



refused, and urged that more active efforts might be made to find out the offenders. The Poongree duly received the letter, and at once despatched it by an express messenger to Mandalay.

The Burmese official from Mandalay charged with investigating the affair informed the Manipur officer in charge of the witnesses that, if the investigation could not be finished at Tummoo, he and his witnesses were to go to him at Gendat.\* Colonel Johnstone, however, directed the officer not to go beyond Tummoo. He acted thus as he was very doubtful if any real investigation was contemplated, and he thought it highly probable that compliance with the request would be followed by an intimation that the witnesses must go to Mandalay. The Court of Enquiry broke up on the 1st March; but, as the Manipur witnesses were accused of having left on the previous occasion without giving time for the investigation, Colonel Johnstone directed them to remain a short time longer before returning to Manipur, which they did. It seemed to Colonel Johnstone that no real attempt had been made to elicit anything respecting the authors of the outrage, and that there was no real wish on the part of the Burmese to make an example of any of the offenders; in fact, he thought the letter from the Poongree of Tummoo, suggesting a payment of Rupees 900, showed conclusively that there was a desire to evade enquiry: and the attacking party having been estimated at from 100 to 200 in number, he considered that it would not have been difficult to obtain evidence regarding some of those concerned, even admitting that the Manipur witnesses were at fault. He remarked that instead of acting honestly they had employed the sons of the Rajah of Sumjok, one of whom, it was reported, ought himself to have been on his trial, to aid in arresting the men mentioned by the witnesses, with the result that might have been expected.

After the Court of Enquiry had dissolved, rumours reached Manipur that the inhabitants of the Kubo Valley were in an excited state, and that the Burmese meant mischief. Troops were reported to be assembling at Gendat and Tummoo, and Colonel Johnstone received word that many families from Kubo wished to take refuge in Manipur, as they anticipated trouble near home. He did not think any danger was to be apprehended, but as a precautionary measure he delayed for a short time the departure of the relieved guard of the 34th Native Infantry, which was then about to leave for Cachar, and went to the Burmese frontier and selected suitable sites for stockades.

The following were the orders passed by the Government of India on Colonel Johnstone's reports, contained in a letter No. 1584 E. P., dated 11th June 1879, to the Resident at Mandalay :—

You will observe that the Court of Enquiry assembled to investigate the case was dissolved on the 1st March 1879 without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion. The

\* Gendat is a town of some size with a Woon as head official. It is situated on the left bank of the Ningthee River at the extreme south-east corner of Manipur. A large stockade was constructed there by the Burmese in 1875.





only offer made by the Burmese was to settle the affair by the payment of a sum of Rs. 900 as compensation for the outrage, and this proposal has been rejected by Colonel Johnstone.

It would doubtless have been a more satisfactory termination to the question had the Burmese authorities displayed greater energy in prosecuting the enquiry, and had the actual offenders been brought to justice and to punishment. But in consideration of the difficulty, and perhaps even impossibility of now attaining this result, owing to the lapse of time since the occurrence and the impracticability of the local authorities, the Government of India have decided, under the circumstances of the case, to raise no objection to a settlement by a suitable money compensation. The amount, however, offered by the Burmese is clearly insufficient to meet the grave requirements of the case; and, as the object of the two Governments is admittedly to prevent further trouble and occasion for ill-blood between the people dwelling on the frontier, the Mandalay Government will doubtless concur in recognizing the importance of the settlement of the present difficulty being such as may fairly satisfy the aggrieved parties according to the usage and ideas of the people concerned.

I am, therefore, to request that you will place the case in this light before the Mandalay Ministry, and that you will move them to issue orders to the frontier authorities for the early payment of such increased indemnity as, under the circumstances of the case, may seem to be reasonable.

The tribe of Chasáds has only recently brought itself to notice.

Aggressions of the Chasád Kookies.

