle.

V.—*The Naga group* of languages, which possibly includes the Singpho.

VI.—*The Kuki group*, reaching up from south of Manipur and Cachar to the North Cachar and Naga hills, and probably including Manipur; a Manipuri dictionary exists, and Major Lewis has published a volume on the "Dzo or Lushai Kuki language."

VII.—*The Khasi*, which is believed to be an isolated race and tongue of which no relative exists nearer than Annam.

All these languages are represented in the census, except the Aka, Ahom, Chutipa, Phakial and Aitonni tongues; the Ahom, as already observed, is hardly a spoken tongue now, but several villages exist in which the three last are spoken, though the enumerators have failed to record them.



188. The following table shows the number who are returned as speaking the different languages talked in the country, which have been described above—

				Surma Valley.	Barmaputra Valley.	Hill Tracts.	Total of Province.
<i>Class I.—Argan Languages of Permanent Inhabitants.</i>							
Bengali	...	...	...	6,114,606	309,968	1,311	2,425,873
Assamese	...	...	...	1,067	1,356,758	534	1,361,359
Urdu	...	...	...	80,581	34,311	1,603	94,495
<i>Class II.—Non-Argan Languages.</i>							
Kachari	...	...	...	5,092	246,977	11,117	263,186
Mech	...	...	...	...	67,885	5	68,890
Rabha	...	...	...	207	60,285	7	60,499
Lalung	...	...	...	63	45,347	1,605	46,929
Garó	...	...	...	297	23,517	88,434	112,248
Hajong	...	...	...	585	561	80	1,226
Tippera	...	...	...	3,984	...	...	3,984
Mikir	...	...	...	630	69,515	8,691	77,705
Daffa	...	...	...	...	549	...	549
Miri	...	...	...	...	25,634	...	25,636
Abor	...	...	...	...	831	...	831
Mishmi	...	...	...	...	681	...	681
Khampti	...	...	...	...	2,383	...	2,383
Khampti	...	...	...	...	73	...	73
Khampti	...	...	...	...	1,340	...	1,340
Khampti	...	...	...	...	1,340	4,026	11,650
Naga	...	...	...	5,994	1,774	...	1,774
Singpho	...	...	...	47,358	149	116	47,623
Manipur	...	...	...	3,842	3,785	7,067	10,694
Kuki	...	...	...	2,736	518	164,439	167,693
Khasi	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total of Class II	...	...	...	70,810	638,956	275,383	882,907
<i>Class III.—Spoken by Temporary Settlers.</i>							
Nepalese	...	...	...	469	2,521	1,365	4,355
Sinhali	...	...	...	4,644	2,280	114	7,038
Nagari	...	...	...	1,942	377	...	2,319
Urdu	...	...	...	1,733	704	2	2,439
Marwari	...	...	...	...	914	17	931
Punjabi	...	...	...	...	247	63	310
Pashtu	...	...	...	10	...	2	12
Tamul	...	...	...	219	13	10	242
Telugu	...	...	...	83	...	4	87
Armenian	...	...	...	5	...	...	5
Arabic	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Chinese	...	...	...	...	9	...	9
Total of Class III	...	...	...	9,136	1,677	1,570	18,283
European language	...	...	...	299	601	231	1,131
Unspecified	...	...	...	4,055	1,070	2	5,127

193. Garo is spoken only by the Garo race, who are found not only in the Garo Hills but in the lower slopes and valleys at the foot of the hills in the Cachar and Sylhet, Goalpara and Kumrap. A few scattered members of the clan were also censused in Darrang, Newgong and Sibhagar. In the valley tract attached to the Garo Hills 3,098 persons were enumerated as Garos by race, but a larger number, 3,242 as speaking the



Garo language. This can hardly be true. Educational works in the Garo tongue (which is believed to be akin to Kachari) have been published by the American missionaries at Tura, transliterated in the Roman and the Bengali character.

194. The Mech and Rabha languages are closely connected with Kachari, and it is

Mech, Rabha, Hajong.

believed that there is no real difference between them; but their grammar and vocabulary

have not been reduced to writing yet. It is reported that a Rabha will often describe himself, when asked his race, as a Raoha-Kachari. The same persons are returned as Mechs and Rabhas by language and by race in every district. The Hajongs, again, are believed to be semi-Hinduised Garos, who have settled on the lower spurs and in the valleys at the foot of the Garo Hills on both the north and south sides of the range; in the valley tract attached to the Garo Hills, 3,689 have been returned as Hajongs by race, while only 581 are recorded as speaking that language. Here, perhaps, the discrepancy (if it be not due, as in Lakhimpur, to an error of the enumerators) may be taken as a sign that the use of the language is dying out, and that Bengali is usurping its place.

195. All Mikirs by race are recorded as speaking the Mikir language, of which a vocabulary has been published by the local American Mission.

Mikir.

196. The same persons (25,635 in number) are returned as belonging to the Miri race and speaking the Miri language. They are found in Darrang, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur.

Miri.

197. The term Naga covers a variety of languages as well as of races. The "Kachicha Nagas" of North Cachar have no

Naga

connection, as far as we are aware, with the

Nagas or Nagas in the hills south of Sibsagar, of whom several branches exist, differing in tongue or at least in dialect, such as the Jobokas, Banterias, Namsangias and many others, as far as the Patkoi range; and in the Naga Hills District there are four races, the Angamis, Lhotas, Bengmas and Semas, who differ completely both in language and dress. Three grammars and phrase-books of the Angami Naga language have been prepared by three officers to compete for a prize offered by the Chief Commissioner, and one of these will, it is hoped, ere long be published.

198. The Manipuris for the most part settled in Cachar and Sylhet about the time

Manipuri.

of the Burmese invasion of Manipur, and the local officers do not believe that any considerable

emigration goes on now from Manipur into the Surma Valley. They have identified themselves with the habits of the people of the valley, and though a race of mixed Kuki and Naga origin, have become more Hindu than the Hindus, professing themselves to be Kshatriyas and to regard the tenets of caste with especial veneration. It might therefore have been expected that a large number of them would have dropped the Manipuri as their mother-tongue and have adopted the Bengali of Cachar and Sylhet, which in effect they all habitually speak. But not only have all Manipuris by race been returned as speaking that language, but in Cachar, while there are 26,745 Manipuris by race (Table VIII), the census returns show 33,922 persons as speaking Manipuri. This is an obvious error, but no explanation of the way in which it occurred has been given. The number of Manipuris is believed to be much under-rated in both districts, but especially in Sylhet, where the Deputy Commissioner believed that they approached more nearly 30,000 than 13,000. It is possible that some of them desirous of exalting their rank returned themselves as Hindus of good castes.

199. The Santong has been classified in Table IX as a different language from the

Khasi.

Khasi, this is a mistake; the language of these two races is identical, though there is a

tendency to divergence in different parts of the district as to the use of particular words. The number of Khasis by race and by tongue agrees in respect of all districts except the Khasi Hills, but here a strange discrepancy occurs: Table VIII shows 101,575 Khasis by race; and Table IX, 106,620 Khasis by language; so that people have been returned as speaking the language though not of the Khasi race. Attention has already been drawn to the anomaly that in Table III B, 104,177 persons are recorded as Khasis by religion. The Khasi has no written character, and has been transliterated in the Roman character by the Welsh missionaries who have published several works in it for the use of their primary schools and of English students of the language.



200. The languages of the smaller hill races—Bhutanes, Dapulas, Abors and Mishmis on the north frontier, Khamtis and Singy hos on the north-east, Kakis on the south-east and Tipperahs on the south—call for no special remark: in all these cases the numbers agree in the tables which record race and tongue.

Extracted from Final Table I.

	Area.	Villages.	Houses.	Males.	Females.	Total population.
	Sq. miles.					
HILL DISTRICTS ...	Cachar Hill Tracts	300	5,470	12,388	12,065	24,453
	Garo Hills	753	15,516	43,359	42,894	86,253
	Khasi and Jaintia Hills.	1,546	35,948	80,543	88,817	169,360
	Naga Hills, Civil and Military.	1	100	1,351	89	1,440
	Naga Hill Tracts (estimated).	231	...	46,500	46,500	93,000
Total ...	18,202	2,830	53,134	184,132	180,695	364,827



APPENDIX K.

ARTICLES ON FRONTIER WORK AND POLICY, 1870-72.

Pioneer, the 12th March 1870.

It is always to be regretted if, in a case where the Government of India, for reasons of

Act XXII. of 1869.

State policy, has recourse to exceptional legislation, it does not take care that full information

as to its aims and motives is at once laid before the public. Nothing is more calculated to produce inquiet, in the minds even of reasonable men, than the idea that the Executive Government is prepared to set aside the action of the Courts of law by *ex post facto* enactments, framed to give validity to arbitrary and illegal proceedings. If the provisions of Act XXII. of 1869 (the Garo Hills Act) have been subjected already to hostile criticism, this has, we believe, been entirely owing to the reticence of Government itself—reticence which, now that the Act has become law, is not only meaningless but mischievous. We have had an opportunity of perusing a volume of papers bearing on the early history of the Garo frontier, printed and privately circulated by the late General Jenkins; and these read in connection with other published documents enable us to give what we think a correct account of the Act in question and its *raison d'être*.

The plains lying at the foot of the Garo Hills were found by the Muhammadan invaders of Eastern Bengal in the possession of a few powerful landholders of Hindu, or possibly of mixed Hindu and Garo blood, to whom the Muhammadans gave the title not of 'Zamindar' but of 'Chowdry.' The revenue settlement made with these Chowdries was assessed not upon the land as elsewhere, but upon certain transit and market dues, the bulk of which was realized on the trade carried on with the Garo mountaineers at the 'kotes of passes' or frontier markets established at the foot of the hills. The main staple of this trade was cotton, which the Garos brought down annually in large quantities to barter for cloth and salt. So long as the Chowdries paid their tribute at Rangamattia, and 'squared' the Fouldar there with occasional gifts of elephants or sandalwood, they were left to manage their estates as they pleased. Accordingly, the more ambitious of them entered upon a career of conquest in the hills, and on the side of Gawalpara several of them succeeded in annexing such outlying spurs as ran into their zamindaries on the plains. On the Garo villages so conquered they levied a house-tax, and generally took as much as they could manage to get, after the manner of annexationists, ancient or modern. The natural consequence of these proceedings, and of the never-ending chicanery and oppression practised on the hillmen at the frontier markets, was a chronic enmity between the Garos and the Zamindars, relieved occasionally by wild murderous raids of the hillmen into the plains, or tax-gathering forays of burkundazes into the hills. And this state of things continued for years after the British Government had taken nominal possession of North-East Bengal. The revenue settlement of the Chowdries was, however, placed by us upon a different footing. We generally directed our best attention to revenue settlements. An assessment was put upon the land, and a more enlightened policy led ultimately to the abolition of 'sayer' and transit dues throughout the country. But as 'sayer' had been a prolific source of income to the landholders of Gawalpara and Mymensing, particular enquiries were instituted as to the amount of compensation to be given them for its loss. Accordingly Mr. John Elliott in 1788-89 made careful inquiry along the north boundary of Pergumals Sherepore and Suo-sung, in Mymensing, as to the dues levied by the zamindars at the frontier markets. He found that as the Garos were too wary to venture far into the plains, these markets were invariably established at, or in, the passes leading to the hills, and were strongly



guarded by the zemindar's burkundazes. Beyond these markets the zemindars dared not venture save with large armed parties for elephant-hunting or for purposes of high-handed regulation. "The Garos beyond the kotes of passes were (he said) entirely independent." The zemindars were, therefore, given a land settlement for their estates on the plains only, and they got compensation for the loss of the dues they levied at the marts. But beyond the line of these markets they engaged for nothing. That was the country of the Garo men. The Surveyor General's Department and the sub-divisional system had not, however, then been inaugurated, and, in the absence of local supervision and precise maps, the zemindars sedulously, and with much satisfaction to themselves, continued to levy dues at the Garo hills, and succeeded now and again in collecting tribute from some wretched village in the hills. In Gawalpara the over-recurring raids of the Garos led the Government to discover the irritant cause; and as the task of repressing incursions now fell on the Government Police, it was determined after careful enquiry to exclude the Bengali zemindars and their rapacious amlah entirely from the hills, giving them such compensation as might prevent their suffering by the loss of any profits they there enjoyed, however illegally acquired. Regulation X of 1822 was passed to give these arrangements the force of law, and it was distinctly the intention of Government at that time that it should apply to the whole of the Garo Hills. As a fact, Garo villages on the Mymensing side were actually settled by the Gawalpara authorities under that regulation. Long years passed of which we know little, till a series of bloody raids by Garos on the plains of Mymensing led the Bengal Government in 1866 to enquire into the state of the hills on that side, and it was found that the villages were in a ferment, because the Shoosung zemindar had been steadily pushing further and further into their midst, levying house-tax by armed burkundazes and closing the frontier markets entirely to those who proved contumacious. Twelve serious raids in the course of four years showed that matters were come to a crisis. A costly expedition was sent into the hills to punish the perpetrators of the last incursion, and the inquiries then made clearly established the fact that the oppression of the Shoosung Rajah's amlah was the cause of all the trouble. In 1859 it had been decided by the Revenue authorities that Pergunnah Shoosung terminated at the foot of the Garo Hills—as the records of 1789 now show that it indubitably did. The Rajah was, however, suing in the Civil Court to establish his right to include in it over 600 square miles of territory in the hills. Of this suit Government knew nothing till it came into the High Court, when it was too late to offer further evidence than had locally been preferred, and the Rajah was able to prove easily enough that some Garo villages had now and again paid him tribute, and that the local officers had now and again admitted this. Local officers in Bengal know little of the previous history of their district, and take little trouble over Government suits. With the approval of the Secretary of State it was determined to put Regulation X of 1822 in force, and to exclude the Rajah from interference in the hills as the only means of preserving a quiet frontier. This was done, but the High Court, on the very imperfect case put before it for Government, decided that the wording of the Regulation was not wide enough to cover these arrangements. It ruled that the Rajah had shown that he had some rights beyond the line laid down by the survey as the north boundary of his estate, but it left him still to show what the extent of these rights actually was. In 1866 the Government had inaugurated in the Garo Hills that policy of direct management by selected officers which will, we believe, in a few years reclaim all the wild tribes on our north-east frontier, and the question which it had now to decide was, whether it should permit the civilization of a whole people to be indefinitely hindered by the grasping machinations of a Bengali zemindar, when it knew his pretensions, however specious, to be unsound. The High Court itself had, as regards the Bhutan Dwaris, pressed upon Government the fact that their tribunal, bound as it was to decide only on legal proof, was not a proper forum when considerations of frontier policy, and the settlement of barbarous tracts, came to be dealt with. Tenderness or regard for the social virtues of the Shoosung Rajah, and we believe he is not destitute of these, would have been a crime. Act XXII of 1869, therefore, by re-enacting Regulation X of 1822 in less ambiguous terms, enabled the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to exclude the Rajah's dependents from the hills, and to place the direct management of the Garos in the hands of the Deputy Commissioner. Full compensation will under the Act be given to the Rajah for every right he can show that he exercised; for all the profits he can prove that he enjoyed. What the result of Government policy in dealing with the Garos has been we may be able at some future day to show. But meantime we trust we have made it clear that higher considerations than a petulant resolve not to be worsted in a civil suit led the Government to the passing of the Garo Hills Act of 1869.



Pioneer, the 16th March 1870.

In dealing with the hill people on the North-East Frontier, the Government is

The Garo Hills District.

confronted by two distinct problems. It has first to ward off the attacks of the outer tribes

dwelling amid the great mountain systems that flank the Empire, and next it has to consider how best to bring under control the inhabitants of the ranges that intersect our settled districts. In regard to the former, it has long ago been seen that to enter on a career of indefinite conquest towards Thibet, China, or Burma, were vain and profitless. The policy adopted, therefore, has been in theory one of watchful preparedness, subject no doubt to occasional lapses, but on the whole effective. Conciliation by free admission to trade, interpreted and emphasized by a strong line of frontier posts, is what Government offers to the Abors, Mishmees, and such like tribes. A similar policy was for a long time pursued towards those other races who occupy the broad range of hills that lies between the Assam Valley and the plains of Cachar, Sylhet, and Mymensing. Leaving out of sight the Khasias, with whom special circumstances led us into settled relations at a comparatively early date, we here refer particularly to the Nagas and Garos. Of the Nagas, their history, their sufferings, and their reclamation, we may find another opportunity to speak. At present we must confine our remarks to the more westerly tribe of Garos. Long before our accession to power, these mountaineers had dealings with the low country; and among the earliest documents in our records is a proposal by Rangta, Chief of all the Garos, to become a Company's zemindar, were he only delivered from the oppression of his neighbours, the Bengalees of the plains. Nothing, however, came of this, and the Garos were left to settle their own quarrels, and ravage periodically the frontier villages, till the time of Mr. David Scott, the great Pro-Consul of North-East Bengal. Under his vigorous rule efforts were made to bring the Garo Chiefs under our influence and control. Regulation X of 1822 was passed to remove from their midst the intrigues and oppressions of Bengali zemindars and their amlaas. The frontier markets were thrown open to the hillmen, and for a time it really seemed as if this would be one of the first races to accept our rule and its attendant benefits. But David Scott died—the conquest of Assam and more imperial claims drew off the attention of Government—the Garos of the inner hills fell away from all engagements with us, and only on the outer verge of the plateau was an uncertain control kept up and a kind of spasmodic order preserved by the darogahs and burkundazes of the neighbouring thanahs. The country became a land unknown; the people were proved uncouth and dangerous. Protected by deadly and all but impenetrable thickets the Garos' fastnesses were for long years inviolate; their outrages unchecked and for the most part unpunished. When now and again some more than ordinarily ferocious raid had desolated whole villages, and filled each little frontier mart with horror, a Company of Sepoys or Police would perhaps struggle up into the hills, and after burning the first village they could find, hurry down again, half of them silly from fever, and the rest halt and maimed from stumbling over the pitfalls of an enemy they had never seen. The general policy of both Local and Supreme Governments up to 1860 was to have no direct dealings whatever with the savage tribes of the Assam Valley. Non-interference did its worst. Bengal, however, at last got a Ruler who saw in these mountain ranges an integral part of the province committed to his charge, and who did not regard with complacency the gross darkness that had gathered round them, broken only, as it seemed, by the glare of burning villages on hill and plain. Sir Cecil Beadon took up the problem so long laid by, and enunciated a policy the results of which have already surprised those who hoped for most. It was in truth no new policy. It was merely the reiteration of the old, but still inexplicable fact, that one British officer of tact and firmness living in the midst of an inferior race, ready to redress their grievances, to sympathize with their wants, and punish their crimes, can turn the hearts of that people to himself, and lead them forward to civilization and peace. In 1866 the Garo Hills District was founded, and Lieutenant Williamson, an officer whose subsequent proceedings have amply shown the wisdom of his selection, was directed to establish himself permanently on the Tura peak, in the very heart of the Garo Hills. Furnished, of course, with a sufficient guard he lost no time in taking up his station. The Garos at first viewed his advent with suspicion, but he fortunately possessed accomplishments that awoke their wonder, and ultimately won their respect. Unerring skill with the rifle, and a soundness of wind and limb that enabled him to beat the village leaders in a race uphill, were a better introduction for him than even his armed police. Community after community have come in to tender their allegiance, and when last the Commissioner visited the hills, there met him from one circle alone seventeen Chiefs, fourteen of whom had never paid tribute to man. And all these are bloodless victories.