No mention of these Kookies can be traced in any correspondence previ-

ous to 1878. They are not mentioned in Dr. Brown's account of the hill country and tribes under the rule of Manipur, contained in the Administration Report for 1868-69, nor in any of the subsequent Administration Reports. Colonel Johnstone reports that they lived for a long time in Manipur territory, but have recently taken up their abode on the borders of the Kubo Valley in territory which he states really belongs to Manipur, but which has often been claimed by the Burmese. He also says that they are "one of the numerous Kookie tribes that are gradually pushing on towards the north-east from the country south of the valley." In October 1878 Colonel Johnstone received reports of outrages committed by the Chasáds, who were attacking the Tankhool Nagas and carrying off the people as slaves. The Tankhools are Manipur subjects, and occupy the hill country to the east of the valley. One report received was that the Chasád outrages were instigated by the Rajah of Sumjok; another was that Jamoo, one of the men who took part in the Kongal outrage, had instigated the Chasáds to attack the Tankhools, and had given presents to Touong, the Chasád Chief, who promised in return to subdue the Nagas east of the Tooyong River and bring them under Kubo. Colonel Johnstone was inclined to believe the latter report. The Maharajah informed the Political Agent that he wished to attack a Burmese Naga village as a warning to the Sumjok people that they could not intrigue with impunity. Colonel Johnstone dissuaded him from doing this, pointing out that there was no evidence that the Burmese had been intriguing. He, however, authorized the establishment of a strong post of observation at a place called Nombesa, about six miles from the border, and a force being sent to Chattik, in Manipur territory, but north of the Kubo Valley, where the Chasáds were said to be assembled in large numbers: the force was in no case to cross





the border line into Burma or to advance within a day's march of it. After this Colonel Johnstone received word from the Manipur officer on the frontier that the Chasáds had been driven out of Manipur and taken refuge in Kubo, where Colonel Johnstone said, "if report speaks truly, they will be warmly welcomed." In connection with this case, Colonel Johnstone again raised the question of the boundary between Manipur and Burma. He remarked :—

As long as asylum is granted to these troublesome Kookies, so long will there be trouble on the eastern frontier of Manipur. It is the position of the Kubo Valley running into Manipur territory as it does that gives the Sumjok people such advantage for annoying their neighbours, as where the boundary is disputed they can always assert that the depredators are not their subjects. When the Kubo Valley was taken from Manipur much future trouble was predicted in consequence, but the great difficulty which now exists from the fact of Kookies and Nagas, who are constantly quarrelling, being under two distinct Governments, could not be then foreseen, as those tribes were then all under Manipur. Now, however, while things remain as they are, difficulties are likely to increase, as the tribes will not cease to quarrel, and the rulers of the countries they inhabit must be responsible for their depredations. Were the broad Ningthee or Kyendwen the boundary, these troubles would cease.

In December 1878 six Manipuri Sepoys were arrested in the Kongal village (Manipur) by a party of 30 Chasád Kookies and six Kubo men, and taken to a Chasád village said to be in a high valley between the Ungoching and Kongal Hills, where they were kept as prisoners in the stocks for nine days. They were then taken to Tapp (old Sumjok), where they were detained for 26 days, but not subjected to any indignity. They were then taken to Mungsa, where their arms were restored to them, and thence to Yangapokpee Thannah, where they were handed over to a Manipur subadar, together with a letter addressed to Tangal Major. The letter stated that the men had been arrested in Burmese territory by Tonghoo, a Chasád Chief, when on their way to the said Chief with a message asking him to come in to Manipur, that the Chasáds arrested them hoping thereby to effect the release of one of their men who had been taken prisoner and carried to Manipur, and that on the case being referred to the Sumjok Rajah, he, from a feeling of friendship, sent the six men back and asked that the Chasád prisoner might be released. Colonel Johnstone remarked that there being thus a great difference between the two statements, it was difficult to decide who were the offenders, and that, if the Manipuris really did go into Burma with arms in their hands, the Burmese authorities were justified in detaining them.

Thus far I have utilised a very full précis drawn up in the Foreign Office in 1879. For later events I turn to the Assam Administration Reports.

In February 1880 information was received of a raid committed by Chasád Kookies on the Manipuri village of Chingsao, wherein 45 people were slain and 3 more carried off into captivity. After consultation with the Chief Commissioner, who was then at Manipur, it was de-

Events of 1879-80.





cided that Colonel Johnstone should himself investigate the facts of the case, and, there being a long-standing dispute between the Manipur Durbar and the Court of Ava as to the exact boundary in the neighbourhood, ascertain in whose territory the village of the Chasád Kookies lay.

*Chasád raid on Chingsao.*

In the event of the village proving to be in that of the Maharajah, it was determined to destroy it. Colonel Johnstone arrived at Chingsao on the 16th March. He learnt that in the previous year a party of Chasáds came to Chingsao and demanded tribute from its inhabitants, asking them to become the subjects of the Sunjok Rajah. This they refused to do, and the Chasáds went away. There had previously been other aggressive acts committed against different Naga villages on the frontier, and these did not cease; but no further demonstration had in the meantime been made against Chingsao, which is three days' march to the north of the Kubo Valley. It is clear that Chingsao, which is a powerful village, was selected for attack, in the hope that, if it was subdued, all the Naga (Lahoopa) villages on the Angoching range would be induced to transfer their allegiance from Manipur to Sumjok. The Sumjok Rajah is a tributary rather than an official of the Mandalay Government, and the Chasád and other Kookies in this raid acted apparently as his instruments.