Raids have apparently ceased to be. Human sacrifice has been everywhere repressed, a dog now taking the place of the nobler victim. Only a small portion of the country remains unvisited, and into that no English foot has ever penetrated. Lieutenant Williamsou, however, hopes to enter it from the side of the Khasi Hills next cold weather; and already the Commissioner has reported that he sees in near prospect the complete submission of the Garo Hills to the British Government—a conquest as cheap financially as it is politically valuable. The field here opened for the Teacher and the Missionary we need do no more than indicate. We scarcely dare hope that there may not hereafter arise some difficulties. A nation is not born in a day. But to secure success it is essentially necessary that the influence of our officers brought to bear on these savages directly and undisturbed. The invariable consequence of the machinations and encroachments of Bengalee landlords in these hills has been outrage and bloodshed. We know that they have no substantial right there, but let us buy up whatever they by use have acquired. The simplicity of a hillman makes him the easy victim of the Bengalee, whether it be in Southalm, or among the Garos, or in the Hill Tracts of Chittagong. Our Government has had some costly lessons on this subject, let us hope it will profit by them.

The system under which the Garo Hills are administered is simple and devoid of technicalities. Each village has its Lukma or headman, who is primarily responsible for the payment of its tribute, the production of offenders and the maintenance of order. Over every circle of villages is placed a Luskur or petty Chief, chosen for his influence and good character. The Luskurs try all cases of theft, injury to property, injury to the person not affecting life or limb, house-trespass and affronts, provided neither of the parties is a near relative of their own or a foreigner. They punish by fine, after proceedings held in open durbar in the presence of at least three witnesses. Either party, if dissatisfied, can appeal forthwith to the Deputy Commissioner who tries the case *de novo*. In the same way the Luskurs, each in his own jurisdiction, try civil suits—their procedure being entirely oral. The Deputy Commissioner hears such cases on appeal, and ordinarily settles them by reference to a punchayet. Houses, needful clothing, cooking utensils, implements of husbandry and seed-grain are exempt from attachment and sale. No professional pleaders or mockhars are allowed. The tribute paid as a house-tax levied on each village is intended to be rather an acknowledgement of submission than a source of revenue. Altogether, the idea of the hill administration is village self-government under the immediate superintendence and watchful eye of the resident British officer. What the results have been we have already shown.

Pioneer, the 18th August 1870.

We have more than once drawn attention to the progress which civilisation and order are making in the Garo Hills. We have done this with a two-fold object. It is, on the one hand, interesting to know the dealings of Government with hill races, hitherto reckoned dangerous and irreclaimable; and, on the other, it is no small encouragement and satisfaction to our frontier officers to think that their labours are not wholly overlooked, and that their countrymen are sympathising with their trials and triumphs. We doubt if the residents in towns and favoured stations, the frequenters of band-stands and lovers of croquet, ever realise the position and life of the gallant young fellows, who amid jungles and swamps and rugged hills are rough-hewing the savage peoples of the frontier into shapely members of the body politic. The solitude and self-sacrifice of such a life are but little understood. With no companions but his police guard; no recreation save that afforded by his gun; exposed to the deadly miasm of the valleys; a Native doctor his only medical adviser; liable at any moment to treacherous attack; no aid or succour within many miles; his house a hut, his food uncertain, with no luxuries and few comforts, the Hills Tract Officer must have heart in his work, or he will utterly fail, and be of all men most miserable. But if he sees his efforts prospering; if he sees savage communities abandoning their lawlessness and burying their feuds; if he finds them coming to him for advice, for redress of injuries and adjustment of disputes; if barbarous customs drop quietly out of use, new industries spring up, new wants arise; if he knows that a nation is awaking to new being in his hands, we can imagine no reward more rich, no satisfaction more pure than his. For this reason it is that the annual reports of such districts should, and we believe do, engage the attention of Government. They are generally unpretending

documents. The best men tell their story in the quietest way. Their enthusiasm is reserved for their every-day work, and the diffidence of young Englishmen comes over them with the assumption of their pen. Such men make little show when visiting a Lieutenant-Governor or Secretary. A card with a well known name is brought in, and there enters a shy-looking, weather-beaten young man, who can scarcely be brought to tell the facts of his last exploit: how he seized with his own hand a murdering Chief in the centre of his astonished clan, or stormed some well-nigh impregnable stockade filled with angry and excited braves. The North-East Frontier has known many such men, but their story will never perhaps be fully told. The eyes of India turn only westward, and the pettiest skirmish on the Black Mountain is more to the Government, and more to the public, than the obscure victories, now-a-days mostly bloodless, which have added whole districts to our empire, and are securing for us a quiet frontier on the East.

Glancing more particularly at the Garo Hills Administration Report for the past year, which lies before us, we find that twenty-three communities have in that time submitted to our rule. There are now only some fifty villages in the whole of the hills, which claim to be independent, and even these are practically under our influence and control: most of the Chiefs have submitted voluntarily. In a few instances subjection was insisted upon as a punishment for outrage, but thanks to the firm bearing and admirable tact of Lieutenant Williamson, not a single shot was fired, though occasionally collision seemed all but certain. The main duty of the Deputy Commissioner, since his settlement in the hills, has been that of a peace-maker. To put an end to the interminable blood feuds of the Garos has been the object he has kept steadily in view. It is generally impossible in any case to tell how far back a quarrel runs, or with whom rests the blame. So the mode of reconciliation adopted is this. A strong party is marched to the neighbourhood of the villages concerned. The chief men are summoned, and informed that the British Government has determined that there shall be no more feud, but that all its subjects shall live in peace with one another. The skulls and ghastly trophies of past murders are brought forth, and in presence of both parties publicly burnt. A solemn oath of friendship is then sworn, the sanction of which is the warning that the village that first violates the truce shall be summarily punished by the Sahib himself. None of these engagements have yet been departed from. The system so much in vogue at times of bribing the headmen of such communities into good behaviour is being entirely abandoned. A percentage upon the tribute collected is given to the Chief selected by the Deputy Commissioner for the charge of a circle or a village, but annual presents and an indiscriminate distribution of rewards are now becoming things of the past.

It may be interesting to give the history of one Garo feud, finally settled during the past year, that some idea may be formed of the vitality of such quarrels and the extraordinary ramifications they take. Lengsang, the head man of Ribugiri, cast eyes of unlawful love on a married woman in his village, Sookri by name. Like David, when enamoured of Bathsheba, he determined to get rid of the inconvenient husband, a relation of his own, by putting him in the fore front of the very next battle; but he went further, for he made a secret arrangement with the enemy, the men of Mandalangiri, that they should come up speedily as though to attack his village of Ribugiri, and there slay Ringrang, his leman's spouse. The plot was carried out, Ringrang died in the affray, and Lengsang with a readiness to forgive injuries which amazed those not in the secret, made peace with Mandalangiri and took Sookri to his house. The avenger of blood was however not far distant. At Boldakgiri was a boy called Dingrang, related to both Lengsang and the dead Ringrang, who grew up in the belief that on him lay the duty of repaying to Mandalangiri the slaughter of his relative. Arrived at man's estate he slew a native of that place and so re-opened the feud. Elated by the success of the first raid he planned another, and in this he was joined by Ribugiri and Lengsang himself, who thus craftily sought to vindicate his own innocence of Ringrang's murder. Mandalangiri however beat them off. Then Dingrang and Lengsang quarrelled, and by treachery the young man surprised the older sinner and butchered him and seven of his family. In this affair one-half of Ribugiri assisted Dingrang. Mandalangiri now came up and stormed that part of Ribugiri which had helped to murder their old secret ally, Lengsang, putting to death all they could capture in the place. At this point the Deputy Commissioner stepped in. Dingrang and his accomplices were seized and transported. The villages concerned were all heavily fined. The skulls of the murdered were produced and burnt, a lasting peace sworn, and cultivation was resumed as though feuds had never been.



We are glad to see that the Government has resolved to give every encouragement to the American missionaries in their efforts to educate the Garos. The Government schools at the foot of the hills only reach the half breeds. The missionaries by entering into the interior will secure the real hillmen. In the course of a few years we may hope to find the Garos as peaceful as the Kols; and if Christianity should interpose to prevent their falling into the gross superstitions and caste absurdities of Hinduism, that surely is only matter for gratulation. A good work will have been well done.

Pioneer, 24th March 1870.

Separated from the Garos by the country of the Khasias and the Sintengs dwells
 The Naga Hills District, that agglomeration of tribes known by the generic name of 'Naga.' Philologists find in them direct descendants of the 'serpent' races of the Vedic chronicle. History, less imaginative, knows them as the Nangtas or 'naked' savages who disturbed the borders of the Ahom kings. The hills which in the Garo country are broken up by numerous ravines and clothed with dense thickets of useless jungle, rise among the Nagas to meet the great central range, and though difficult enough to traverse, yet open out here and there into broad sweeps of rolling savannah, wooded with oak and beech and fir. The tribes inhabiting this part, which may be roughly described as lying between Assam and Manipur, are all known as Nagas, but they have no inter-tribal relations, no common bond of union. Each village is self-contained and self-governed; stockaded to meet the open attack, and ever on its guard against the treachery of its nearest neighbour. The smaller villages it is true obey for their own sakes the behests of the more powerful; but in most things each community stands alone. In years now happily gone by, the advantage of a common foe, whether in the shape of the pony cavalry of Manipur, or the red-coated sepoy of the Sahibs, might draw them together for a time; or the prospect of a successful raid upon Cachar or Assam would induce a temporary oblivion of village jealousies; but to trim his rough kilt and collar with the hair of his enemies was the ambition of each Naga warrior—a delight not easily to be foregone. The blood feud of two communities could only be appeased by blood, and each fresh settlement renewed the mutual debt. Such were the savage hillmen with whom we first made acquaintance in the year 1832. It would be wearisome to bring together all we know of their various septs, or to recapitulate the dealings of our Government with them for the last forty years. Nor would the retrospect be in all points a pleasant one. It is only now that we can look with unmixed satisfaction upon our avowed policy in the hills. The first attempts to open up the Naga territory were made rather in the interests of Manipur than of India, and were due to the fact that Rajah Gumbhir Sing was desirous of strengthening his hands against Burma by intimate trade relations with Assam, and it was thought well to encourage him in this policy. But the only effect of this encouragement on their hills was to rouse the whole Angami Naga clan and bring them down in revengeful foray, not on Manipur, where there was little to get and many to keep that little but on the defenceless villages of the Cachar and Assam plains. In due course retaliatory or, as they were called, punitive expeditions were sent into the hills; and although some attempts were made by the officers conducting these to establish amicable relations for the future, but little success seems to have attended their efforts. The hills were claimed as British territory and Manipur was warned to confine itself to certain prescribed limits. Engagements for the payment of a nominal tribute were entered into by the Angamis, only to be broken when our troops withdrew. The establishment of a police station in the hills was met by vehement protest expressed in the murder of its Darogah. Between 1839 and 1850 ten military expeditions had been sent against the Nagas, with no more tangible result than the burning of many villages, the destruction of much grain, the loss of many lives, and the confirmed hostility of the whole tribe. Baffled at length by the inveterate savagery of the people and the difficulties of their hills, the Government fell back on a policy of absolute non-interference and defence; and even the Imperial Dalhousie emphatically pronounced the game not worth the candle. We had nothing to gain, he said, by annexing a wild people and their barren hills. So we relegated them to a kind of political 'Coventry.' In the year 1861 our troops withdrew, and the Nagas relieved their feelings on the occasion by a grand series of two and twenty raids, of which we prudently took no notice. For fifteen years we left them to themselves and to the tender mercies of



Manipuri ravagers. At last, however, Government became convinced that a policy of masterly inactivity in dealing with a savage tract lying in the midst of our settled districts is no policy at all—but a specious synonym for neglect of duty. As in the Garo so in the Naga Hills, Sir Cecil Beadon in 1866 urged upon the Government of India the necessity of dealing specially with the circumstances of the case. No line of posts, however strong, could guard the plains from the incursions of a foe to whom hill and swamp and forest were aids instead of hindrances. What we had to do was to enter boldly on the work of civilising the hillmen themselves, and to change the whole standard of their national morals. In the very midst then of the Angami country was a site selected, at which Lieutenant Gregory, a specially chosen officer, should be permanently located. Attended by a strong guard, but avoiding all appearance of aggression, he built his headquarters station at Samoogooding, a place which had once before been a police post, and the people of which were willing to submit to our rule and enjoy our protection. They agreed to pay a house-tax of Rs. 2 per annum, commutable to eight days' labour in the year. No attempt was made to annex any community by force. They were all invited to meet Lieutenant Gregory at Samoogooding, and the objects of his settlement there were fully explained to them. A general amnesty of all old offences was proclaimed, except as regards one village which had recently been guilty of a bloody raid on a Meakir hamlet. At the same time there was no weakness of demeanour shown. The assembled Chiefs were warned that outrage would be met by summary chastisement, and as earnest of this the offending village of Razezomah was razed to the ground and its inhabitants distributed through other communities. All were told that no interference would be exercised in respect of their internal feuds, though the Deputy Commissioner was ready to act as arbiter on reference voluntarily made. Those who chose to submit themselves to the British authorities and pay the small tribute demanded in token of fealty would be received and become entitled to protection. But all without distinction were invited to trade, and were permitted to frequent the markets established near the foot of the hills, on receiving a pass from the Deputy Commissioner and leaving their spears at Samoogooding till their return. In anticipation of the time when our influence should be paramount, it was decided as regards civil and criminal administration to work on the basis of recognized custom. In petty crime and civil cases the Gamoora, or village Chief or Chiefs, were to decide, with the aid of assessors, subject to the appellate and general control of the Deputy Commissioner. They were also to be held responsible for police and for the tribute of their community, receiving 20 per cent. on the collections by way of salary. Such in brief was the system introduced, and what has been the result? First and foremost there has not been a single Angami raid since Samoogooding was occupied. This is of itself no mean success. Then again the Deputy Commissioner has been able to visit in peace most of the principal communities. He has not made any attempt to exact tribute or extort labour, but the Nagas in large gangs voluntarily offer their services to construct roads and build the station. For this of course they are paid fair wages. Last year 3,000 of them visited the plains for trade, without committing a single outrage. Deputies from all the principal villages now attend at Samoogooding and act as means of communication between their people and the Deputy Commissioner. "The name of Angami," writes the Deputy Commissioner of Assam, "once a terror to the frontier peasantry of Nowgong and Golaghat, and an abhorrence to civil officers, promises soon to designate as peaceful and industrious a people as any we have dealings with."

The Nagas who live to the south of Sebsaung and on the westerly slopes of the central range are not so open to our influence, and have to be dealt with as the Abors and Mishmees, and other external tribes. So late as 1867 they committed a raid at Gellaki, but all their supplies are drawn from the plains we can punish them effectively by closing the markets to them. This course induced them to deliver up to justice the leaders in the Gellaki raid: and the gradual civilization of the Angami District on their flank will soon give us such a point of vantage as will render outrage impossible for the future. There is much yet to be done, and there may be difficulties yet to come, but the right path has at last been struck, and time must lead us to a happy issue.

Pioneer, 28th March 1870.

In the brief account which we lately gave of the Garo Hills District we said the Government was on its north-east frontier engaged in working out two distinct policies, the first defensive and directed to warding

off the attacks of the outer peoples who are geographically and politically beyond our



control; the other aggressive and civilising, designed to bring into the body politic those tribes whose habitat is undoubtedly within the limits of the Empire. We have now to turn to a part of our frontier where these problems present themselves for solution in a composite shape. We find ourselves in Chittagong hemmed in eastward by a great mountain system within which dwell warlike tribes of whose history, wants, and local position, we know as little as we do of the Abors and Mishnecs; while northward between us and the settled District of Cachar intervenes a tract of hill land hitherto unexplored, the inhabitants of which, the Lushais, harass us north and south as the Garos were wont to harass Gowaipara and Mymensing. Theoretically it would seem that our course of action was clear before us. We have, one would think, only to protect the plains eastward by a chain of police posts, and to occupy the Lushai country as we occupied Tura and Samoogooding, to effect the same good results. What should be done as regards the Lushais we may on some future day discuss. Meantime let us examine the position of the Government in the hills lying east and south of the Regulation District of Chittagong. The first fact which complicates our problem here is that we have not been able, as on the north side of Assam, to confine our administration to the plains. When we took possession of Chittagong, we found two Mugh chieftains established in the hills, paying a tribute in cotton to the authorities at Islamabad. They had obtained a sort of rude sovereignty over the wandering tribes who "joomed" along the course of the mountain streams, and who were known under the various titles of Koomes, Kookies, Mrungs, &c. In 1789 we converted the cotton tribute into a money payment, which oddly enough is to this day known as the "Kapas" mehal or tax, the basis of this tax being a capitation fee levied annually by the Chiefs on each couple of *joomers* owing them fealty. It was the duty of the Chiefs as well to repress any lawless tendencies among their own subjects as to ward off the attacks of the less settled races living in the upper hills towards Burma and Arakan. The whole country south of the Kurnafoodle River was nominally the kingdom of the Phroo family; and to the head of this family in 1847 the Government granted a considerable remission of revenue on his undertaking to defend the plains and his proper hills from the Shindoes and other powerful tribes who were even then pressing upon British territory. North of the Kurnafoodle jurisdictions were more divided and separate settlements more numerous. Hence our earliest steps in direct administration of the Hill Tracts were confined to the north of that river. It was not till 1860 that the Hill Tracts of Chittagong were formally separated from the regulation district and placed under a special Superintendent; and even then—although Act XXII. of 1860 enabled Government to provide a complete system of management—the main object of the Superintendent's appointment was that he might, through the agency of the Chiefs, prevent raids which had of late years become somewhat numerous. Before the Superintendent entered on office there took place that most disastrous incursion of savages into the plains of Tipperah known as the great Kookie invasion. Passing across the north of the Chittagong Hill Tracts a horde of wild mountaineers burst suddenly upon the unsuspecting Bengalee villages of the plains, and burnt, plundered, slew, and carried captive, retreating safely to their jungles when the troops at length arrived. It was the attempt to punish this outrage that first opened our eyes to the character of the country and the task that lay before us. With infinite difficulty an expeditionary force penetrated to the village from which the war party had set out. To burn it down and struggle back again was all they could effect. The hills were deadly in climate, clothed with impenetrable thickets, utterly destitute of supplies, broken up by ravines and countless water-courses; the only paths were torrent beds, along which a light-armed Kookie might perhaps safely travel, but which to the sepoy were as difficult as the jungle on their sides. Such was the country we had now to enter. The nearer ranges were inhabited by tribes of peaceful joomeas, our undoubted subjects whom we were bound to protect. We took their revenue and they fairly claimed our aid. The interests of our settled districts also demanded consideration; and well nigh hopeless as with the available means the task appeared, it was yet undertaken. A line of strong police posts was planted on the outer verge of the joomea tract from the Ferry to the Kurnafoodle, and the Superintendent of Hill Tracts took up his station at Chundergata, a missionary of civilization to the tribes he had to guard, and pledged to do his utmost to keep them safe from harm. How material prosperity and improvement have been advancing within the protected tract the annual returns of the district show; but to those who believe that our guardianship has been a farce, it will be a novel and startling experience to be told that since the establishment of our posts there has not been reported one single raid north of the Kurnafoodle. We could not have anticipated this *a priori*. There is not a point of the defended line that is not permeable to a war party of savages. It is only lately that connecting paths have been cut from post to post. The communication with the head-quarters base is difficult and long. Every principle of