About daybreak on the 17th of February the villagers of Chingsao were disturbed by a volley of musketry, and some 50 Kookies, all armed with muskets, then entered the village and slaughtered the inhabitants as they ran out of their houses. A body of Nagas came up from the western end of the village, and drove out the Kookies, who, however, succeeded in burning half the houses of the village, and in carrying away a great quantity of plunder. The Chasád and other Kookies were armed with guns, having, as was previously reported, been supplied with them by the Sumjok Rajah. When the people of Chingsao reckoned up their losses, they found that 20 men, 7 boys and 25 women and girls had been killed, and that one man, one woman, and one girl were missing,—the girl, it was ascertained, had been given as a present to the Rajah of Sumjok. Five Nagas of Chattik were recognized among the Kookies. Colonel Johnstone satisfied himself of the truth of these facts, and, having ascertained that the Chasád village was unquestionably within Manipur territory, returned to Manipur.

A messenger was afterwards sent to Tonghoo, the Chasád Chief, who refused to come to Manipur himself, but sent Yankapoo, his younger brother. The latter admitted that the Chasád village was in Manipur, and that five men of his village had taken part in the raid, but stated that the chief offenders were the men of the neighbouring villages of Chumyang, Chungle, and Moonoye, inhabited by Kookies of the same tribe as the Chasáds, but situated within Burmese territory. Yankapoo did not accept the terms offered by Colonel Johnstone on the part of the Durbar, and the negotiations terminated. It was then determined, with





the sanction of Government, to chastise the Chasáds, and a force of 1,000 men under Tangal Major and Balaram Singh Major was despatched for this purpose. Unfortunately, the whole affair was managed in a most dilatory manner. The Chasáds were allowed, under pretence of negotiations, to leave their village in a body, and finally nothing was done, except to burn the houses of the five men who had taken part in the raid. No opposition to this expedition, of which notice was given to them, was offered by the Burmese authorities. Friendly letters afterwards passed between Manipur and Burma, but nothing was done towards restoring the captives or punishing the offending Burmese village. In Colonel Johnstone's opinion this was due rather to the corruption of the Burmese frontier officials than to unwillingness on the part of the Court of Mandalay to come to a settlement.

The fact remained, however, that for the past three years a series of wanton and destructive aggressions had been inflicted in Manipur territory at this point by subjects of Burma, and that, in spite of promises and protestations, no attempt had been made to give satisfaction. The Chief Commissioner reported his opinion that the boundary between the two States required to be defined and demarcated in this neighbourhood; but, besides this, it was, Mr. Elliott thought, essentially necessary that some punishment should be inflicted for past aggressions, and some guarantee given to Manipur against similar outrages in the future. Manipur, as a protected State, is prohibited from seeking forcible remedies in the shape of reprisals, and it is only to the interference of the British Government that she can look either for satisfaction or protection.

Rumours of a Burmese invasion of Manipur were rife in September and early in October and were repeated in November, causing a serious panic.

The Sootie Kookies again committed a number of atrocities on the frontier; but it was observed that considerable numbers of them came into Manipur and took up cultivation there.

During 1879-80 the Political Agency was placed entirely under the Chief Commissioner of Assam, and Mr. Elliott paid a visit to Manipur to make himself acquainted with local politics. One result of this visit was the decision to open out a cart-road from Manipur to Kohima, the new head-quarters of the Naga Hills. Already trade is improving between the two places.

The boundary between Burma and Manipur, as laid down by the British Commissioners in 1834, was exactly defined by natural landmarks only along the western face of the Kubo Valley. North of that valley the country was at the time uninhabited, and the boundary





running through it was never laid down on the ground. This boundary was expressed in the agreement with Burma as "a straight line passing due north from the northern extremity of the Kubo Valley up to the first range of hills east of that upon which stand the villages of Cho-ctar, Noongbree, and Noonghur," of the Lahupa (or Tangkhul) tribe of Nagas. Since 1834, however, the Tangkhul Nagas from the west, and the Kookies, partly subject to the Rajah, or Tsauba, of Sumjok, a tributary Chief of Burma, and partly belonging to tribes dwelling on Manipur territory, from the south, had been gradually pushing up into this formerly unoccupied tract; and the doubtfulness of the mathematical line, with the standing hostility of Kookies to Nagas, had led to several outrages, to the series of which the attack on the Kongal Thanna, a Manipuri military post at the head of the Kubo Valley, in December 1877, and that on the village of Chingsao in February 1880, belong. This series was continued during the year 1880-81. One of the results of the massacre at Chingsao was the establishment of a Manipur Thanna at Chattik, a Tangkhul Naga village south of Chingsao, standing on a ridge almost exactly coincident with "Pemberton's line" (the mathematical boundary already referred to). In the neighbourhood of Chattik is a village site known as Chowhoom *Khoonao* ("the little") an offshoot of a larger village called Chowhoom *Khoolel*. This village site had been for some time deserted; and was in November 1880 reported to have been occupied by Choomyang Kookies from Sumjok territory, who claimed it as part of the Sumjok dominions, and refused to pay revenue to Manipur. Some time was spent in parleying between the Kookies in Chowhoom *Khoonao* and the Manipur guard at Chattik; and when a party was sent by the order of the Manipur Court to visit the former village, it was found stockaded, and, besides the Kookies, a Shan officer, with 60 men from Sumjok, in possession. This officer addressed a letter to the Manipur Subadar, claiming the village as Sumjok territory, and matters rested thus for a short time. About the 16th or 17th January a collision occurred, precipitated apparently by a stealthy attack which the Kookies were endeavouring to make on the post at Chattik, between the Manipuris and the Sumjok people, which ended in the latter being driven out of Chowhoom *Khoonao*, and their stockade destroyed. On the 23rd January the village of Chowhoom *Khoolel*, the parent of "Little Chowhoom," was visited by a party of Sumjok Shans and Choomyang and other Kookies, and 15 persons carried off captive. This village is undoubtedly within Manipur territory, being west of Chattik, which itself stands near the line. Passing on from this place a village of Tangkhul Nagas, still further west, named Moolung, was attacked, 15 people killed, and 5 carried off as prisoners.

While this was going on in the north, two villages on the road from Manipur to the Kongal Thanna, named Koontuk *Khoonao* and Kussoong, were about the 24th January attacked and plundered by another body of Kookies from Sumjok territory. The party which made this raid was,





however, intercepted on its return by a Manipuri force from the Khang-bom Thanna, who recovered some of the booty, and captured two Kookies, from whom valuable information was gained. These outrages of January were the last overt acts of violence. The Manipur posts on the frontier were strongly reinforced, and no further aggression followed from the side of Sumjok. Rumours reached the Government of preparations being made at Sumjok, to resist any attack which might be made by way of reprisals by Manipur; and in February there was a report that a force of 1,000 Burmese had arrived at Sumjok from Mandalay. No confirmation of this story was, however, received.

The Sootie Kookies remained quiet during the year 1880-81, so far as Manipur was concerned. They committed, however, several outrages in the Kubo and Kulé Valleys, subject to the Burmese Government. The south of Manipur was said to be well protected from these Kookies by those of their number who had settled in Manipur territory, and by Khongjais. As the Kubo and Kulé Valleys are unprotected, it was thought probable that they would continue to raid in that direction, and not towards Manipur.

Lushais.

The Lushais maintained friendly relations with Manipur during the year 1880-81.

There was no renewal during the year 1881-82 of the disturbances on the Burma frontier, which looked so threatening in the beginning of 1881 that a body of native troops was kept prepared to start from Silchar at a day's notice in order to assist the Maharajah against aggression. But these aggressions were so grave that the British Government determined on appointing a Commission to lay down a definite boundary to replace the imaginary line drawn northwards from the Kubo Valley in 1834, and known as Pemberton's line.

Affairs on the Burmese Border.

Colonel Johnstone, the Political Agent, was selected as Boundary Commissioner, and Mr. R. Phayre, c.s., of the British Burma Commission, was associated with him as his Assistant, it being deemed advisable to have an officer acquainted with the Burmese language for the purpose of communicating with the officers of the Mandalay Government stationed on the frontier. Major Badgley, of the Topographical Survey, was sent with the party to survey the country and to map the boundary selected, and two scientific gentlemen were also attached to the expedition,—Dr. Watt, who combined the duties of botanist and of medical officer to the party, and Mr. Oldham, of the Geological Survey. The escort consisted of 200 men of the 12th Khelat-i-Ghilzai Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Angelo, and of 50 men of the





Frontier Police. The Maharajah of Manipur deputed one of his Ministers, Balaram Major, to go with the Commission, and insisted on providing at his own expense all the supplies needed for the expedition.