military security seems wanting; but the fact remains; the posts have stopped the raids. Up to the end of 1866 the defence of the country south of the Kurnabollie was left in the hands of the Poang or Bohmong as the head of the Phroo family is called; and it is in this quarter that the raids of which we hear so much have all occurred. Not that they have been so numerous even here as is commonly supposed. There were none in 1861, 1862, or 1863. Since that time ten raids, or rather ten outrages, have been reported, several of them being by the same raiding party, the sack of one homestead being often called a raid. These outrages have generally been the work of Shindoo, a powerful tribe living in the far interior, quite beyond the reach of the Chittagong authorities, and accessible, if at all, only from the side of Burma. The Kookie or Lushai tribes of Howlongs and Syloos living to the north-east of the Hill Tracts District have also raided in the south, passing across the face of our posts to reach their prey. The best energies of our Superintendent have been devoted to the establishment of amicable relations with these last, but not, we fear, with any real success. We have still to make such a demonstration of power in their midst as shall convince them that we are as powerful as we are peaceable. The Kindred clan under Ruttan Peea, whose village we burnt in 1860, has been friendly ever since that time, and it is now, we believe, proposed to station an officer with a strong guard at this Chief's head-quarters, to confirm him in his alliance, and serve as a check upon the Howlongs and Syloos, who would be chary of sending out large war parties southwards, leaving two hundred hill police to intercept their return. Within the last three years we have extended our police posts south of the Kurnabollie, but they neither go far enough, nor are they strong enough to protect the country. A considerable increase of force is required. But this given, we would deprecate any great expenditure of men or money on this part of our frontier. A vastly exaggerated idea of the nature of the attacks—now-a-days called raids—appears to us to be generally prevalent. They are not in most cases great tribal invasions, but petty hill duennies, attended no doubt with murder and outrage, but much facilitated and encouraged by the habits of the unfortunate victims. A Jomea family, having exhausted the ground at its present clearing, wanders away into the jungle, following the course of some mountain stream. When it finds a spot sufficiently solitary and otherwise eligible, it burns down the jungle, builds a wretched hut, and after dibbling holes in the soil sows in these five kinds of seed, for the coming up of which it sits down to wait. If the site is good other families may follow, and then for common defence a stockade is run up. A Kookie scout spies from a distant hill the gap in the forest or the smoke of the fires, and in the gray of some dim dawning, with yells and shots and arrow flights, the place is harried, the women and children carried captive while the men of the family fly to the jungle or fall by the spear. Days after at the nearest post the Jomea father tells the Sub-Inspector of the raid. In another week a painting constable gets to the Superintendent. The telegraph informs Calcutta that the Kookies are out. Police are hurried off, the posts are strengthened, but the raiders have vanished in the forest, and we can only guess from whence they came, and vaguely wonder whether they went. Occasionally, no doubt, these attacks are on a larger and more extended scale; but what we wish to maintain is that it is impossible on such a frontier to secure perfect immunity from the inroads of hill savages; that what we have to do is to take up a definite line and defend it as best we can, declining to give protection to Jomeas wandering beyond it; and that there must be some ratio between the amount of protection afforded and the value to us of the country protected. There are no imperial considerations whatever involved in the defence of this vast jungle such as influence us on the north-west frontier. Prudence, financial and political, warns us not to be quixotic.

Pioneer, the 9th April 1870.

Five and forty years ago the north-east frontier had imperial claims upon the attention of Government and of the public. But since the Burmese were driven out of Assam,

North-East Frontier Defence.

the interest therein has flagged and flickered, to be only temporarily revived by the war with Bhutan, and finally to be classed among things provincial and obscure. We propose now to inquire what is involved at the present day in the idea of frontier defence as applicable to the Divisions of Cochin Behar, Assam, Dacca, and Chittagong; to examine the provision already made in this behalf; and to seek to arrive at some conclusion as to possible improvement and the desirability of change. First, then, we may exclude from the list of our probable foes in this quarter



Barma, which was at one time the most formidable of them all. It is no longer likely that Burmese Generals will lead regular armies through Manipal into Cachar or by the Patkol Pass into Upper Assam. Nor need we fear any serious danger from Thibet, although it is a fact not generally known that in 1852 a Thibetan army advanced to within a few miles of our frontier by the Kurriapara Dwar. Bhutan is indeed the only power capable of making an organized attack upon the plains; but that the Gurkhas will ever do so we cannot for a moment anticipate. Their outrages, though sufficiently annoying, have always been petty in character, and the lessons lately read them, coupled with their wretched state of internal anarchy, may serve to guarantee us against serious danger. Sikkim, even if willing to give trouble, is not able, and is sufficiently controlled by Darjeeling. Besides which our subject does not take us into the interior of the hills in this quarter. Civilized or semi-civilized enemies we have not then to dread. We have to deal only with savage hillmen of various designations whose incursions cannot be foreseen, and who possess neither the arms nor the habits of regular warfare. With regard to such of these races as lie entirely within our border, we have lately shown that a policy of direct management has met with remarkable success. The presence of a British officer and of armed police among the Garos and Nagas, and of troops among the Khasias and Sintenges, has apparently rendered the plains of Assam, Mymensing, Sylhet, and Cachar, secure from raids so far as those tribes are concerned. There is still, however, even here a certain residuum of danger. The experiment is new in its extended application, and we cannot prudently, in discussing the question of frontier defence, omit all consideration of possible outrage by the inhabitants of the tracts above specified. Besides these we have in Assam Akas, Dullas, Abors, Miris, Misamis, Singphos, Khamtis and Bor Nagas, who, however quiet now and anxious to trade, must yet be confronted with a show of force, and led to love through salutary fear. The country which has to be protected from their incursions is one of the most hopelessly difficult in all India. Void of roads, void of supplies, intersected by more rivers than any other province of equal size, for the most part a vast swamp covered with dense forest, where villages and clearings show like oases amid wastes of foliage, Assam has to be defended in almost infinite detail. If the protecting force is to be anything more than a name it must be dispersed over a line a thousand* miles in length. It is obvious that such minute sub-division is foreign to any strictly military organization, and that no regiment could undertake such duty without detriment to its efficiency and subversion of its discipline. Accordingly we find that the Assam regiments which performed this outpost work before the introduction of the new police were notoriously ineffective. When the 43rd Native Infantry was ordered for service some years ago a large proportion of the men rejoined its head-quarters for the first time in eight or ten years, having never in that period had a single regimental parade. After the Bhutan war the police relieved the military of all outpost duty in Assam, and for the last five years we have had three regiments idling at a few sadder stations, while an armed police has held the whole frontier line and garrisoned the Naga and the Garo Hills. It is true that were the troops away the same number of police as are now employed could not be relied upon to protect the province. But the duties which have to be performed are those which only a force constituted like an armed police can carry out, and if they were numerically stronger and regularly sent into the reserves for drill, our Assam Police could defend the whole valley, as indeed they do now discharge the more active functions of its watch and ward. Confining ourselves still to Assam and the neighbouring mountain tracts let us see what is the strength and cost of the arrangements now subsisting. The annual cost of the 42nd, 43rd, and 44th Regiments with head-quarters at Debroochur, Gowhaty, and Shillong, respectively, is Rs. 6,69,310. The strength of each regiment is supposed to be 800 men. The total strength of the police for the districts of Assam, including the Khasi, Naga, and Garo Hills force is 2,064 men, costing Rs. 3,52,210 only exclusive of European superintendence, which may be taken to raise the total cost to Rs. 4,11,010. We believe that if the police were increased by 1,200 men at a cost of, say, Rs. 2,50,000, the troops might be entirely withdrawn and four lakhs of rupees be legitimately saved. It must be remembered also that the whole criminal work of the province is done by the present police force in addition to its outpost duty and active defence of the frontier. On the Bhutan frontier we have two regiments stationed, the one at Julpigori, the other at Buxa. Their annual cost is about Rs. 3,76,000. If it be necessary to have any troops at all on this part of the frontier, which we doubt, believing as we do that a military police would do the work better and more cheaply, we would move one of these regiments to Doo bree, on the Berhampooter

* That is to say, taking north and south sides of the valley together.



where it could act effectively either towards Bhutan or towards Assam, and relieve the minds of those who consider the sight of scarlet to have some magical efficacy in securing quiet. The second regiment might retain its head-quarters and one wing at Julpigori, the other wing being posted at Buxa and supported by a strong body of police. Were this done reductions would also be possible in the direction of the brigade and head-quarters staff at Shillong, costing now over half a lakh per annum. Turning now to Sylhet and Cachar, we find that the only foes to be guarded against are the Kookie tribes dwelling between Hill Tipperah and Manipur, who have been much heard of lately under the name of Lushais. The rebellion of the Sintengs of Jaintia in 1862 indicated another possible source of danger to the north; but we believe that it is not likely to recur, and that the force, be it police or be it troops, in the Khasi Hills will be able to keep all needful order. The people are, moreover, fast being civilized. At present we have in Cachar a wing of the regiment whose head-quarters is at Dacca, and a police force in Cachar and Sylhet together, of 896 men, costing Rs. 1,50,026. We would not reduce the military force, but would station it in Sylhet instead of Cachar, and treat it purely as a reserve. The police, organized as we would have them in Assam, could hold the frontier and prevent at the same time those raids into Manipur by exiled Rajputras, which are a constant source of anxiety to the District Officers and to the Resident at Manipur. But if we are ever to be secure from raids, the Lushai tract interposed between Cachar and Chittagong must be specially dealt with. We have no better suggestion to make than those put forward last year by the Bengal Government and publicly discussed at the time. A road must be cut through from Cachar to Chittagong; such a road as erewhile civilized the Khasi Hills. A specially chosen officer, with a strong guard, must go into the country there to dwell, and ultimately to rule, taking the work of Gregory at Samnagrodting and Williamson at Tura as his model. The wonderful success being achieved by Mr. Edgar at this present moment in the very heart of these hills will pave the way for such an advance. The mysterious Sookpils, that old man of the mountain, has at last been reached and turns out a very amicable bogy after all. The time is not far distant when Lushai raids will be things unheard of. Hurrying southward we find ourselves in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The circumstances of our position here we lately described. Only a strong body of armed police can secure immunity from outrage in these hills. Our present force numbers 400 men, and costs Rs. 75,404. It must be largely increased so as to enable it to protect the country south of the Kurnafoolie from the Shindoes and other such marauding tribes. The Howlongs and Sylloos must be kept in check by the deputation of a special officer with 200 armed police to an advanced post, where he can confirm the feeble faith of Rutton Poa, our ally, and ultimately co-operate with the officer in charge of the Lushai Hills north of the watershed. Anything that we can say on the defence of the north-east frontier within the limits of an article must of necessity be sketchy and incomplete, but if we have succeeded in drawing attention to the facts of the case, or in making the conditions of our frontier policy more clear, our object will have been fully attained.

Pioneer, the 4th May 1870.

If absolute independence and freedom from control is calculated to make princes happy, or entitles them to preeminence among their peers, the Rajah of Hill Tipperah is surely the most fortunate and foremost of

Hill Tipperah.

Indian princes. Ruler of three thousand square miles of territory, in which his word is law for life or death, paying no tribute to any paramount power, waging war or levying subsidies at his own free will, subject to the inspection of no British officer, interviewed by no strangers, criticised by no press, this Chief stands alone in the proud independence of his State. Yet (such are the anomalies of actual fact) this hill kingdom is but a portion of an imperishable Raj, the rest of which is a permanently-settled zemindari in a British district. The title to succeed is tried in due course of law in our Civil Courts. The Rajah on the plains is assessed to income-tax and pays for chowkedars. He receives no salute. He is invited to no durbars. The events of late years have given rise to much consideration of the position of Hill Tipperah. Flanked on three sides by settled districts it is bordered on the east by that unknown land of mountain, stream, and jungle, from which burst forth the bands of Lushais or Kookies that from time to time ravage our tea gardens in Cachar, or butcher our cotton-growers in the hills of



Chittagong. For the last sixty years a suspicion has lurked in the breast of Government that fuller knowledge of this tract would prove that the Tipperah Rajah was to some extent responsible for the outrages so done. Responsible, we mean, in this way—that while in some few cases the attacks were probably committed by his own proper subjects, without his antecedent knowledge, in nearly all they were brought on by his mode of dealing with the fierce tribes of the interior, who were unable to distinguish in retaliation between his territories and those of the British Government. Further, there could be no doubt that neither by affording information, nor by substantial assistance, had the Rajah disavowed himself from the responsibility so attaching to him. No definite case against him has, however, at any time been made out, for the very simple reason that we have never had an officer resident in his territory who could ascertain for us the facts. At one time indeed, in 1823, the evidence became so strong that he was warned by the Governor General that, Rajah as he was and independent as he had been, if the case were by further inquiry proved against him, he would be tried as a criminal in the Courts of Sylhet. At another time, in 1844, a party of troops entered the hills and captured the leader in a recent raid, the Rajah and his followers looking quietly on while their internal police was thus managed for them and in their despite. And yet the Government has never to this day taken steps for bringing this little State under proper supervision, though the Kookie invasion of 1860, when fifteen British villages were burnt and well nigh three hundred British subjects slain or captured, was directly traced to mis-government in Hill Tipperah, which had irritated the subordinate Chiefs into calling in the Kookies for revenge. Our districts suffered to a great extent by mistake, but the evil was the none less real for all that. Then again the raids last year on Sylhet at any rate, were, it is almost certain, made by the Lushais, when in pursuit of a Chief subordinate to the Tipperah Rajah, with whom they had cause of quarrel, and who had fled within our boundary. It is high time now that an officer were stationed in Hill Tipperah to guide the Councils of the Rajah, and see that no rash measures of his shall incense the inner tribes with whom Mr. Edgar has just opened such promising negotiations, and who profess that it was never their wish to make us their foes. A good opportunity for revising our relations in this quarter has just occurred. In 1862 the present Rajah got possession of the *guddee*, but his right to retain it was disputed by a near relative, who, according to precedent, instituted a suit in our Courts *quoad* the zamindari, which has been pending all these years. The Privy Council has, however, now confirmed the reigning Rajah's title, and a few months since he applied to Government for investiture which had been withheld till the result of the suit was known. This investiture is the only token of fealty the Rajah has hitherto yielded. It was only on the last occasion that a *nuzzar* was for the first time demanded by Government, though now it has been decided on the next succession to demand the full *nuzzar* of half a year's revenue from the hill territory. We regard this as a necessary step in the direction of a full and proper control. Be that as it may, the investiture was on the 8th of March carried out by the Commissioner of Chittagong at the capital of the State, with sufficient pomp and traditional ceremonies. The Rajah, relieved of all anxiety as to his position, is free to enter upon measures of reform if only the way be shown him. He is not by any means ill-disposed, and only requires to be freed from the control of his amlah, who are opposed of course to anything likely to diminish their influence. Let us then, both for the sake of Hill Tipperah and for our own interests, assert our paramount rights and delegate an officer to that State as we have done long since to Manipur. Then we can settle on a definite basis the questions as to the surrender of criminals and realisation of civil claims which now perplex our Court. Then we can consider with knowledge all the political bearings of the mutual relations of the frontier tribes. Then we can effectually guarantee the peace and safety of our subjects in Sylhet and Cachar, if not in Chittagong.

Pioneer, the 10th June 1870.

On the 14th of August 1832 the Province of Cachar was annexed by proclamation to British India. Two years previously

The Lushais.

Rajah Govind Chandra had perished by the hand of an assassin, crowning a miserable life by a miserable end. For seventeen years a king in name, he had seen his country made the battle-field whereon three Manipuri brothers contended for supremacy. He had seen its plains parcelled out among them, and been himself thrust forth, while in the Northern Hills a mental servant had successfully raised the standard of rebellion and had



gotten to himself a kingdom. The Burmese had next invaded the land and laid waste its villages. Vast tracts had fallen out of cultivation; the people had fled in numbers to the neighbouring districts; and when the strong arm of British power and the exigencies of British policy replaced Govind Chandra on the throne, it was to rule over a desolated poverty-stricken realm, till, a few years later, he died a violent death. No part of Cachar had suffered more from the troubles of the time than the great fertile tract lying south of the Barak. Seventeen hundred square miles of the richest soil lay here deserted. Finely wooded with valuable timber, watered perennially by the Dullessuri and Sonai, the land was equally good for tillage or pasture. It had been long years before populous and prosperous. But apart from the ravages of the semi-civilized armies of Manipur and Burma it had suffered fearful things from the wild Kookies of the Southern Hills, to whom the disorganization of all Government had afforded rare chance of plunder such as no savage would willingly forego. The southern limit of Cachar had never been defined. An unexplored country of hill and jungle, supposed to belong to Tipperah, marched the district in that quarter. The home of ravening beasts and savage men—none, save perhaps a few adventurous wax-gatherers, had ever penetrated its shades. But for miles along the lower courses of the streams that issued from these hills, our officers found sites of villages and traces of cultivation, which showed that at one time the country had enjoyed undisturbed prosperity. Under British rule this happy state of things very speedily returned. Settlements of Manipuris and other cultivators spread fast southward. Then came the discovery of tea and the influx of European planters; and now our gardens extend far up the valleys, a tempting prey to the lawless tribes of the interior, who to this day retain their savage characteristics in unmitigated perfection.