In order to carry out the survey as rapidly as possible, two parties were sent out: one undertook the northern part, travelling eastward through Chattik Thanna, and the other the southern, beginning their work from Kangal Thanna. The latter party, with Colonel Johnstone himself, left Manipur on the 10th December; and the survey work was accomplished rapidly and effectually, meeting with no resistance, except that two parties sent to clear survey points in the Angoching range were turned back by armed followers of the Tsauba, or Chief of Sumjok. It was, however, found possible to dispense with these points.

Colonel Johnstone's hopes that he would be met by Burmese officials to act in concert with the British Commissioners in laying down the fresh boundary were disappointed. The Pagan Woon and Phoongyee of Tummoo both wrote letters saying they had no authority to discuss the boundary question, and throughout the whole of the subsequent operations there was no representative of the Burmese Government.

The Tsauba of Sumjok showed himself unfriendly on more occasions than one, and tried to stir the Chasád Kookies to attack the expedition, but in vain: and no hostile action interrupted the work of the Commission.

Remonstrances were addressed to the Pagan Woon, to whom the Sumjok Tsauba is subordinate, complaining of the obstructive attitude of the latter official, and the Woon replied by urging Colonel Johnstone to come to Tummoo to talk matters over, although he had previously intimated that he had received no authority from the Court of Mandalay to discuss the boundary question. Mr. Phayre was accordingly deputed by Colonel Johnstone to visit Sumjok and Tummoo, and Major Badgley accompanied Mr. Phayre as far as Sumjok, to take what observations he could without exciting suspicion. Mr. Phayre was to go on from Sumjok to visit the Pagan Woon at Tummoo, and to return to Manipur *via* Moreh Thanna and the Aimole Pass. Mr. Phayre's visit was quite fruitless: the Sumjok Tsauba refused to have anything to do with the settlement of the boundary, saying he was without authority from Mandalay. Mr. Phayre went on to Tummoo, where he was received with great ceremony by the Phoongyee (Bishop) and by the Pagan Woon. The Woon, however, though showing a friendly disposition, declared himself powerless to act. During Mr. Phayre's stay at Tummoo he received news from Colonel Johnstone that the demarcation had been completed; on which, after impressing upon the Woon the advisability of the acceptance by himself and by the Sumjok Tsauba of the new boundary, he re-joined Colonel Johnstone, and the party, after completing their work, left for





Manipur, which they reached on January 10th. The result of the demarcation may be summed up as follows :

It was found that the imaginary boundary known as Pemberton's line had been incorrectly drawn on the map, for it neither agreed with the actual condition of things, nor did it carry out the terms of the Treaty of 1824 : for, instead of following the eastern slopes of the Yomadoung or Malain Hills, and curving round the head of the valley, it cut off from Burma and handed over to Manipur a large portion of the Kubo Valley. The Commission, however, laid down a boundary which agrees as nearly as possible with the terms of the Treaty, while it gives a fair and clearly-marked frontier. The boundary thus fixed follows the base of the eastern slopes of the Malain range, crosses the River Namia a few hundred yards south of Kangal Thanna, thence turns east to the Talain River, follows that river upward to its source, and then proceeds down the Napanga River to where it passes through a gorge in the Kusom range. From thence it runs northward along the crest of that range. The points where the boundary intersects the Namia River and touches the Talain River have been marked with pillars, and a road has been cut connecting these two points.

This boundary has not yet been accepted by the Burmese Government ; but its settlement has already produced a good effect. Some of the Chasád villages situated on the frontier formerly debated have moved westwards and peaceably settled down as quiet subjects of Manipur, and thus removed the possibility of dispute as to whether they belong to Burmese or Manipur territory.

Two events in the internal history of Manipur during the year call for notice. One of these, which Other events of the year. occurred early in May, was the homicide of a servant by the fourth son of the Maharajah. For this act the offender was tried, and, though acquitted by the Court of Justice, was banished by his father, who disagreed with the verdict, to a lonely island in the Logtak Lake. In this matter the Maharajah behaved with justice and dignity, and the severe penalty inflicted was not relaxed till May 1882.