Of what goes on within these hills we have had till lately little or no information. But one singular fact has been demonstrated which no political student can afford to overlook. It is that there is some persistent pressure acting on the tribes from the south that drives them northward into our acknowledged territory. First, a tribe of Nagas came fleeing across the Barak, driven up by the Tangune Kookies. Then came the Tangunes themselves, expelled by the Changsels and Taloes. Still later, in 1846, we had the latter, in their turn, seeking a refuge from the Lushais; and now we know that the Lushais, powerful as they are, dread the advance of the Poe, of whom we can only conjecture that they are connected with the Shindoos, who have for many years troubled the verge of our hill tracts in Chittagong.

The serious attention of Government was first called to the Lushais in 1847, when Colonel McCulloch, the Political Agent in Manipur, reported that a tribe so called armed with muskets, and having among them fighting men dressed like Burmese, was ravaging the south of Manipur. The country intervening between the Kathi Valley and Tipperah was supposed at that time to belong to the Hill Tipperah State, and accordingly the petty ruler of that anomalous kingdom was invited to give information in regard to this new invader. He however professed an ignorance of their history and doings, which were probably real. We were not long left in doubt as to their aggressive character and dangerous qualities. In November 1849 they came down in force upon Cachar and perpetrated a series of raids and massacres upon Kookie villages lying within ten miles of the station of Silchar. A simultaneous attack was made upon the borders of Sylhet precisely as we saw happen last year. Fortunately for itself the Government lost no time in despatching a punitive expedition. In January 1850 Colonel Lister, whose gallant conduct of operations in the Khasi Hills had brought him great renown, marched southward with the Sylhet Light Infantry. In ten days he arrived at the village of Mullah, which he carried by surprise in the absence of the fighting men. It contained from 800 to 1,000 houses, full of grain and cotton. So struck was Colonel Lister by the appearance of the country, pathless, difficult, unknown, and by the strength of the villages stockaded and inaccessible, that he burnt down Mullah and made a hasty retreat lest he should be cut off in the forests and come to disaster. The only tangible result of this expedition, therefore, was to show the Lushais that their fastnesses could be reached and stormed and burnt *when there was nobody there to defend them*. One good thing we did secure. We delivered some 400 captives, who were kept by the Lushais to till their jooms. But the Lushais by way of relieving their exasperated feelings butchered all that remained in their hands. It was the universal opinion of our local officers at this time that the tribe would only be emboldened by the partial result of the expedition. These expectations were not however fulfilled. Our foray set the Lushais upon inquiring as to the power and character of the white people now for the first time seen by them. They determined to make overtures of peace. In October munticks or representatives from five



Chiefs—Sookpial, Barmooeslin, Bostai, Langroo, and Lalpoo—came into Cachar and invited us to become their allies against the Poo. In December Sookpial himself came in and had interviews with Colonel Lister. It is denied, we believe, now that this was Sookpial; but it is certain that a Chief whom all the Kookies in Cachar recognized as Sookpial was for days in the station. His retinue were armed with flint muskets of American pattern with "G. Alton" on the locks. We of course declined to war on the Poo. But friendly speeches were interchanged and Sookpial presented *auzzars* "in token of submission". In 1855 he re-appears again, though not in person, asking our aid against neighbouring Chiefs who had attacked him, and grounding his request on the fact that he was "our man" and had paid us tribute. His request was refused; and his next appearance was in January 1862, when three villages on the confines of Sylhet were burnt by him, and the inhabitants either slain or carried captives. Instead of sending a force against them on this occasion, the Cachar authorities were ordered to negotiate and endeavour to bind him and the other Chiefs to respect our boundary and restore their captives. Up to the close of 1865 this palavering went on without any substantial result, till in 1866, the Government, despairing, assembled the police to form an expedition into the hills. These preparations led Sookpial to renew negotiations, and he gave up four (!) captives and promised to behave well for the future! The expedition was abandoned. This was in 1867. And up to this point it seems to us that the Lushais have by no means had the worst of it. The Adumpong massacre, as the outrage of 1862 was called, was unavenged. We returned good for evil, presents for smiting, fair words for foul deeds.

Pioneer, the 11th June 1870.

Our narrative brought us down to the year 1867, and it will be well, before going

More about the Lushais.

further, to "put ourselves in the place" of Sookpial, or any other of the Lushai Chiefs, and try to realize how an astute and boastful

savage would regard us after all that had passed. Would he not think that the fierceness of his attacks had paralysed our nerve; that his position was so inaccessible as to be secure from our troops; that we dreaded the chance of conflict with his warriors amid their native woods, and either stole upon his villages when garrisoned by old men and women, or sent embassies with presents to court his favor rather than risk the dangers of a warlike enterprise? One thing at any rate is certain. We had given the Lushais no real cause to dread our power. We had negotiated without any show of substantial strength, such as would impress a savage, vain of the unchecked career of victory his tribe had hitherto pursued. Whether our impressions of the nature of our frontier policy in this quarter be correct or no, this at least is the fact, that after an *interval of only one raiding season*, the Lushais came down with fire and sword upon our settled villages of Sylhet and defenceless tea gardens in Cachar. The Chief who despatched the raiders against Sylhet was none other than Sookpial—Sookpial, receiver of embassies, restorer of captives, payer of tribute—submissive, conciliated Sookpial! Three days after the attack on Monierkhal tea garden, the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar was in receipt of Government orders directing him to follow up the raiders with such troops as were at hand, and inflict condign punishment for these renewed outrages. Within four days from the arrival of that telegram troops were *en route* for the frontier, and a plan of operations had been settled and approved by the Bengal Government. Charming energy prelude surely some great result! Three days later, however, the superior military authorities found that all this was very irregular. It was not in accordance with the precepts of the Aide Memoire, or whatever the military Hoyle is called, to send anything less than a small army into an enemy's unknown country. Artillery and Seikhs were absolutely required. On the 23rd of January 1869, the avenging force, as first proposed, handy and serviceable, was on the frontier ready to start. It was not till the 22nd of February that the artillery arrived. *On the 1st of March the rain began.* Two columns of invasion entered the Lushai country. The first, under the Brigadier-General of the North-Eastern Frontier, was to follow the line of the Dilliesuri Valley. Two days' march from Juhacherra brought them to Pukwa Mookh, and here the rain caught them. For five days the force remained in camp at Pukwa, watching the rivers rise. On the sixth they advanced five miles, failed to get the elephants and artillery across a hill stream, returned two miles to the camp perched on the top of a muddy *clack*, and next day fairly

set their faces for Cachar. This column at any rate could not have had much moral effect on the Lushai tribes. The second column was to operate on the Sonai Valley to the east of the Dullessuri, and was accompanied by Mr. Edgar in person. It had been long ready to start, and the tidings of its preparedness had reached the Lushai settlements, for before it broke camp messengers came in from the villages of Vompilal, Chief of the eastern clan, making submission and friendly overtures and deprecating any hostile attack. This column, therefore, advanced for purpose of demonstration along a line of friendly country. But it did advance in spite of rain and storm, and that mainly owing to the indefatigable efforts of Mr. Edgar, ably seconded as he was by young and enterprising officers, unencumbered by responsibilities, none of whom luckily was over the standing of a Major. They penetrated right up to the Lushai villages, received deputations from the surrounding Chiefs, who one and all of course denied having raided on Cachar, and after solemnly warning the Lushais of the punishment that awaited them for future outrage, the force quietly and safely returned. So far the Sonai column, no doubt, did its work well. But the tribes on that river are quite distinct from those on the west upon the Dullessuri and Gootur, to which Sookpial belongs. The column directed against the western clans did not, to say the least, succeed in reaching these. But there was a third column operating from Sylhet, to which we have not yet alluded. This was not intended to be a column of attack, but was to create a diversion (not in the way it probably has among the Lushais, but) by distracting the attention of the western tribes. It was to push on and join the Dullessuri column in its anticipated triumphal march through Sookpial's Poonjis. Trusting to the irresistible might of our troops, the little party from Sylhet went pushing gaily forward, not very careful about supplies, as they hoped to find these with the main body, till they reached the Gootur and found themselves with 180 police and 55 sepoy's right among the Lushai fastnesses. Beacon fires blazed out on every hill, shots came dropping into camp from the woods around, the whole country was up, provisions were entirely exhausted, and not a sign of the Dullessuri force was to be seen—(it was by this time safe in Silchar). So the Sylhet column too had to turn away and hurry back to food and civilization. Sookpial and his neighbours would no doubt set this result at any rate down to their own credit, as a positive repulse of our force. As regards punishment for outrage done and rescue of captives taken, this Lushai expedition was clearly a failure. It was the decided opinion of the local officers, and we believe of the Bengal Government, that no peace or safety could be looked for on this frontier for the future, till effective measures had been taken to convince the Lushais that we are as able to punish as we are willing to be friendly. It was proposed that a carefully organized, and not too unwieldy, force of police and Goorkhas should at the proper season enter the hills, not necessarily to plunder and to ravish, but to bring the hitherto hostile Chiefs to reason and to terms, to rescue captives and exact pledges, and, finally, to pave the way for bringing all these tribes under the direct control of a British officer, who, residing in their midst and studying their habits, might lead them on to peaceful paths such as it has been our policy to introduce among the Nagas, Khasias, and Garos. The Government of India, however, would not hear of an expedition. "It was averse on principle to move bodies of troops or police to effect reprisals for outrage, or chastise offenders by following them into their hills." But it was willing to try the plan of direct management by a selected officer. Frontier posts were to be erected and frontier villages armed for defence. The Lushais, in short, were to be managed by love, while they had not yet learnt the respect and fear which, when followed by forbearance, alone lead such savages to love. The Supreme Government was preemptory, and the local officers loyally fell into its views. A deputation from the Eastern clans had come into Cachar to renew the friendly intercourse begun under the dread of our troops, and Mr. Edgar seized the opportunity to arrange that he should in the cold weather visit their neighbourhood. His proposals were sanctioned by Government. Every art of conciliation was employed by him to induce the western clans also to receive him. He was warned by Government to feel his way cautiously and carefully—not to advance at any risk. He was given full discretion as to the mode of negotiation. What the result of his expedition has been we hope soon to show. It is obvious at starting that he had a most difficult task before him. He had to conciliate without exciting contempt. He had to dictate terms to tribes who had no reason to dread us. He had to work under the depressing influence of the knowledge that our attempts at coercion had hitherto failed; that the Government would not support his threats, if such were called for by substantial show of force. He had to make political bricks out of an infinitesimal quantity of material chaff, for he had scarcely a full grown straw to cling to. How he succeeded or failed we have yet to learn.



Pioneer, the 19th July 1870.

We are now in a position to give some account of the journey lately undertaken by

Mr. Edgar among the Lushais.

Mr. Edgar, the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, with a view to the pacification and conciliation of the Lushai tribes. In our preliminary articles we showed what the nature of our political relations towards those tribes had been, and how outrages had been met by empty threats, friendly overtures, or futile expeditions. We stated our conviction that Mr. Edgar had a most difficult task before him, inasmuch as he had to conciliate triumphant savages without exciting further contempt, and to be firm and peremptory under the depressing thought that Government would probably not be itself peremptory in case of need. We had, however, faith in our frontier officers' tact. We had more than faith in the omnipotent rupee. Silver bath charms to soothe the savage breast; and even among the Lushais we doubted not each man and village had its price, if not in cash, then in cloths, and beads, and gewgaws. On the 20th of last December, Mr. Edgar, accompanied by Major Macdonald, set out from Silchar, a small police guard and a gang of coolie porters forming their only escort. The expedition shaped its course for the Sonai, and the eastern clans of Lushais bordering on that river. For this there were many reasons. Along this stream Mr. Edgar had himself succeeded in guiding a party of troops the year before. Friendly overtures had been made to him by some of the clans in this quarter, and he was indeed ostensibly responding now to an invitation conveyed to him by the delegates of their chiefs. Besides this, as his progress was to be cautious and deliberate, there were hopes that the tidings of his peaceful errand, the fulfilment of his promises, the fame of his presence, would penetrate across the hills to the Dullessuri to melt the heart and moisten the mouth of Sookpilal. On the 1st of January Mr. Edgar and his party arrived at Loshai Ghat far up the Sonai, in the very heart of the country. Here they established themselves for purposes of negotiation; and as no one could say when such a comprehensive palaver would end, the police and coolies, under Major Macdonald's directions built a bungalow, godowns, and lines, and cleared the jungle round so as to guard against treachery or surprise. Two muntrees, or deputies, from two leading communities had accompanied Mr. Edgar from Cachar. These were Jampitang, who represented the village of Kholai, and Mora, who was deputed from Dollong. Dollong is ruled over by a very aged lady, Impani by name, the mother of that Vompilal, deceased, whose village Colonel Lister destroyed in 1850. Kholai belongs to a minor son of the said Vompilal. Though their Chiefs are thus connected, it would seem that considerable jealousy exists between the villages. Certainly there was no lack of it between the rival muntrees. Mr. Edgar was constantly being taken aside by Mora and warned against "that rascal Jampitang"; and Jampitang, when Mora's back was turned, never had a good word to say for him. These savage worthies were now despatched to summon their Chiefs to meet Mr. Edgar according to their promise; but days passed and no Chiefs came. Mora returned from Dollong, saying Impani was mourning for a daughter and could not attend. He brought however two muntrees from Pibuk, Sookpilal's mother, and two from Khalkom, Sookpilal's son. This was promising, as indicating a desire to treat on the part of the western clans, and Mr. Edgar very judiciously made his face stern to them, rejected their paltry offerings of fowls and demanded why Sookpilal, the arch offender, had not come to make his peace. At the same time enough was said to show that peace would not be hard to find. To test the truth of Impani's excuses, Hurri Churn Surma, Mr. Edgar's right-hand man, who from long residence on the frontier knew the Lushais and their ways, and through whom everything was done in this expedition, went up to Dollong, and there truly he found the old lady sunk in grief and haggard with weeping, but seeking some solace for her woes in smoke—drying the corpse of her daughter over a low fire. Nothing daunted, the Baboo sat him down beside her, and broached to her then and there Mr. Edgar's wishes. She assented readily to everything; though indeed there seems to us to run through her replies an under-strain of complaint. "Have it as you will—only for pity leave me with my dead." Scarcely had Hurri Churn got back to camp when the clash of barbaric music chiefly gongs, announced to the party the advent of a personage. This proved to be Khalkom, the son of Sookpilal, attended by some 200 men, mostly armed, and having in company a juvenile chief, the son of one Darmanpi, who did not himself appear. It was clear that although Mr. Edgar had given full proof of his amicable intentions, in the free-handed way in which he paid for services rendered, and in the overtures made to the deputies from the clans, still the predominant feelings in Khalkom's breast were fear and mistrust. Diplomacy now assumed the form of rum and curacao, or some such conciliatory compound, and after various speeches Khalkom, protesting that he would be the saheb's man for ever and a day, but that the muntrees would settle all business details, skuttled off in a dooly



with visible symptoms of relief. Mr. Edgar was in camp at Lushai Bazar from the 1st of January till the 8th of February, but Khalkom was the only Chief he saw during all that time. He had, however, long discussions with the muntrees of the Chiefs already mentioned and with others, and unfolded to them the proposals he had to make. What these were we may now see. Between the tea-gardens and cultivation of South Cachar and the Lushai villages intervenes a broad tract of uninhabited hill and jungle, which effectually masks to us all the movements of the tribes beyond it. A raiding party may appear at any moment by paths to us unknown, and, after burning and plundering a village or a tea garden, plunge back again into the forest gloom, leaving us entirely ignorant of the precise clan to which they belong. The idea, therefore has been started that if we could induce the tribes, all or any of them, to move northward so as to occupy this fertile but desolate tract, we should have them under our immediate control, and might in time find it possible to arm and strengthen them, so that they might serve as a shield to Cachar against inroads from the south. Mr. Edgar therefore proposed to lay down a boundary line beyond which our civil jurisdiction should not extend, and he invited the muntrees to cause their Chiefs to settle each a village on this line. He promised them, if friendly, arms and ammunition when the villages were established. These proposals were on the whole favourably received, and next cold weather ought to show us what is the worth of the promises the muntrees so freely made. At one point in the negotiations the Kholei men gave considerable trouble. When pressed about last season's raids, they showed much impudence. Mr. Edgar said such things could not be allowed to go on, and that if there was no other way of stopping them, Government would station an officer in their midst. On this they left the camp in a rage, called out their armed men, and paraded in force across the river. We think it was a mistake to place the idea of stationing an officer among them in the light of a threat. The mutual advantages of such a measure might well have been insisted on rather than its repressive character, even although it was afterwards found impossible to get a proper site for a resident officer. But we think a graver mistake was committed on the following day, when, though they still continued refractory and hostile, they were wooed back to good humour by presents all round. With a guard of 80 men and a strong camp we should have liked to see Mr. Edgar wait a little longer. But it is, we admit, difficult to judge of the propriety of such actions on bare statements of the facts. While the expedition remained in camp Major Macdonald succeeded in making his way to the top of the main peak of the ridge between the Dullessuri and Soanai, and there got sights, which, with his other observations, enabled him to add to our maps correct representations of these two valleys and the surrounding hills. A brisk trade was also carried on in the camp, and hundreds of Lushai came down to see the sahebs, a favourite amusement being to measure themselves against Major Macdonald's lofty person, to inspect his weapons, and criticise his drawings. Two sketches of a tiger and an elephant, drawn to different scales, did not please them, as the tiger was made so much bigger than the elephant. Shrewd savages! What most took their fancy was a proposal to establish an annual fair in the hills. The enquiries made by Mr. Edgar at this place seemed to show that many of the outrages in Cachar had been committed by the Lushais to avenge wrongs done them by the Kookies living there under our protection. A fruitful source of raids has been the possession of certain mysterious gongs, carried off, as the Lushais allege, from them and kept for many years by certain Thado Kookies in Cachar. There is no limitation of time to a Kookie's suit, and Mr. Edgar's promise to investigate the case on his return gave much satisfaction.

On the 8th February the expedition set out across the hills for the Dullessuri Valley in the hope of seeing Sookpial. On the 12th they reached that river and turned south. On the 21st they got to Bepari Bazar and set up their second camp, there to wait till Sookpial chose to come in. Difficulty was experienced in getting messages faithfully conveyed to that Chief, as every village muntree employed wanted to retain the profits of go-between as long as possible. At last some messages arrived from Sookpial's village, and on the 21st of March a month's patient waiting was rewarded, for Sookpial, the mysterious old man of the hills, then arrived, now for the first time to be gazed on by Europeans, — a shrewd, hard-faced old barbarian with gimlet eyes, thoroughly appreciating the fiery cup of greeting presented to him by his host and poured down his throat by attendant muntrees. Negotiations then began, and here again we cannot but view with some regret the line of persuasion adopted by Mr. Edgar. He told these people that the Sylhet sahebs were very angry with them, and wanted to punish them for the late raids, but that he had interceded for them and guaranteed their future good behaviour. We should be disposed to doubt if it was well to draw broad views of distinction between Sylhet and Cachar. We would not have in words so readily condoned all the



outrages this old villain had committed. We would have enquired as to the captives carried off from our villages, and would have talked a little big in the hope of covering the unpleasant fact that we were cajoling, when we ought to have been dictating terms to a humble well-threshed savage. Sookpilal readily agreed to the proposal to fix a boundary to South Cachar, and promised to place a village on the line. Arrangements were then very judiciously suggested by Mr. Edgar, under which traders protected by his pass should be allowed to go freely up the Gootur and Dullesari on payment of fixed dues to the Chiefs. To this also Sookpilal agreed; and then was he clad in gorgeous raiment to delight his barbaric soul: a purple coat brodered with green and gold; loose drawers of green, flowered in gold and scarlet; a hat of silk, mixed green and white; a necklace of glass buttons and gold beads, and long glass earrings finished off the suit. Placed then before a looking glass the Chief grew vain, smirked, grinned and, finally fairly melted, flung himself on Hurri Thakur's neck and hugged him like an ecstatic bear. This closed the palaver. On the 25th of March the expedition started on its return journey to Silchar, and now how shall we sum up the results?

No praise can be too high for the patience, perseverance, and tact displayed by Mr. Edgar throughout these three months. Differ from him as we may on some minor points, we desire emphatically to congratulate him on his enterprise as a whole. The policy which dictated it was not his. But loyally he accepted it and ably he brought it to such issues as were possible. Were the negotiations with the Lushais to end here, we should have no hope that the safety of our frontier was any the more secured. But we believe that the Government intend to send similar expeditions into the hills every cold weather. This one is said to have cost some Rs. 15,000; and we have no doubt that an annual expenditure of say Rs. 10,000 will prevent raids as far as the Lushais are concerned. Government never was so liberal before. But how the tribes view the policy may be judged from the fact that, before Mr. Edgar was well away, the eastern tribes sent messengers to Manipur to say that the *sakobs* had come into the hills and duly paid tribute to the Lushai Chiefs. We look with great suspicion on the fact that only two full-grown Chiefs met our officers during the whole time. We fear this was meant as an insolent assumption of superiority. If, however, Mr. Edgar can succeed in getting the tribes to move within reach of our posts; if he can develop a profitable trade and establish popular fairs on the frontier, we may in time be able to take a more decided and more dignified attitude. But meanwhile there is always the danger that these unreasoning hillmen may imagine that a stimulating raid will elicit better terms, or Mr. Edgar's successor may be wanting in the tact and caution necessary to the situation. We are at best trying an experiment; and shall be only too glad if it succeed.

Observer, the 11th February 1871.

Between the eastern districts of Bengal and the empire of Ava is interposed a great mountain system, of which we know little more than it is peopled by numerous savage

The Lushais.

tribes of warlike habits and predatory instincts. From the western face of this central range, the general run of which is north and south, branch off almost at right angles two minor systems, the one separating the valley of Assam from the Districts of Cachar, Sylhet, and Mynensing, the other shutting off Cachar and Sylhet from Chittagong, Noakhali, and the Bay of Bengal. In the first of these cross ranges, live the various races of Nagas, the Sintoangs, the Khasias, and the Garos, all of whom, in days past, habitually raided on the lowlands to their north and south defying for many years the attempts of our frontier officers to bring them to order. Now, happily, a wise policy of direct management by chosen officers, supported by a show of strength adequate to repress outrage, has brought the beginnings of civilisation and peace home to these wild and warring tribes; and the northern marches of Cachar, Sylhet and Mynensing have been for some years free from the incursions which were wont annually to disturb them. The attention of Government and of the public has of late been chiefly drawn to the southern range, the eastern half of which is shown in the maps as "Lushai tribes, unsurveyed," the western portion constituting Hill Tipperah, that anomalous little tract which became, we believe, a kingdom by mistake. A series of raids unparalleled for daring and atrocity has, within the last ten years, been perpetrated on British territory, north and south, by tribes issuing from these hills; and if the slaughter of its native subjects was not enough to lead the Government to deal seriously with the facts,

there is some hope that the English blood which has been recently spilt, and the European interests that are now imperilled, will compel a speedy adoption of measures well fitted to punish for the past, and prevent similar outrage for the future.

To understand these raids properly, it is necessary to remember that the Lushai country, though it intervenes between Cachar and Chittagong, does not on the south look down upon the plains. It merges in the outer ridges and broken spurs of mountain system dividing Chittagong from Burma, upon which various peaceful tribes under our rule carry on a "joom" cultivation of cotton and rice. The Chittagong Hill Tracts are under a European Officer, and are flanked on the east and north-east by the savage races of Shindoes, Howlongs, Syloos, and Rutton Poa's clan. The Howlongs and Syloos and Rutton Poa's people, as well as the tribes living north of the water-pent between Cachar and Chittagong, are generally known as Lushais. We have thus Cachar Lushais and Chittagong Lushais: the former always raiding to the north, and the latter—it was till the year supposed—confining their ravages to Arracan, the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and Tipperah. There is reason to believe that some of the Chiefs of the Cachar Lushais are connected by blood or marriage with Chiefs of the Howlongs and Syloos; and although there is no such thing as a Lushai confederacy, each Chief being as a rule independent, there is no doubt that, for purposes of war and plunder, temporary alliances are made, and formidable bands are got together. With the help of a map, the local conditions of the frontier in this quarter will now, we trust, be tolerably clear.

Let us next briefly summarise the history of these hills for the last ten years, and of the raids committed by the tribes there dwelling. To take the Chittagong side first, In January 1860, five hundred Lushais, under Rutton Poa, their Chief, swept across the north of our hill tracts, burst into the plains of Tipperah, burnt 15 villages, butchered 153 British subjects, and carried captive 100 souls. In those days we avenged the slaughter of our people where we could, and precisely one year afterwards, a body of military police, under Captain Raban, penetrated to Rutton Poa's village, and inflicted considerable chastisement on him and on his tribe. The policy of vigor brought its own reward. It was followed by the unconditional submission of the Chief; and the subsequent establishment of a chain of police posts has, ever since, kept the hill tracts north of the Karnafoolie free from raids. Rutton Poa has continued friendly. He has given information from time to time of raids contemplated by his neighbours, the Howlongs and Syloos. He dare not render more active help owing to the exigencies of his own position. And naturally enough he does not scruple to intrigue in order to maintain his advantage as the sole medium of communication between us and the other Lushais near him. These Lushais, chiefly Howlongs, as well as the more southern and still more warlike Shindoes, have raided frequently on the south of our hill tracts, where the population is sparse and the police posts few and far between. The whole of these tracts is indeed a confused jumble of broken hills and ravines covered with the densest jungle, where the only paths are the beds of torrents. The climate is for three-fourths of the year deadly to natives of the plains, and posts can only therefore be maintained during the cold season. Their effect is at best rather moral than practically formidable. Many attempts have been made to cultivate amicable relations with the Howlongs and Syloos. The greater number of their Chiefs swore not long since oaths of friendship with Captain Lewin, the Superintendent of the Hills, but the Howlongs have always been insolent in manner, and frequently in active hostility, while the Syloos have been more open to conciliatory overtures.

Turning now to the Cachar frontier, we find that the Lushai tribes north of the water-pent are divided apparently into two sets, the one living on the upper waters of the Dullessur, the other approached by the valley of the Sonai. In 1862 (to pass over all previous outrages) Sookpial, a Chief of the western section on the Dullessur, made a savage raid upon Hill Tipperah, and on villages lying in the south-east corner of Sylhet. For four years desultory attempts were made by the local officers in Cachar to ascertain Sookpial's precise position, and to open communications with him. It was thought possible that he had not intended to attack British territory, and that he would on demand surrender the captives and give pledges of his future good behaviour. Negotiation failing, police were in 1866 got together for a punitive expedition, but the difficulty of penetrating to an uncertain goal through an unknown country led to its abandonment. The Lushais had clearly, so far, no cause to repent of their evil deeds. The policy of 1866 was not in this instance one of vigor, but years had been lost in tracing the offenders. In December 1868, Sookpial again raided in Tipperah and Sylhet, and on the 15th of January 1869 Lushais burnt the tea-houses at Boharbund in Cachar and attacked Monierkhall. The



Cachar raiders were supposed to be of the Sonai tribes, but were probably acting in concert with Sookpilal. To punish these outrages, a great military expedition was taken in hand. Three columns were to enter the Lushai country, one by the Sonai Valley, one by the Dullessur, and the third from Sylhet through the Tipperah Hills. The Sylhet attack eventually dwindled to a police reconnoissance. This party marched through the hills till it got close to Sookpilal's villages, and there finding itself in hot quarters, fired upon, and unsupported, it very wisely came away again, rapidly. The Dullessur column was the main attack, and to uphold its dignity and ensure success, it waited for guns and elephants and grenadiers, until the rains were just about to begin. It then marched a few miles into the hills, got very wet, and came back again, *re infecta*. The Sonai party was more persevering, and somewhat more successful. It got up to some Lushai villages, but not being certain who were the guilty parties, it frightened the neighbourhood generally by firing a few rounds in the air, accepted conciliatory offerings from the Chiefs around, and returned covered with glory and mud to Cachar. Up to this point again the results seem to be that the Lushais may have been a little scared, but had not yet been hurt or punished for their repeated misdeeds. We must remember that they know but very little of us or of our power; that like all ignorant savages they have great ideas of their own prowess, and the majority of them have good reason to believe in the inaccessible of their present sites. In view of this state of things, the local officers and the local Government urged strongly upon the Government of India the propriety of sending into the country a carefully organised expedition at the very commencement of the next cold weather, not necessarily to burn and slay, but to convince the tribes of our power to punish, and to open up communications with Chittagong. It was also suggested that permanent security could not be looked for until we had treated the Lushai tract as the Garo Hills and Khasi Hills had been treated, by placing an English officer with a strong guard in the midst of it, and doing away entirely with the anomaly of allowing a hostile and savage strip of highlands to intervene between two British districts. The Supreme Government would not, however, hear of an expedition. It declared itself, according to the Administration Report, "averse, on principle, to move bodies of troops and armed police, even in limited numbers, in order to effect reprisal for outrages on any part of our extended frontier". Another policy was now to be tried. The Lushais were to be taken in hand by a special officer, but his influence was to be based on conciliation and not on respect. He was to lead by love, not govern by salutary fear. Now in savage countries, conciliation is too often only the Latin equivalent for rum and rapes. In the case of the Lushais we believe, it eventually involved gifts of green pyjamas. It means, in short, cozening where we cannot compel.

There is much to be said for the view of the case taken by Lord Mayo's advisers. The difficult nature of the country, the uncertainty of our being able to inflict *adequate retribution* to produce any lasting effect, were strong reasons for discountenancing an expedition. But if the Lushais were beyond the reach of punishment, they were also beyond the pale of negotiation. The Government, however, thought otherwise. Mr. Edgar, the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, to whom some of the Sonai Chiefs had, when fearing an expedition, sent messengers, was directed to visit the hills with a guard, and endeavour to establish amicable relations with the tribes. What the results of Mr. Edgar's mission really were, and how the geographical information acquired by his companion, Major Macdonald, has improved our position and ability to punish for the renewed outrages of the present year, we must enquire hereafter. It is, however, only too apparent that such overtures, coming after such marked failures to coerce, were open to the most fatal misconstruction.

Observer, the 25th February 1871.

In a former article we brought the history of our dealings with the Cachar Lushais

down to the point where, after having failed to punish for outrage done, the Government determined to adopt a policy of conciliation pure and simple. We have said plainly enough that this mode of treating a savage and hostile people was a policy without a back bone—a limb and nerveless phantom not to be dealt upon at all. Let us now very briefly see what it was that Mr. Edgar really achieved by that conciliatory journey, the details of which were laid rather ostentatiously before the public some nine months ago. Accompanied by Major Macdonald of the Survey, protected by a well-armed guard, and followed by a crowd of coolies bearing food for the travellers and tripperies for the



Lushais, Mr. Edgar started from Silchar on the 26th of December 1869. He arrived at Lushai Hâth on the Sonai by the 1st of January following. His guides were two *muntrees* or representatives of Chiefs living near that river, each of whom used daily to take the Deputy Commissioner aside, and give him mysterious warnings against the other, huskily whispering in Kookie gutturals "Dollong is the friend, not Kholei". The very day after their arrival at the Hâth, the Lushais began their demands for money, exhibiting much unlovely temper because they did not get it there and then. So sulky indeed were they, that Mr. Edgar wrote to the station ordering more police to be sent up by degrees, as he thought "these people might give trouble". For thirty-eight days the emissaries of the great and conciliatory British Empire sat in their fortified camp at Lushai Bazar, and during the whole of that time they were never invited or admitted to a single Lushai village, and saw only one personage who even professed to be a Chief—Kalkom, to wit, the son of Sookpilal. Savages of the commoner sort locked round them in plenty. *Muntrees*, too, from different queer named potentates attended to ask what on earth the Sahibs wanted, and to ascertain what they were prepared to give. With infinite patience and wonderful tact, displaying at once the good humour of an Irishman, and the immobility of a Falstaff, Mr. Edgar received and palavered. Not once but often his visitors would try to bully and extort. Hostile demonstrations even were not wanting, and noisy parades of armed warriors threatened, at safe distances, the security of the camp. With instinctive prevision of an approaching civilisation, they would scream in their rage that he had come to ruin their clans and seize their villages. One day all would leave the camp in dudgeon, to return again the next, allured by the fascination of a trade in which all the profit was on their side, and all the loss on ours. Big dinners and bigger drinks to the *muntrees*, cash payment for each service done and each point conceded, judicious threats and conciliatory acts, but above all eighty armed police in a strong camp, brought Mr. Edgar safely through the first part of his adventure—fortunate chiefly in this, that he had succeeded in bribing some *muntrees* to show him roads over the hills hitherto unknown, and that he had acquired an insight into the inter-tribal relations of the savages which he could never have attained in his cutohery at Cachar.

We do not, of course, mean to say that no more than this was attempted. On the contrary, the main point to which Mr. Edgar directed his arguments, was to induce these clans which should profess themselves friendly to move northward, and settle in the forest close to the south of our cultivated tracts and gardens, there to be supplied by us with arms, and form a defensive barrier against the forays of wilder tribes from the south. It was not to be expected that all this could be brought about *tout à coup*. But beyond the post-prandial assurances of the *muntrees*, we fail to see any indications that even a promising beginning of negotiation had in fact been made. All officers acquainted with our eastern frontier attach much importance to frequent personal interviews with the Chiefs themselves, and to the receipt of friendly invitations to the villages of the tribe. Reading the conduct of the Eastern Lushais towards Mr. Edgar in the light of general frontier experience, we should incline to doubt if his visit was at all welcome, save as regards the material and temporary benefits it brought with it; and we are very far from sanguine that the proposals made by him were ever seriously entertained by the tribes. Certainly they have since taken no steps whatever to fulfil their part of the bargain.

On the 8th of February Mr. Edgar's party left Lushai Bazar to cross the central range of Renai Pahar into the Dullessar Valley in the hope of coming to terms with Sookpilal, believed by us at that time to be the most powerful of the Lushai Chiefs. He was at any rate the one who had done us most damage. On the 20th of February the expedition reached Repari Bazar, after being detained for some days on the road owing to shortness of supplies. Messengers were at once sent off to invite Sookpilal to attend in person. For a whole month, however, he kept Mr. Edgar waiting, but on the 21st of March this old man of the hills did actually condescend to appear. It was a real triumph of patience getting hold of him at all. Doubtless, had he not heard full accounts of the very plausible and magnificent conduct of the Sahib towards the eastern tribes, he would never have come. If, however (he may have thought), *muntrees* were well treated, how would he, a Chief, be entertained? But again we note that he did not ask Mr. Edgar to his village or near it, and that our officers were never in fact within some days' journey of it. Negotiations began, as usual, with stimulating beverages. In this instance rum and curacao tickled the chieftain's palate, and warmed his unsophisticated heart. Mr. Edgar then proposed that a boundary should be laid down, which should be respected by us and them. On this line Sookpilal was to place a *Pooaji* and a guard, which should guarantee the safety of the frontier. Arrangements were further made by which he should enjoy a monopoly of the trade with Cachar by the Goochur, levying fixed rates on all



licensed dealers and wood-cutters entering the country. All this would be admirable, if carried out, for the irregular exactions of the various Chiefs, and their occasional weakness for plunder and heads, had hitherto greatly interfered with traffic. When these matters had been satisfactorily settled, Sookpial was invested with a dress of honor specially made for him,—green pyjamas with scarlet and gold flowers, a purple coat with green and gold embroidery, an indescribable hat of green and white silk, a necklace of glass buttons and gold beads, and two glass earrings! One farewell tot of "Edgar's peculiar," and the Sahib and the Savage parted with mutual esteem. The policy of conciliation had reached its grand climacteric. But before the patient diplomatist had reached his bungalow in Silchar, messengers from the Lushais were proclaiming in Manipur that the Sahib had been into the hills to pay tribute to the Chiefs,—sure proof of their puissance, and significant warning to their remaining foes. Now, if it should be the case, as we believe it is, that Sookpial is very far from being the most powerful of the Lushais, that there are other Chiefs as warlike, and as partial to green pyjamas, we can easily imagine with what feelings they will have learnt the story of Mr. Edgar's doings in the hills. What had Sookpial done to bring down on him such showers of good things? Simple question! He had raided with impunity and success. Nothing could be more congenial to their own habits and wishes. If Sookpial had slain his tens, they would slay scores. If Sookpial had butchered defenceless peasants, they would have heads of police, of sepoy, and of Sahibs. We may imagine, too, what jealousy there would be of the happy Sookpial through all the independent *Doonjies* of the hills. The Howlongs, whose war parties had spread panic and desolation southward to Arrakan, had never received such tribute to their prowess. Their great Chief, Vandoola, had never been so honoured, leader though he be of at least 4,000 fighting men, 2,000 of them armed with guns. Is it too much to suppose that, so far from permanently pacifying the frontier, the result of Mr. Edgar's negotiations was to hold out direct incentives to a score of warlike peoples to come and do as Sookpial had done, that they might fare as Sookpial had fared? We know now that it is not alone to the attacks of the tribes dwelling on the Cachar streams that our gardens and villages are exposed. The long ranges running up to the water-part prove to be but paths by which the powerful races of the Burma and Chittagong mountains may ravage our territory and retire unharmed. It is more profitable to plunder tea-gardens with a view to contingent green pyjamas, than to harry the huts of Joomas in the jungles of Chittagong. The war-trail will in future point north instead of south.