The second important event was the rising of a man called Erengba during the latter part of June, while the Political Agent was absent on privilege leave. This person, who claimed descent from one of the former Rajahs, gave out that he was warned in a dream that he was to become Rajah, and soon collected a heterogeneous party of followers. Among these he selected 18 persons to receive letters of dignity as his principal Ministers of State and chiefs of his army. The band, numbering less than three hundred in all, proceeded towards the capital on the 23rd June 1881, but were easily put down by the Maharajah's troops. Eighteen of the ringleaders were tried and executed, and the remainder were either imprisoned, or compelled to work at the manufacture of salt, or whipped and let go. The rising never had the slightest support





among the general population, and it was thought that when the ring-leaders, who knew the risk they incurred, had been put to immediate death, the rest of the following might have been treated with scornful clemency. Accordingly, the Government of India, in reviewing the proceedings, expressed their displeasure at the disproportionate severity with which this miserable *émeute* was suppressed.

In his final report on the survey Colonel Johnstone gives the following account of the Chasád Kookies :—

Account of the Chasád Kookies.

The Chasáds, or more properly speaking the Cháksáds, are a branch of the great Kookie race which found originally in southern Burmah, has pushed its settlements as far north as the Naga Hills. They are nearly related to the Sookties or Kumhows, who inhabit the country to the south of Manipur, but not so closely as to have prevented the usual tribal feuds, which made it unpleasant for them to live near one another.

The Chasáds left their old home to the south of the valley of Manipur between 10 and 20 years ago, and settled in the hills bordering on the Manipur Valley near the Kongal route to Burmah. Previous to their settling there, a foul act of treachery had made them, at heart, deadly enemies of Manipur. It may be related in a few words.

At that time Colonel McCulloch, the Political Agent, had direct political charge of most of the Kookies in Manipur. He had by a large expenditure of his private means and great tact, generosity, and kindness won over and settled down the early Kuki immigrants, and Raja Nur Sing had wisely assigned to him their entire management. As might be expected, jealousy sprang up in the minds of many of the Manipuri officials, and when Colonel McCulloch first established relations with the Chasáds as new settlers, an effort was made to obstruct his arrangements. On a certain occasion, when the Chief of the tribe, the father of the present Chief Tonghoo, was coming in to Colonel McCulloch by his invitation and under safe conduct, he was murdered by a high Manipuri official, the brother-in-law of the present Raja. This abominable act, as might be expected, alienated the Chasáds; and though they settled, as I have said, near the valley, they never appear to have been satisfied with their lot, and always complained of the oppression of the Manipuris. In the end of 1877, the Chasáds, with their tributary off-shoots, Choomeyang, Chungle, Moonoye, Koomeyang, &c., began to move, and determined to leave Manipur altogether, Choomeyang apparently went first, and crossing the Ungoching Range began to settle down in Burmese territory. The other villages began to follow suit, but, together with Choomeyang, were told by the Sumjok Tsaubwa to settle down in their present place, he adding, significantly, "if Manipur objects, I will protect you." This is the story told by the Kookies themselves and corroborated by careful enquiries.

After the Kongal outrage, Manipur was for some time unrepresented on that part of the frontier, as the thana was not again posted there, and advantage was taken of this remissness on the part of Manipur to try and encroach on her territory. The Chasáds, finding themselves protected by the Sumjok Tsaubwa, with the great name of Burmah at his back, were only too glad to engage in a life so consonant with their tastes; and being supplied with arms and ammunition by Sumjok, began a series of outrages and a system of plunder and rapine, which has made their name a terror to all the *more* peaceful Tankhools and Lahoops in their neighbourhood; and the many complaints made while the expedition was at Kongal Thana, prove that these depredations have been carried on up to the time of our arrival there. In fact the Chasáds have recently done for Sumjok and the Kubo Valley what the Kongal Thana formerly did, *viz.*, checked the depredations of the tribes who came before them; and these astute Kookies, if not afraid of Sumjok, as they say they are (a statement I do not believe), have all along seen that it is their policy to share their plunder with, and to some extent obey, a power whose name has hitherto given them free license to attack with impunity their old masters and enemies—the Manipuris.

The Chasáds may briefly be said to inhabit the country lying between Chattik and Kongal Thana on the north and south, and between the Ungochings and main portion of the Malaya Range on the east and west.

They inhabit 12 villages, some of which are mere off-shoots of others.





After the survey one of the Chasád Chiefs, Tonghoo, at once submitted himself. The other Chumyang held aloof, and in February 1883 the Political Agent and Manipuri troops took possession of his village. The Agent declined to allow it to be burnt, and eventually Chumyang came in to the Agent and told him that if the Kookies were managed by him, they would submit at once, but they feared the Manipuri Durbar. Time was given them to decide on staying and submitting or moving off into Burma ; and so the matter rests.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE MIKIRS AND LENGMA NAGAS.