One thing, however, we have now discovered, and it is this, that if we care to abandon the policy of conciliation—that now somewhat discredited policy of rupees and rum—the villages of these raiders are not beyond our reach. We have left ourselves no space to show what we believe to be the only successful way of dealing with these tribes. For this, another opportunity must serve. The problem before Government, in face of the renewed outrages of last month, is not by any means an easy one. None can be more sensible of its difficulties than we. But it must be solved, and solved thoroughly and for ever, if our administration is not to be a scandal to our civilised subjects, and a mockery to our savage foes.

Observer, the 11th March 1871.

We have now to consider very briefly what measures it seems incumbent upon

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Government to adopt in view of the renewed outrages of the Lushais, and to enquire by what means our frontier districts of Cachar and Chittagong may be rendered reasonably secure from the attacks of these or cognate tribes. In Chittagong, we have to defend a long line of broken highlands, in which dwell peaceful forest races paying us revenue and looking to us for protection. It is morally impossible for us to draw back the limits of our empire and leave these our subjects to the mercy of their savage neighbours in the other hills. We must therefore look for a fairly defensible frontier, either within our acknowledged civil jurisdiction, or as little to the eastward of that as possible. Fortunately we have not far to go to find this. Both north and south of the Karnafoolie, and just to the east of the tracts at present occupied by our Joomas, run two almost continuous ranges,—that to the north called Demagiri, and that to the south known as Seychul. On the Seychul range there are at present no inhabitants, but there can be little doubt that it is used as a convenient highway by the



Howlongs and other tribes in the north when they sent raiding parties towards Arracan or into the Sungoo Valley. Our present outposts are situated in the broken country well to the westward of this line. They are useless save as a moral demonstration, and they protect only the ground on which they stand; sometimes, indeed, not even that. They might occasionally be able to send a detachment to cut off the retreat of a raiding party, but ordinarily the Lushais passing up the bed of some secluded stream, or stealing through the forest by elephant tracks, penetrate where they will, and ravage as they choose, knowing well that their presence near the jooms will not be discovered until they have disappeared with their captives and their ghastly spoil of heads. So perfectly is this fact recognised that during the raiding season the cultivators retire nightly from their villages into the jungle round about, where, surrounded by their families and moveable property, they sleep malaria-haunted slumbers, thankful if at morning they find their huts intact. It is now, we believe, being admitted that no system of fixed police posts can protect efficiently a country of this kind. The other alternative is a system of strong patrols, and if these are to be of any good, they must have a clearly defined and fairly open line along which to patrol. Such a line is afforded us by the Seychul range. Along the summit of this a path must be cleared, and at reasonable distances stockades must be erected between which armed parties of police shall constantly pass to and fro. No Kookie foray could cross this line without its traces being discovered within a few hours of its passage. We may feel pretty sure that no Kookie Chief would ever venture to cross it, if the police are reasonably strong and moderately energetic. Nor would these advanced patrols have to be maintained throughout the year. Lushais cannot live by raids alone. They too have jooms to till and crops to garner. Plunder and slaughter are only the cold weather amusements of a generally bucolic existence. During the rains the frontier guard might be withdrawn to head-quarters, where the men might enjoy the society of their wives, and profit by school and steady drill. We believe that the Government of India has already sanctioned the organisation of an efficient frontier force for the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and that now, happily, all the local officers are at one as to the best mode of utilising it.

We have up to this point spoken in detail only of the Seychul range, south of the Kurnatoolie. Proceeding northward we find at the point where the extremity of these hills debouches on the river that we come in contact with the group of Lushai communities that run down like a wedge into the hill tracts district from the central and northern ranges. Rutton Poon, the Chief whom we effectually consolidated ten years ago by a sound threshing, is at present moving his village sites from the north of the Kurnatoolie on to the extreme spurs of the Seychul range. He is, as we have already shown, amenable disposed, and is our one real ally among these southern Lushais. He cannot afford to do much for us, because the Syloos and Howlongs are more powerful than he, and are more ready to punish for supposed treachery than we to protect for service rendered. But, if we are ever to have a hold over these invaders of our territory, we must by establishing a strong post near Rutton Poon's village, confirm a week-kneed ally and menace in permanence the fastnesses of the Howlongs. Such a post would not only form the best rendezvous for the patrols on the northern half of the Seychul, but it would command a line of road along the Demagiri range, which should be similarly patrolled in order to give efficient protection to the hill tracts north of the Kurnatoolie. When the patrols and stockades on the Seychul and Demagiri ranges are fully established, we shall have, as regards Chittagong, a well defended line between our Joomia ryots and the raiding tribes. But our work must not stop here. Our line is turned at the north by the tribes inhabiting the *terra incognita* between Cachar and Chittagong. Had we only the last named district to look to, we might possibly complete our scheme of defence by carrying our line of patrols westward as best we could, athwart the streams and broken hills, until we reached the Fenny and the boundaries of Hill Tipperah; such a line would close in our Chittagong Hill Tracts as in a ring-fence. But we have a more difficult task before us than this. We have the Cachar frontier to provide for, lying between Hill Tipperah on the west and Manipur on the east. It might be possible to run a line of posts across this strip, and by dint of extensive and costly patrol, to defend the tea gardens from raiding parties attacking from the south; but, in the first place, to secure any really good line, we should have to advance some considerable distance into the Lushai tract, to cover those gardens which have already pushed far up the valleys of the Dullessuri and the Sonai; and, in the next place, our post might always be turned on either flank by parties marching through the sparsely peopled territories of Tipperah and Manipur. Besides all this, any merely defensive police would fail to meet the due requirements of the case. Warlike tribes have been allowed to



attack us with impunity. They have spied out the richness and the unprotected condition of the land. They have been within ten miles of a sdr station, a wealthy bazar, and a well-filled treasury. Is it to be supposed that even the prospect of losing a few young warriors in the field will deter the Howlongs and Syngas from repeating their invasion? On the contrary, rumour is already rife that they intend to avenge their losses at Montekhall by raid on a scale hitherto unknown, and in numbers which, without preparation, it will be hard to meet. We must teach these savages that we are strong as well as conciliatory. They must learn to know that the lives of our subjects are not to be taken with impunity. They must practically feel that we can reach them in their most secluded fastnesses. The Government will naturally be chary of renewing the military *fiasco* of 1859. But indeed no more retaliatory raid will now serve our turn. With careful deliberation the plan must be worked out. There are men at hand well qualified to help. Money will have to be spent, and our rulers, we know, are thrifty and the times hard. But if we once realise that an adequate outlay now will save us both money and trouble hereafter, and will lay a permanent basis for future tranquillity, none of us will grudge the necessary funds.

The expeditions made by Mr. Edgar and Majors Macdonald and Graham have shown that the Lushai villages are not so entirely inaccessible as we have long believed. Three good routes at least, two of them by water, lead far into the interior from the north. In the same way paths have been discovered and rivers explored to within a few miles of Buntan Posa's village on the south. Between the two points to which we can thus penetrate, and to the eastward of them lie the villages of the tribes with whom we have to deal. *The points alluded to are only forty miles apart.* True the country is difficult, but we are not merely going to march through it. We must occupy it in force for at least three months, and having inflicted on the offending villages condign and righteous punishment for the outrages of the past, we must take due steps to make them harmless for the future. This will best be done by running a road right through the Lushai tract into Cachar in continuation of the Demagiri patrol road. Such a road brought order and civilisation into the Khasi Hills when all other means had failed. It must, for some years, perhaps, be strongly patrolled, and commanding posts on either side must be occupied by strong guards in stocked camps; but very soon the road will bring the Lushais as peaceful traders to our bazars. The civilising influence of commerce will permeate the hills, and it is possible that a few years hence we may see Vandoola, the Howlong Chief, owning great hills of tea, and shipping at Chittagong choice specimens of Pekoe to rival the produce of the very gardens he but lately ravaged. The idea may seem extravagant, but history, local and petty enough but true, tells us that Ningroola, a Singpho Chief, who long troubled us in Dibroooghur, underwent in days gone-by a similar transformation.

The Government will, we believe, no longer hesitate to devise some scheme for stamping out these raids which shall be *thorough*. We are confident that both Imperial and local authorities will work together for this end, and while we have indicated in rough outline the plan that most commends itself to us, we trust that no theoretic views will prevent the best devised measures from being carried into full effect.

Pioneer, the 22nd February 1872.

It is high time that the Government of India gave some sign of its ultimate intentions as regards the Lushais and its hill-tracts policy. The expedition has done well all that it was possible for an expedition to do. It

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has shown the tribes, both north and south, that punishment for outrage, though slow in coming, is now and then sure; and that the same hands that torn at times with rapiers and green pyjamas can deal out far-reaching destruction when the need arises. It has burnt villages and destroyed grain enough to mark its presence in the hills for many a day to come. This was its duty—the only way open to it of accomplishing its task. We are not of those who first clamor for punishment, and then beg off the culprits because "it hurts." When the tribes would not submit to our arms, the only alternative was to break up and disintegrate their communities. In the end it is quite possible that a show of submission may be made by some at least of the recalcitrant Chiefs—a handful of captives may be surrendered, and the policy of conciliation may crown with much official sneaking the edifice which rough-handed war has built. It is because we distrust



entirely this conciliatory policy as at present expounded, that we draw attention to the subject at this early stage. Punitive expeditions are an absolute necessity in dealing with aggressive and ferocious borderers. On the north-west frontier they are matters of common occurrence, and attract little or no attention. We described one, the most recent, yesterday; it was vigorously conducted and entirely successful, for the present time and for that particular place; but it will assuredly not be the last of its kind. They are indeed in that quarter almost the only means open to us of maintaining order. The races we have to keep in check are the foreigners, dwelling outside the limits of Hindustan. On the north-east the circumstances are altogether different. The limits of the empire are drawn far outside most of the tribes we have to meet, and this alone has necessarily led to fluctuations in policy and uncertainty of aim. At one time the plan of annual expeditions and retaliatory raids was perseveringly tried, as in the Naga Hills. But while the efforts of Government practically began and ended with these, no lasting effect was produced. At other times the policy of conciliation, pure and simple, has been in fashion. Indeed this policy has always found favor with a Government professedly paternal. But when tried in this shape, it too has generally proved abortive. The only policy which has at all met with permanent success is one which leaves nothing to chance—where conciliation takes its stand upon strength and preparedness, and where personal influence is backed by material power. How then are we to apply the lessons of the past to the circumstances of the present case? We had suffered outrage, repeated and gross. Instead of promptly punishing, we made fruitless demonstrations, and finally despatched a conciliatory embassy. Personal influence descended upon the Lushais in showers of rupees and gorgeous raiment. Boundary treaties were interchanged. Chiefs hitherto inaccessible pledged our envoy in liquors to them hitherto unknown. To remote tribes the news spread magnified, and before our messengers had left the hills, this story had run through Lushai land, from Tipperah to Manipur, that the British Government had paid tribute and sought peace of Soekpial. The policy thus inaugurated had the result most men, save its authors, anticipated for it. Next year, while the officer who loyally carried it through against his own convictions was again in the hills, there happened such a series of raids both north in Cachar and south in Chittagong, as had never before devastated the frontier. But still the Government of India were averse to punishment; and it was only when the clear-seeing mind of the Commander-in-Chief grasped, after local inquiry, the facts of the case, that reluctantly an expedition, which might, it was hoped to the last, be a military promenade, was at length sanctioned to. That expedition has been thus far successful. But if when it is over we are to revert to the policy of conciliation and personal influence in its original shape, we can look for no permanent good results. We shall leave behind us, in the hills, tribes exasperated by the loss of their villages, though no doubt, convinced of our power to penetrate a certain distance into their fastnesses. They will have learnt that to punish any raid requires years of deliberation, and the employment of an agency very different in calibre and mode of action to that which ordinarily protects the hill tracts. They will have noted that, even when such abnormal and very destructive agency appears, offenders have only to submit and say "they are sorry," when the threatening visitors will at once receive them into favor, and disburse liquor and rupees as visible tokens of amity and good-will. If it should therefore happen that on the withdrawal of our troops, the old nonsense about conciliation and personal influence is the only policy put forward, we shall be much surprised if next season does not witness a renewal of the raids on a scale and with a ferocity of which we have at present little conception. There will be revenge to goad the Lushais on the war-path, as well as the ordinary lust for plunder and slaves. What is wanted is permanent security, and a permanent possibility of punishing outrage without expensive expeditions on the Abyssinian scale.

First, then, we must open up the country as far as possible by roads, not necessarily macadamized turnpikes, but broad, serviceable paths, along which a body of troops or police can march with elephants. One such path, driven through from Cachar to Chittagong, would do more to civilise the Lushais than any other scheme suggested. The experience of all hill tracts teaches us this. In truth, we do not see how the policy of personal influence is to be worked at all save in combination with a system of roads by which our officers can get at those they are to influence. Failing these, this wonderful animal magnetism will operate only once a year at an annual *meela*, as heretofore in the Chittagong Hills, or fitfully upon one or two Chiefs at a time after laborious journeys of months, as in Mr. Eager's Lushai tours. Roads are essential both to conciliation and to repression. Some officers are, we know, opposed to them, on the ground that they would open out the tea-gardens to the Lushais as well as the Lushai villages to our police. But surely this is a very short-sighted line to take. With our roads we must have frontier



posts; we must have armed patrols. If a raiding party did slip past, they ought always to be intercepted on their return. The dread of this would any way tend to prevent raids; and as a fact, a system of posts and patrol paths has secured the north of the Chittagong Hills from inroads these ten years past. On the side of Cachar our policy, whether conciliatory or not, must rest on a basis of paths, posts, and patrols. In face of the strong (but weak) determination of Government to allow this anomalous Lushai land—a mere strip between the British districts—to continue independent, we can do no more. On the side of Chittagong similar arrangements must be made; but the physical characteristics of the country, and the position of the tribes, will compel us here to go further. In Cachar the line of posts may be within our own territory—the roads alone must invade the adjoining tracts of the Lushais. But in Chittagong it is impossible to establish an effective line of defence wholly within the limits of our present jurisdiction. Every local officer agrees in this. To perch a series of stockades among the broken hills and dense jungles of our hill tracts district would be mere waste of men and money. We must take up a line further eastward, where we can cut a continuous patrol path along the the summit of one of the ridges that here run almost uninterruptedly north and south. On this line we must place our stockades; and, properly held, it will be an almost impassable barrier to raiders from beyond. If they got through to raid, they ought never to return alive to boast. On the north these ridges join on to the more open ranges, where Rutton Poa and the Syloos dwell. Here we must have a strong guard permanently posted, as well to protect Rutton Poa, our ally, from the revenge of the Syloos, as to be a permanent menace to them and to the Howlongs. This done, we may allow personal influence to have its turn. It will not then be mistaken for timidity. It will rest on material power, and run no risk of being misunderstood. Apart from these or such-like measures of preparedness, we have no faith whatever in the policy of conciliation. Our troops must soon turn home again. It is high time the Supreme Government gave tokens of its plans.

Pioneer, the 6th May 1872.

In anticipation of the early publication of the views of Government, both as to the

What the Left Column did in Lushai land,
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results of the late expedition and the policy to be adopted towards the Lushais for the future, we propose to review, as well as our im-

perfect materials will permit, the work done by the two columns of this force, and to bring together, in the form of consecutive narrative, the information scattered through the letters of special correspondents and the meagre paragraphs of communicated telegrams. We shall endeavour to convey some idea of the character of the country traversed, and the difficulties overcome; and as we can hardly venture to hope that our readers will honour us by tracing our progress on the map as we go along (if indeed they have maps available), we shall strive to make the story as clear and self-contained as we can. We shall begin with the left column which started from Cachar, and shall afterwards follow the fortunes of the Chittagong force on the right, and finally attempt to estimate for ourselves the probable results of the expedition as a whole.

The strength of each column of the expedition was fixed by the Commander-in-Chief at half a battery of mountain artillery (with rockets), one company of Sappers and Miners, and three regiments of Native Infantry. The regiments selected for the Cachar side were the 22nd, 42nd, and 44th, consisting mainly of Punjabees, Sikhs, and Gorkhas—regiments specially adapted for the work before them, and equally expert with the matted and the bayonet. Carriage was reduced to a minimum, for the way was long and rough, and the routes uncertain. Tents were dispensed with, each man being furnished with a waterproof sheet for his bedding, and left to cut branches and bamboos to keep the dew from his pillow. One maul of personal baggage sufficed for the General: six seers only were allowed to the soldier. We need not tarry to explain how elephants and coolies were got together and sent up, how boats were seized and boat-men impressed, how the Commissariat failed and district officers went almost wild, and how the fell scourge of cholera threatened at one time to mar the whole. By the end of November the column had fairly started into the hills, and on the 6th of December the civil officer, Mr. Edgar, had left Silchar to join the troops. Before accompanying them on their weary progress, it will be well to understand the dispositions made in support of their advance, and the instructions which we gather were given them for their guidance. The goal which the left column



had (if possible) to reach was the village of Lalboorah, son of Vonolei, who had been mainly concerned in the raids upon Monierkhall. It was known that this Chief dwelt far within the hills to the south-east of Tipai Mookh—the trijunction point where Cachar, Manipur, and Lushai land join their boundaries. The line by which he had to be reached lay therefore to the extreme east of the District of Cachar and up the course of the Barak River, which there runs northward from the hills. The whole southern frontier of Cachar stretched westward from the column's right flank, and had of course to be properly protected. This was done by stationing strong guards at the points where the ordinary Lushai routes debouched on the district. Beyond the hills again to the east of the line of march lay the territory of Manipur, the confines of which towards the south-west pointed towards Lalboorah and the other Lushai clans of that neighbourhood, the only intervening tribes being those of the Solti Kookies—a race hostile to the Lushais and friendly to Manipur. Advantage was taken of this to move a strong Manipur force down towards the south, with orders not to invade or attack the Lushais, but merely to serve as a threatening demonstration against them and as a support to the Soltis. This Manipuri contingent was the net into which subsequent events drove all the captives held by Lalboorah and many other Chiefs. Having thus stationed permanent supports, as it were, on both his flanks, General Bourchier prepared to carry out the plan of the expedition entrusted to his conduct. It was a task requiring much political discrimination as well as military skill. The information which Government had as to the perpetrators of the raids was at the best incomplete. The names of the leaders were, it is true, pretty well ascertained; but our knowledge of their tribal relations was admittedly imperfect, and it was impossible to say with certainty that *this* village shared the guilt while *that* was undoubtedly altogether innocent. Hence it was evident that the expedition could not merely march into Lushai land to plunder and to ravish, careless of where its blows might fall, and eager only to burn and slay. If during its progress guilt were with certainty brought home to any particular villages, the General's orders were to punish without scruple. The surrender of Chiefs known to hold British subjects in captivity was to be demanded rigorously, and in the event of non-compliance their houses and property were to be unhesitatingly destroyed. Restoration of captives was also to be insisted on. Should it appear that some only of the inhabitants of a village had joined in the raids without complicity on the part of the village as a whole, the payment of a fine and the surrender of the guilty were the punishment to be inflicted. Hostages were to be demanded, did this appear necessary. If hostility was met with, resisting villages were to be attacked and burnt, and the surrounding crops laid waste. It was, however, strongly impressed on all that retaliation was not the main object of the expedition. It was the desire of the Supreme Government to show the Lushais that they are completely in our power, to establish permanent friendly relations with them, to induce them to promise to receive our Native agents, to make travelling in their country safe to all, to demonstrate the advantages of trade and commerce, and to prove to them, in short, that they had nothing to gain but everything to lose by acting against the British Government. This was the general programme on which both the columns had to work; and with this before us we may at last venture to set out from the sadder station of Cachar.