Bordering upon the plains of Nowgong, and in fact within the limits of the district, are two tracts of hilly country inhabited the one by Mikirs, the other by Rengma Nagas.

The Mikir Hills extend from the Jumoona to the Dhunsiri, and

The Mikirs.

their greatest distance from the Kullung and Brahmapootra rivers is

10 miles. They are separated from the Naga range by low undulating hills and small valleys, and their average height is not more than 500 feet. Their length from east to west is about 50 miles, and breadth from north to south about 30 miles.<sup>(1)</sup> The Mikir villages are never situated more than half-a-day's journey from the plains, and extend only as far as the Koliani, in Morung. Beyond that point the hills are occupied by the Rengma Nagas.

The Mikirs have no written character, and their language is said to differ from that of the surrounding tribes. According to their own tradition they originally occupied the low hills afterwards included in Tularam Senaputtis's country, from which they were driven by the Raja of Cachar into Jaintia, whence again they emigrated to their present site. They long remained subject to demands from Cachar and Jaintia, and a prey to the incursions of the Nagas. The Assam Rajas claimed their principal allegiance, appointed their Chiefs, and took a tribute in cotton, mats, &c., valued at about Rs. 300. The Mikirs received permission from the Assamese authorities to cultivate a strip of land under the hills, and an assignment of the proceeds of certain fisheries and ferries. These they farmed out, and received their rents in the shape of dried fish and rice when they brought down their tribute.

In 1838 it was determined to bring them under a revenue settlement of some kind, and to raise them, if possible, in the social scale by putting them on the same fiscal platform as the Assamese of the plains. The Assamese had always looked upon the Mikirs with contempt and dislike, and the tribe had kept itself aloof in the jungles, away from all civilising intercourse. The hills were now visited by a British officer and a settlement effected with the consent of the Chiefs, by which the old tribute was converted into an assessment upon each house according to the number of male cultivators living therein. The total net revenue so assessed was about Rs. 1,700. The hills were divided into five dwars, each under a chief, who was made responsible for the collections

(1) Revenue Proceedings, 1838, 3rd April, Nos. 53 and 54.  
Revenue Proceedings, 1841, 19th January, Nos. 46 and 47.





and took a commission of 12½ per cent. on the gross payments. The total population of the hills bordering on Nowgong was estimated at 12,000 souls. Taking into account certain outlying portions of the tribe, the total number of Mikirs was probably 20,000 in 1838. They are said to sacrifice to the sun, moon, rivers, large stones, and trees, in order to avert sickness or procure favourable harvests. They are much addicted to spirits. Marriage is ratified by draining a bowl of liquor. Polygamy is unknown. They burn the dead and bury the ashes. They are intensely devoted to keeping pigs, and are altogether a very inoffensive race; not given to crime of any kind.

The effect of the settlement, which was afterwards modified to a uniform house-tax, was to bring about a marked improvement in the social condition of the tribe. The Mikirs had always been treated as bondsmen, and been in the hands of a few hereditary Assamese kotokies or managers. They now found themselves on a par with their neighbours, and began to send their children to school.

They have always been well behaved with but one solitary exception.<sup>(1)</sup> In May 1863 a party of Mikirs from a village on the con-

Raid on Hurlock Parbut.

finies of Jaintia attacked another Mikir village at Hurlock Parbut and

killed some of the inhabitants. When pursued by the Assamese Police they showed fight and resisted capture. Enquiry seemed to show that the Jaintia insurgents (then in the field) had instigated the Mikirs to this attack, to which they were the more readily incited, because they had suffered from an oppressive Mouzadar. Redress being given they settled down again at once.

Strangely enough, while the Mikirs were thus early brought under

The Rengma Nagas.

our fiscal system, the Rengma Nagas, inhabiting part of the same range

towards Golaghat, were to a great extent overlooked.<sup>(2)</sup> They are first mentioned in 1839 as a tribe living in the jungly hills between the Koliani and Dhunsiri, and apparently were considered a section of the Angamis. In 1841 it was reported that they were always at feud with the Lhota Nagas, but were willing to pay tribute to us and swear to keep the peace. They had held lands under the Assam Government, but had subsequently lost these. The lands Government agreed to restore. But no steps were taken at this time to fix the tribute payable by the tribe. Owing to some misapprehension the lands were not actually

(1) Judicial Proceedings, July 1863, Nos. 402 to 405.

Judicial Proceedings, September 1863, Nos. 194 to 197.