For all that portion of their journey which lay between Silchar and the first Lushai villages, it may be roughly said that the force had to follow the course of the Barak. For 14 miles or so from the station, they had a fair track due east to Luckeepore, where the river takes its great southern bend: but here the difficulties of the road commenced, and the troops had actually to begin their pioneering labours one day's march from their head-quarters. At the frontier outpost of Mynadthur the force was fairly on the verge of the wild country, and from the dépôt here established the stores required in front were regularly despatched thereafter. The second grand dépôt was at Tipai Mookh, on the junction of the Barak and the Tipai, between which and Mynadthur were four distinct stations or camps. Up to this point water-carriage was to some extent available, though the river was rapidly falling, and not to be depended upon. On the 21st November the 44th had marched to Luckeepur. By the 9th December it had cut its way to Tipai Mookh. There was much to do here in the way of building hospitals, store-houses, and stockades. But they were now close upon the Lushai fastnesses, and it was deemed expedient to show the enemy without delay what the force was capable of effecting. Accordingly, on the 13th December, the General pushed on the Sappers and a Wing of the 44th to a camp five miles out, and commenced therefrom the ascent of the Seubong Range through fine timber forests, encamping ultimately at an elevation of 4,000 feet. From this point, looking southward, the Toeebhoom River was seen flowing from the east into the Tipai. Across the latter stream to the west stretched the *jooms* and cottages of Kholei, while far



away on the south-eastern hills perched the more advanced villages of Poiboi. From its lofty camp on the Senboon the little party descended by a long day's march towards the confluence of the Tipai and Tooeebhoom, crossing the former stream by a weir, in spite of the yells and threatening demonstrations of a crowd of armed Lushais. It was in vain the General assured them that his intentions were not necessarily hostile; that if they did not molest his men he would do them and theirs no injury. Nothing succeeded in producing confidence, and with a final yell of defiance they at last disappeared to take counsel for the work of the morrow. Next day (the 23rd December) the troops commenced the ascent of the hill on which the Kholel villages lay, and were received at the first clearing by a volley from a Lushai ambushade. This of course prevented all hope of peaceful negotiation. Had they remain quiet, we should merely have marched into their villages, interviewed their Chiefs, and settled our relations for the future. As it was the village was taken with a rush, fired, and its granaries destroyed. Another village, a mile further along the ridge, was occupied as a camp; and a third village at the summit of the mountain was captured and burnt before evening closed. Next day, and the next, the troops were occupied with raids on the surrounding villages and granaries, and a lesson was read to the unbelieving men of Kholel which they are not likely soon to forget. It was disappointing to be met with hostility at the outset, especially from villages with the chief men of which Mr. Edgar had had some apparently friendly palaver before the expedition started. Mora, the *muntri* of Impanu, the old lady who at present rules these villages, had indeed met the General at the crossing of the Tipai, but had disappeared with the rest when the troops crossed over. On the 26th December the force evacuated Kholel and retired to the camp in the valley below, near the stream; but being still constantly harassed by firing from the surrounding jungles, a second foray was made on the 29th, the mountain was again scaled more to the west by a party of the 42nd, which had now come up; and the blaze of fresh villages and granaries would soon have followed had not the enemy suddenly, unexpectedly, and very dramatically made complete submission. As the troops advanced they were met by Darpong, a *muntri* of the still distant Poiboi, who had been with them at an early stage of the expedition. This gentleman, clad in orange-coloured garments and decked with a lofty plume, now came and interceded for Kholel, and by anticipation for Poiboi. Assured that it was not our wish to continue hostilities which we had not begun, he climbed up a tree, and from its summit emitted an unearthly yell that echoed among the surrounding peaks, put a sudden stop to the dropping fire in the jungles, and brought in the Lushais in crowds to fraternize with their late opponents. The *muntries* declared that the elders of the tribe had never wished for war, that the young braves had rashly commenced hostilities and brought all this sorrow on their homesteads. On the 30th and 31st, Mora and other *muntries* came in, peace-offerings were offered and accepted, and the year closed in comparative quiet. Here for to-day we must leave the force with the first stage of its work well over, its first foes subdued and reconciled, but having still before it the task of punishing the Cachar raiders, and reaching villages the very situation of which was at best uncertain.

Pioneer, the 7th May 1872.

We left General Bouchier and his column in their camp at the confluence of the

Tipai and Tooeebhoom after receiving the submission of the clans of Kholel. The camp was soon thronged by Lushais, young and old, bringing pumpkins, fowls, and ginger for barter, and curious to examine "the appurtenances" of civilization in the shape of watches and burning glasses. Every effort was made to gain their confidence, and messengers were sent to the tribes ahead to explain more fully to them the objects of the expedition. On the 6th of January the forces advanced from the Tooeebhoom east by south towards the Tooeetoo, another affluent of the Tipai, crossing the intervening ridge at a height of 3,400 feet. Thence almost due south over a difficult road they marched to the village of Pachuee, the ninth station out from Mynadur, overhanging a sudden bend of the Tipai. Here they could see to the eastward the precipitous cliffs on which stood the principal northern villages of Poiboi, while as far as the eye could reach to the west lay villages and *joome*. Waiting here for reinforcements and stores, the General took the opportunity of making an excursion to the old site of Kholel, where was the tomb of Vonpilai, the former Chief of that clan. The village had been burnt six days before our arrival, but the tomb was intact, and consisted of a stone

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platform 20 feet square and four feet high, surrounded by poles, on which hung skulls of wild oxen, deer, and goats, enigmatical representations, drinking vessels, and the skull of a pony slaughtered at the funeral. On the 13th the force made preparations for its onward march. It was but 2½ miles from Pachnee down to the Tipai, but it gave two wings of the 22nd and 44th hard work to clear a road. So steep was it naturally in places that the Lushais had been wont to let themselves down by ropes of cane, which primitive aids to locomotion were hanging down the face of the rock when our men arrived. The force was now coming close upon Poiboi, already referred to as one of the most powerful Chiefs of this quarter, whose attitude, notwithstanding the presence in camp of his *muntiri*, Dharpong, was still uncertain. Two wings had been left to overawe Kholei in the rear. There was a wing at Tipai Mookh, and a wing in the two stations immediately in rear of the advance, which itself consisted of two wings, with the General and headquarters. Small detachments held intermediate posts, and the artillery had got as far as the camp at the confluence of the Tooseebhoom and Tipai, but was fast pushing on to the front, and had indeed joined the General before he crossed the bend of the Tipai below Pachnee. It was well, as it turned out, that he was in a position to make a good display of force at this point. The Lushais were evidently very unhappy at his determination to proceed. The villages of Chipooee and Tingridong, which lay on the mountain across the river, were nominally subject to Poiboi, but were situated so far from his chief village as to be to some extent independent. We were anxious therefore to secure their neutrality, but at the same time they were half afraid to treat us well lest Poiboi should resent it hereafter. As the force scaled the hill at Chipooee, they were met by Dharpong and a crowd of Lushais, who pretended that Poiboi himself had come to meet the General. The man put forward as the chief turned out, however, to be an impostor, and as a punishment for the deception the General warned them that he would now listen to none but Poiboi himself in his principal residence. Leaving a strong party to watch these doubtful villages, and taking the headmen on as hostages, the force again set on south-eastward. The road as usual led over a lofty ridge down to another affluent of the Tipai, and then up a mountain chain on the other side. The reconnoitring party in advance came here upon two paths, one running along the ridge, the other turning down to the east. Across the latter was suspended a rude imitation of a gallows with figures *vis. per coll.*, and a block roughly cut into the representation of a body with the scalp off. These were intended at warnings not to take the path so guarded—warnings, however, which were afterwards known to be treacherous and deceitful. Fortunately the leaders of the advance were not easily frightened, and they forthwith selected the tabooed road, which they explored without accident. On the road left open the Lushais were lying in wait and ready for an attack! Next day (the 25th January) Dharpong, who had been sent on to summon out Poiboi, appeared in camp and warned the General that he would be attacked if he went on. This of course had no effect: but attacked he was on all sides, in the midst of one of the worst bits of ground yet traversed by the troops. The men, however, behaved splendidly, and though the General himself was wounded the enemy was driven off and severely punished, and the road in advance secured. This attack proved that Poiboi and Lalboorah had actually coalesced, and had determined to oppose the further march of the column. Accordingly, as a foretaste of what they might expect, parties were sent out to burn Poiboi's villages on the neighbouring heights, and here for the first time the artillery made play, and struck terror and wonder into the minds of the Lushais, who fled from their stockades in panic and left their homesteads eventually undefended. It is worth mentioning here that on the bodies of some of the Lushais slain in this skirmish was found ammunition taken from the sepoy killed at Nudgigaon in the Cachar raids—proof positive that the expedition was on the right track, and that the tribes, who now opposed us, were actuated rather by despair of pardon than hope of success. The lessons thus taught him seem, however, to have convinced Poiboi that he had better separate himself from his ally, Lalboorah. He was warned that a heavy fine of hill oxen and other things, with complete submission, could alone condone his rash resistance, and that his villages would all be burnt unless he too came in. He began sending in presents forthwith, but the General replied that he would treat only in Sellam, the chief village of the tribe. And for Sellam, on the 1st February, the column marched, crossing three ridges, one 5,850 feet high, to the top of the Lengting range, where they came in sight of Sellam and its dependencies, crowning the hill over against them, and stretching with *foam* and clearing for some three or four miles. Here again Dharpong, the *muntiri*, appeared bearing offerings, but nothing served to stay the advance; and Sellam, deserted by Poiboi and his followers, was occupied in peace. The very furniture from the Chief's house, a great hall 100 feet long, had been removed. Skulls and antlers alone hung on the deserted walls. Next day, however, the



Lushais came fearlessly to the camp, and were given to understand that only Poiboi's submission could eventually save their villages. Poiboi with his guilty fears had, it now appeared, sent embassies to General Nuthall and the Manipuris; but his submission to General Bouchier in Sellaam was what was uniformly insisted upon, and to Sellaam he seemed determined not to come. Here the preparations were made for the final dash upon Lalboorah. Two guns and 400 men were the force detailed for this service; baggage was almost entirely got rid of. Time was pressing, and the work required to be speedily done with. On the 12th February the troops started upon the last stage of the expedition. Five days' marching almost due south through an elevated mountain region, over ridges in some places 6,600 feet high, brought them at length in full view of the valley of the Champai, the head-quarters of Lalboorah, son of Vonolel, leader of the raids on Monierkhall. On the 17th of February they reached the village. But other invaders had been there before them; and signs of war and slaughter greeted them on every side. The withdrawal of the Manipur Contingent from the frontier, owing to sickness, had set free the Sokti Kookies—old enemies of the Lushai, who, seizing the opportunity and knowing the panic caused by the advance of the British column, made fierce onslaught on Lalboorah under the guidance of Kamhow, their Chief. Lalboorah had, it is true, beaten them off with loss; but their attack had probably prevented his occupying a strong position, which he had stockaded and prepared, across the route by which the column came, and frustrated the hopes he entertained of entangling them in the mountains. His village was now found deserted, and was forthwith burnt to the ground, only the tomb of his father Vonolel escaping the flames. On a neighbouring height dwelt the widow of Vonolel, herself a powerful and wise old woman, who had in vain urged her sons to submission. From her a fine was levied of war-gongs, oxen, goats, and such like, which she did not refuse to pay. Besides this it was stipulated that three headmen should return as hostages to Tipai Mookh, that they should receive Government Agents in their villages when required, that either the 12 muskets taken at Monierkhall and Nugdigoon should be given up, or a similar number of their own fire-arms be surrendered. On the 20th February the conditions were complied with, and next day the force, its task accomplished, set out on its return. Poiboi, in nervous dread of punishment, had, we may notice, been hovering round the camps all the way from Sellaam, and had even met the Native assistants of the civil officer, but nothing had induced him to come in to sue for peace. This is the one failure in the operations of this column. It was 92 days since the head-quarters of the expedition had left Cachar. During that time they had been almost constantly on foot, cutting the roads by which they advanced over lofty mountains, ridge after ridge, crossing and re-crossing numberless streams, scaling fastnesses of hostile tribes, burning their villages and destroying their crops when punishment was demanded, proving, at the same time, to the peaceably disposed that conciliation was more agreeable to us than scourge. The return march was a festal rather than an armed progress. Molested by no enemies, the column retraced its steps, attended by crowds of admiring Lushais, who thronged its camps and bartered their country produce for trifles valuable to them and costing little to us. Head-men and *muntries* from all the tribes attended the General to Tipai Mookh. By noon, on the 10th of March, the last man had left that station, and the column withdrew to Cachar, leaving behind it some 100 miles of mountain road to testify to the perseverance and pluck of the gallant corps, which had cut and blasted a path from Mynadbur to Chumpai, and avenged the outrage of Monierkhall at the tomb of Vonolel.

Pioneer, the 10th May 1872.

Since our notice of the doings of the left column and most of what now follows was written, the *Gazette* has made the story in its fullest possible shape common property. What the right column did in Lushai land, it is only because there are many who will read in a leader what they avoid in small type that we continue our summary of events in the Chittagong Hills.

In treating of the doings of the left column which penetrated to Lalboorah's village from Cachar, we set forth the general principles by which the expedition as a whole was to be guided. We may now note that while the main object of the left column was to get at and punish the tribes who had raided on Monierkhall and East Cachar, it was the aim of the Chittagong force to reach the Syloo Chief, Savoonga, who was known to have been concerned in the raids on West Cachar, the sack of Alexandrapore and the murder of Mr. Winchester. With the Howlongs, too, we had a score to



settle, but it was not at the outset certain which column could most effectually deal with them. Mr. Edgar had hoped that the Cachar troops would have penetrated by tolerably easy roads to Lalboorah's village, and remaining there would, at leisure, have subdued the neighbouring tribes, including the Howlongs, who were supposed to be near. But the difficulties of the way made it late in the season when Lalboorah was reached, and the site of his village was found to be so far to the east that General Bouchier at Chumpai had over thirty miles of mountain ridges between him and General Brownlow at the most easterly point to which the latter attained. To the Chittagong Column, therefore, fell the task of dealing both with Syloos and Howlongs, and, though the two branches of the expedition never met among the hills, we shall see that each did its work thoroughly and well; and we shall find that in the end their failing to unite was a matter of very secondary importance. The great advantage possessed by the right column as compared with the left was, that it had the sea, or rather Calcutta, as a tolerably convenient base, and that it had water-carriage up to a point in the almost immediate vicinity of its active operations. The Kurnafoolie, which cleaving the north of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, is navigable by river steamers up to Ranganuttia, a distance of 61 miles; thence to Kassalong, 17 miles further up, light country boats of 18 inches draught could go; and beyond that 12 miles on to Lower Burkhal small boats and canoes, carrying about five maunds each, could very well be used. The troops selected for this column were the 2nd and 4th Goorkhas and the 27th Punjab Infantry, with half a mountain battery and a company of Sappers and Miners—a force precisely the same in composition and character as that with General Bouchier. On the 28th October General Brownlow landed in Chittagong, and no time was lost in completing the Commissariat arrangements, already well advanced, and in pushing on provisions as far as Kassalong. The course of the Kurnafoolie above this place is broken at intervals by dangerous rapids, the first of which is situated between Upper and Lower Burkhal. From Kassalong to Burkhal the river runs due east. At Burkhal it takes a sudden northward turn, and above the rapids is found a clear, deep, sluggish stream navigable by boats for 19 miles to the rapids of Ootum Chutra. By dint of great labour boats were dragged up the Burkhal falls, and a river service established on the reach above. Beyond Ootum Chutra to Demagiri the course of the stream as we ascend turns again to the east till we reach Demagiri, a point where the great Ohepoom range abuts on the Kurnafoolie from the south, and the Sirthay Klang meets it from the north. Canoes, it was found, could be got up the Ootum Chutra rapids as far as Demagiri. It was well indeed that this boat service between Burkhal and Demagiri was possible, for the land route between those places was all but impracticable. Only 16 miles apart as the crow flies, it was a five days' march of 41 miles to traverse by the ordinary Kookie path, two-thirds of which lay along the beds of torrents, the rest being through almost impervious jungle. By dint of great labor a road was cut passable for unladen elephants and coolies, but laden elephants were to the last unable to traverse it. From the ranges on either side of Demagiri a fine view was obtained of the Syloo and Howlong country. Five ranges lay before them to be crossed, rising to 4,000 and 5,000 feet, covered with forest to the very top. In every intervening valley was a stream, now rushing fiercely shallow amid its boulders, and now flowing deep and unfordable between dark silent woods. At Burkhal the General was joined by Rutton Poea, the Kookie Chief of whom we have heard so much, and who, since 1860, has been our more or less faithful ally. His present villages lie on the Ohepoom range south of Demagiri, and he offered to lead the force by land as far as that place. What the road he led them was like we have seen above. At Demagiri there was much to do; a standing camp had to be cleared, and provisions for the whole force got up in anticipation of an advance. Demagiri was to the Chittagong Column what Tipai Mookh was to that from Cachar. It was the 1st of December before there was food enough in store to warrant a forward movement. For four miles above Demagiri the river was impracticable, but canoes were placed on the reach above as they had been above Burkhal, and ten miles more of water-carriage was thus secured. Some little way above this point the force left the valley of the Kurnafoolie and turned northward along the Sahjuck. From the furthest point on this stream to which the canoes could go the troops commenced their regular hill work, marching north by east to attack Vanoonah, the first great Syloo village on the Belkai range, and to commence that severe course of discipline which in time taught the Syloos that the way of transgressors is indeed hard. On the 14th December Vanoonah was captured by surprise, common both to the Lushais and to our reconnoitring party, which came suddenly on the village from above after losing its way in the woods. The Syloos had, in reply to our overtures, already intimated their full intention of fighting, and had made no sign of submission. On the contrary, a few days later they vindicated their reputation as warriors

and braves by attacking in force three little Goorkhas carrying the post-bag, and were very much astonished to find that, after shooting one of them from behind a tree, the other two did not run away, but showed effective fight until a rescue came. From Vanoonah's village Colonel Macpherson with three companies was sent on a five days' raid to the east. Down into the valley below, and up the range beyond, his men toiled scrambling, and on the third day they made for Lal Heera, only eight miles from Vanoonah as the crow flies. This they burnt with two other villages beyond, and destroyed vast quantities of grain, getting back to Vanoonah on Christmas Day. Another raiding party had been out during their absence to the north-east, and done equally good service of a similar kind, and returned home "driving off the cattle" to assist the stores of a much-tried Commissariat. On the 27th the head-quarters moved northward along the ridge from Vanoonah for 13 miles, and thence a few days later turned eastward on its way to Savoonga (the head village of the Syloo tribe) and the Howlong fastnesses beyond. From Upper Hoolien, a captured village *en route*, a full view was obtained of the country they had to traverse, and it was seen that there were still three ranges to cross with the intervening valleys. While the force rested at Hoolien, a party raided north, and took villages and stockades, defended with some energy though without persistence. On the 13th of January Syloo Savoong was occupied and found deserted, and the conquest of the Syloos was then complete. The position of this village was singularly fine—lying on a hill 3,200 feet high with the Kloon Doong or Dullessuri flowing under it on its way to Cachar a tributary of the Gootur rising at its western base, and a branch of the Kurnafoolie taking its course southward close by. The Syloo Chief dwells as it were at the very *Omphalos* of the hills, and sends out his war parties north and south to plunder in Cachar or slay in Chittagong. We have spoken of the troops raiding and burning in the course of our narrative as things of course, but in fact no effort was spared to induce the Syloos to come in and make terms. By messengers and notices, by shouting parleys across rivers and amid the woods, they were warned and encouraged and invited to come in: but their hearts were guilty and their hands not clean, so, savage like, they doubted of that which should happen unto them. Their doubts were their destruction. And in truth, politically speaking, it was better for the future peace of the hills that things were as they were. Punishment has more effect when felt than when fancied, and if we have one regret in connection with the whole Expedition, it is this—that the more easterly villages of the southern Howlongs (the most formidable of the tribes) were wise enough to submit at the first summons, as we shall see below, and that the residence of their principal Chief Vandoola was never occupied even for an hour. Bloodshed and burning we do not affect; but peaceful occupation to vindicate our power and policy was much to be desired. We are, however, anticipating. The rest of our narrative we must condense. From Savoonga the destruction of other Syloo villages to the north was effected, and Rutton Poa was despatched as a messenger to the northern Howlongs dwelling across the Dullessuri. Rutton Poa travelled by a more southern and round-about road to avoid the refugee Syloos, and was met by messengers from the Howlongs bringing in Mary Winchester as an earnest of peace. General Brownlow waited patiently at Savoonga from the 12th January to the 11th February, to give his emissary time to work upon the Howlong mind. Then finding that no reply had come from the northern section of the tribe, though the southern Chiefs said they would come in at Demagri, the force at last crossed the Dullessuri. No resistance was offered, though the villages were fired by the inhabitants as they advanced. On the 16th, however, Sungboonga and Benkoca, the great Chiefs of the clan, came into camp and submitted, agreeing to give up their captives and to admit our troops to their villages. No other terms were insisted on. Two days later Lalboorah (not he of Chumapai), Latoma, Lieurikoom, and other leading Chiefs, came in, and the same day the first instalment of the returned captives rewarded the exertions of the force, and testified to the sincerity of the Lushais. A detachment of Goorkhas attended the survey officer through the villages, and on the 23rd the troops set out on their homeward march, accompanied for a time by crowds of Howlongs, male and female, clad many of them in dark cotton tartans, and wearing as ornament the true Highland sporran. With curious inconsistency, the Syloos, having been utterly harried and ruined, came in as the force retired, and made full submission. On arrival at Demagri General Brownlow started with four companies eastward to quicken the movements of the southern Howlongs, who had not yet appeared. Forty miles' march over a fearful country and a final climb of 4,000 feet brought them to the village of Sypoca, an inferior Chief, who at once submitted. At the Dullessuri beyond, the General was met by Vantonga, one of the leading Chiefs, and by the sons of the great Vandoola, who brought in captives and did homage on their father's behalf. The season was now late, and General Brownlow accepted this and



returned, to save the force the three days' eastward march which lay between the river and Vandoola. We cannot blame him for this, but of all the Chiefs in that quarter, Vandoola is the one whom we should have most wished to see humbled. There are, however, good grounds for hoping that the permanent establishment of a strong post at Demagri will secure his good behaviour for the future.

The right column had now done its work. Its four months' campaign had reduced two powerful tribes and brought in fifteen Chiefs, rescued many captives, and added to our maps in detail three thousand square miles of hill country. What the political result of the expedition as a whole may be, we shall try to estimate hereafter.

Pioneer, the 8th January 1872.

We always look with comparative eagerness for the annual reports of

Work in Bengal Jungles.

those tracts in which free scope is given to the administrative abilities of individual officers, who are left untrammelled by the formalities of Regulation law and made answerable for their actions only to God and the Government. Such are the hill districts now dotted along our Eastern Frontier. Of them we have often written, and in them our interest never flags. Did we, indeed, not edit the *Pioneer*, we would fain rule over the squat swart Garos of the hills, or teach Nagas to grow potatoes on the rich terraces of the Barail! But not in those hills alone are English energy and directness of aim working out great results. In many a jungle solitude, where fever lurks in every brake, and uncouth savage races dispute with wild beasts possession of the clearings, we can point to devoted men, little heard of by the public, little noticed by their Government, who are spending and being spent for the sake of the people they control, and bringing by degrees whole tribes to learn the rudiments of civilization and progress. It is with no invidious design, or wish to exalt one such administrator above his brethren, that we instance Captain Johnstone's management of the forest races of Keonjhar as a type of the thing we mean. We refer to him because he is not now in India or likely ever to read these lines, and because we know that he stuck to his post long after doctors and friends had urged his immediate departure, solely that he might see the first fruits of the labours on which his whole heart was set. With a frame all saturated with malaria, he is now doubtless fretting in enforced leisure at home at being separated from his beloved Bhooias and Jowangs. Our readers will remember the way in which the management of Keonjhar fell into our hands. It is one of the so-called tributary mehals of Cuttack, neglected little principalities left, as a rule, almost entirely to the control of their native Chiefs. The British Government exercises of course a paramount supervision. But this is entrusted to the Commissioner of Cuttack, a busy, overworked officer, who, with the dread of another famine always before his eyes, has to concentrate his energies upon the civil administration of Orissa, and has little time for visiting the distant and unwholesome forests that fringe his satrapy. Years ago the Keonjhar Rajah died. He had done good service in the mutiny; and the Government, either by way of gratitude or from a vague sense of duty, removed the boy, his successor, for education to Cuttack. The training of a Babu was hardly the one best suited to a forest Chief. But there was worse in the arrangement than that. The young Rajah was removed for years from all contact with the simple races he was to govern, from all intercourse with the officers of the primitive state to which he had succeeded. He was not the Dowager Rani's son, and she, a clever, unscrupulous woman, made good use of the time given her. Adopting a relative of the most powerful neighbouring Chief, she put him forward to the people as the rightful ruler. He grew up in their midst, and won their affections; and when the actual Rajah returned under the auspices of the Commissioner to his inheritance, graced with all the accomplishments of a zillah school, he found that he was received as an outcast and imposter, and that the hearts of the people were gone utterly from him. He was, however, duly installed, and fortified by much good advice, he commenced his feeble attempt at independent management. The regular cultivators might, perhaps, have acquiesced after some grumbling in the rule of the Chief selected by Government; but the ruder men of the woods were otherwise minded. It was not in consonance with their simple faith to desert the Chief



to whom they had hitherto paid fealty. The knotted cord ran through their villages as the fiery cross along the margin of Achray, and

"Fast as the fatal symbol flies

In arms the huts and hamlet rise."

A "little war" was on the hands of the Bengal Government, and it was only when bullet and gallows and treachery had done their work, that the Keonjhar forest tribes, their leaders gone, their spirits broken, their Chief removed, bowed to the mysterious will of the Sirkar, and accepted the Babu Raja whom unkind fate had sent them.

It was to conciliate these tribes, to heal the wounds that policy had been forced to inflict, that Captain Johnstone was deputed. Many men would have been content with holding the country in sullen subjection, scouring it with an armed police and reporting the dull silence of despair as "satisfactory" evidence of penitence and submission. But Captain Johnstone thought otherwise. He loved the people in a way that puzzled red-tapists, and made them at times deem him not a little mad. Nothing could have been more judicious than the way in which he set about educating the Rajah in the true sense of that word, bringing him into sympathy with his subjects, strengthening his character without boring him by homilies, and instilling into him true principles of government by slow degrees. This was his duty, and he did it well. But it was in his own dealings with the wilder tribes that Captain Johnstone most delighted. A mighty hunter, lord of elephants, one of the few who understand the manners and customs of that earth-shaking beast,—he had special opportunities of becoming intimate with the forest-dwellers. His success in winning their confidence was something marvellous. We have no space to go into details: one or two facts will serve to mark the results. He has induced the Bhooiyas to go in heartily for popular education. Six hundred and sixty babes of the wood now daily attend his schools, children but a year or two ago so wild that at sight of a stranger they buried themselves in the jungle like startled deer. The most remarkable thing about them now is their wonderful memory. He does not inflict on them moral maxims of the copy-book pattern, but they read story-books, and look upon the *sahib* as a sort of beneficent deity who sheds peace and smiles on every little urchin who waddles up to his verandah. The cattle of the district are being improved by a breeding stud. Agriculture has become in the eyes of the people a new art by improved seed and staples. Markets have been established, and efficient order is maintained throughout the State by a force of 33 policemen. But Captain Johnstone's principal triumph is the clothing of the Jowang women. The Jowangs are a tribe of some 4,000 souls, who dwell in the far recesses of the forests, in a state of most degraded savagery. For two years Captain Johnstone sought to win their confidence and bring them within the pale of civilized man. As a first step to this it seemed to him desirable to raise their standard and ideas of comfort, and to enlist the ladies of the tribe on the side of progress. Now all the ladies aforesaid clad themselves as Eve was clad when shame first seized upon her. Leaves were their only drapery. Moreover, they believed that were they to wear aught else than leaves, tigers and bears would infallibly rend them. This was the idea he had first to remove. After much discussion among the males, a resolution was come to—"flat experimentum." An aged hag, whom nobody would miss, was clothed and watched. No ill results followed to the lady, and after months of patient waiting and coaxing Captain Johnstone was permitted to clothe the whole female population, 1,846 women and girls at his own expense. The discarded leaves were gathered into a heap and solemnly burnt, and the men of the tribe entered into covenant never more to permit their women to appear unclothed. Can we doubt that the taste for millinery once implanted, woman's influence will induce the men to adopt settled habits of labor to earn the means of supplying these new wants? We may laugh over the story, but the moral of it is much to the thoughtful student.

Pioneer, the 23rd April 1873.

Thanks to the work of men like Butler, Williamson, and Lewin, the North-East Frontier of Bengal is fast becoming a more

Lewin's Proverbial Philosophy.

interesting study than seemed possible a few years back. In 1865 the only idea which

most men had, with reference to its hills and forests, was that they were the habitat of



savage tribes, whose bloody raids and thieving forays threatened serious danger to the cause of tea. In Assam there were still some who remembered how Scott had tamed the Garos and Brokis brought in the Nagas; how Wilcox, Bedford, and Newville had traversed the wild borders of Lakhimpur, and the Khamtis and the Singphos had first paid in homage. But Dalhousie had pronounced the Assam Frontier a bore. Our officers were to mind their mounzais and leave the hillmen alone, and we gradually drifted into ignorance even of their tribal names. We lumped together as Nagas all the tribes from the Patkoi to the Kopili, and dubbed all hillmen Kookies from North Cachar to Arracan. In 1866 Sir Cecil Beadon—who, for all his misfortunes, had the instincts of a statesman—undertook to change all this. A policy of direct administration by selected officers was inaugurated and carried through, and these columns have borne repeated testimony to the way these chosen men have worked, and to the success which has in general crowned their labors. In the hills of Chittagong some attempt had been made a few years before the enunciation of Sir Cecil Beadon's views to bring the tract known as the Kapes Mehal, or cotton farm, under the direct control of an English officer. The men sent there were, with one or two exceptions, unsuited for the rough life of the highlands, and did not possess in any marked degree the faculty of conciliating their rude neighbours in the inner hills. It was just when the Government were casting about for officers fitted for work of this kind that the account reached them of a journey undertaken by the District Superintendent of Chittagong through the hills to Arracan, marching barefoot, clad in *dhotees* and *poorees*, with no dyspeptic aversion to hill beer. An admirable performer on the fiddle, Captain Lewin, was revealed to the Joomeas as a new and more agreeable species of *sahib*, a welcome addition to a hill fireside. He was forthwith put in charge of the hill tracts, with full administrative and police powers, and his intimate acquaintance with hill customs and languages has since then been abundantly proved.

We now have before us his last brochure, consisting of 278 proverbs in the original, with English renderings, a preamble, and occasional notes. These terse little sentences throw much curious light on the social habits and characteristics of a simple race. They are concentrated and sententious wisdom of the Khiongtha, or children of the river—a people of Arracanese origin, speaking the ancient Arracanese dialect, and conforming in every way to Buddhist customs. The *Laungtha*, or children of the hills—the more savage tribes of Kookie and Lushai—have not yet advanced far enough to furnish much field for similar inquiries. Already, in his account of the hill tracts, Captain Lewin had given as a few specimens of Khiongtha proverbs corresponding in sentiment very closely to some of the better known English sayings. For instance—"Food refused when offered, search in seven houses and you will not find," was appositely compared with—"He that will not when he may, when he will he shall have nay." We were also introduced to the following:—"If I must die I must die, but do not touch my top knot, as the peacock said," very neatly capped by Leech's—"Take all, take money, take life; but spare, oh, spare my collar!" In the present collection we find many proofs that human nature is after all very much the same whether it is trained in the woods of Chittagong or amid the leafy lanes of England. "He got angry with the rat, and set fire to the house," is the hillman's way of "cutting off his nose to spite his face." The Englishman "shuts his door when the steed is stolen," the Khiongtha lets his pot fall, and *then* took up his waistcloth. At home "the bad workman quarrels with his tools," in Chittagong "the unsuccessful fisherman curses the river, rough people lay the blame on their dress." A very large proportion of Captain Lewin's proverbs are devoted to the merits and shortcomings of hill wives and husbands. From his former book we gathered that the relations between these two races are a most remarkable study; we now find that there are two sides to the picture, and that Khiongtha husband has his anxieties, a Khiongtha youth his doubts, and that domestic quarrels are not unknown. The process of wooing is, however, much the same all the world over. "Spread pan and betel before guests, lay presents before a woman." The following, called at random, call for little comment; "They are each and all luminous with suggestion:—People make salutation on seeing a monastery; women laugh when they see their lovers." "If you want a good pot sound it first; if you want a good wife, know her first." "If you love your wife, neither tell her your secrets nor make friends with young policemen (an interesting tribute to the gallantry of Captain Lewin's force)." "Caulk a new boat, beat a new wife," is attested for by "Prop up an old house, cherish an old wife." "One's own home is always the pleasantest, and she is loveliest whom one loves best," is in contrast to "The mind of the bride's mother is as uneasy as peas in a brass plate." "If a man runs after a woman he falls into marriage, if a woman runs after a man she falls into ruin." Repeated blows make the drum sound: a wife gains her ends by often asking." "The sweetest



marriages are the most worm-eaten; a beautiful woman is least to be trusted." But "good soil gives good grain, a good husband makes a good wife." "Half-grown grain wants the rain; to her with child be soft and mild." On the whole, we think there is ample evidence that the social virtues are more potent than the social vices among these children of the river and the wood.

There is scarcely an incident of hill life which proverbs do not utilise or illustrate. The great tribal or village feasts which figure largely in our frontier policy evoke the comment:—"Dry vegetables smelt in the pot; cold people thaw at a feast." The miseries of those exposed to raids breathe in the saying, "A thorn under the nail is unbearable; so is it to have a relation in slavery." The caution incumbent upon a man visiting a strange and possibly hostile clan is inculcated thus:—"If you go on a strange river take down your flags; if you enter a strange village, take the strut out of your walk." "In your own village crow and be cock; when you're in another, you must be a hen." "Entering into a wood blaze a tree, on visiting a village make a friend." The love of the people for intoxicating drinks is touched off in these:—"An old house wants props; an old man wants drops." "For drink, Khowng (fermented beer); for the cold, a quilt." "An axe is spoiled by the knots in the wood; a man is ruined by the glasses he swallows." The raised houses of the villages are put before us in the warning:—"If you talk secrets in the day time, look behind you; if at night, look under you." That their forests produce vermin and noxious herbs is hinted at in this:—"Dust your bed before sleeping; in eating always eject the first mouthful." In the following we get much concentrated wisdom and worldly shrewdness:—"Do not talk on important matters to a man just off a journey." "Seek no quarrel with one just awakened." "As a pole punts a boat, so does speech assist wisdom." "A thousand ants can carry an earthworm; so the words of many turn a lie into truth." "No one runs open-mouthed up a hill; do not run headlong into anger." "He who cultivates an old *joon* will have much weeding; he who marries a widow will have to pay her debts." "Do not close an old road; have no quarrel with an ancient friend." "A dog is disliked for his teeth and man for his tongue." "Too high is broken by the wind, too low eaten by the goats." "Content is covered with the Sheshia leaf; but for discontent a plantain leaf would not suffice." In jungle scrub the castor tree is king; any knife is sharp amongst potatoes." "Home counsel is bitter; you will get honey enough outside." "If you give, give quickly; if you trade, trade money." There are a good many of these proverbs, not quoted by us, in which the relations of the people to the *king* are set out in various lights, reminding us in several instances of the cynical advice of Solomon on the same subject. It is, we think a pity the translator has not given us an exact rendering of the word he turns into *king*. As it stands, it gives, we think, a false idea of the tribal economy. We suspect it is only a free rendering of *raja*, or village headman. We doubt, moreover, whether the proverbs are, in all cases literally translated. But it is a moot point how any such task as this should be executed, and Captain Lewin himself is fully conscious of its difficulty, and far from boastful about his success. He has, however, done much to increase our interest in the people among whom he dwells, and for whom he cherishes a warm regard.

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