Revenue Proceedings, 1848, 25th May, Nos. 103 to 105.

(2) Revenue Proceedings, 1848, 18th October, Nos. 9 and 10.

Revenue Proceedings, 12th April 1843, Nos. 76 to 78.

Political Proceedings, 18th April 1841, Nos. 79 and 80.

Judicial Proceedings, 15th June 1854, Nos. 210 to 212.

Revenue Proceedings, 26th January 1854, Nos. 4 and 5.

Revenue Proceedings, 24th January 1845, Nos. 45 to 49.





given over till 1854 when the Rengmas refused to pay tribute on the ground that Government had not kept faith with them or protected them from the Lhota Nagas or Angamis who had raided on their villages. Even when the North Cachar Nagas and Kookies were assessed in 1842, the Rengmas still escaped. Allowances were, however, sanctioned in 1845 "for the 6 kotokies of the *Rengma* and Lhota and Angami Nagas in Nowgong," two for each tribe whose grants had been inadvertently resumed. It was only in 1848 that they agreed to pay a small house-tax, the net proceeds of which from 32 villages, of about 2,756 inhabitants, came to Rs. 459.\* The payment of this tribute fell very soon into abeyance: and for twenty years nothing was realized from the tribe.

In the spring of 1870, the Deputy Commissioner of the Naga Hills district visited twenty out of the thirty-two Rengma villages and

\* The following account of their natal tradition, taken from the journal of Mr. Masters, the officer who effected this settlement, is not without interest:

"They have no written language, but they hold a tradition of their origin, which though not quite so extravagant as the tales we meet with in the history of some of the nations of the earth, and yet may be equally true. Formerly there were no Nagas in this world. It is here necessary to premise that the "world" of the Rengma Naga includes all that tract of country which can be seen from the highest peaks of the Rengma Hills, but no more. It includes Upper and Central Assam, and is bounded on all sides by lofty mountains inhabited by Abors, great enemies to the Rengma Nagas. Their tradition states that a young man whose name is not known came from some other country, or some other world, and alighted in the province of Assam. Wandering in the forests here he met with a young woman, with whom he was so much pleased that he took her to be his wife. They lived comfortably together, and in course of time had four sons—Ram, Krishna, Ahom, and Naga. All these grew up together healthy young lads. When they arrived at the state of manhood, their father became anxious to portion them out in the world: but before doing so he thought it necessary to make himself acquainted with their capabilities, and fortunately hit on a happy expedient. His house was very much infested with mice; in order to try the qualifications of his four brave sons, he resolved on setting them to work to destroy the mice and clear the house of his unwelcome visitors. Ram, being the first-born, had the honour of the first chance. He tried his best, but effected little, and was compelled to give it up as a bad job. Krishna was next called upon, but he, instead of killing the mice, took up his pipe and began to play a merry tune, and the mice all came dancing round him. Ahom was then ordered to try his skill, but Ahom was a poor, weak, soft-hearted lad, without spirit, without energy, and wished for nothing, but to sit still and smoke his tobacco, chew his pan tamook, and, enjoy himself as much as possible. He consequently killed no mice. The old patriarch being convinced of the incapacities of his first three sons, became exceedingly anxious to know what the youngest could do, and ordered Naga to kill the mice, promising him a good reward if he succeeded. Naga immediately set to work and very soon cleared the house of mice, with which his father was so pleased that he gave Naga the first portion of the inheritance and allotted him all the high peaks on the Rengma Hills. To Ram, from whom the Mikirs descended, he gave the next lower range of hills. To Krishna, father of the Cacharies, he gave the low hills and all the high spots of ground in the plains. To Ahom he gave nothing but the low ground in the plains, the rice pothars, the rivers, and the swamps. Thus was the world portioned out at the first, and so has it continued to the present day, except that the Mikirs are encroaching on the inheritance of their younger brothers and extending their cultivation close up to his villages. Some have imagined that the Assamese have got the best portion, and that the rich and extensive pothars, which produce abundant crops without much labour, were selected for Ahom rather out of pity than otherwise; his father being convinced by his evident want of energy that he would never exert himself sufficiently to effect any difficult office. The Assamese maintain their character to this day."





appointed Mouzadars elected by the villagers, who were in future to be responsible for the revenue.

The Rengmas have always been well affected, and it is believed that they have been of some use as a check upon the Lhota Nagas behind them. The Chief of the tribe has for years past held an allowance of land (28 poorahs) granted by Government on account of this service.<sup>(1)</sup>

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(<sup>1</sup>) Revenue Proceedings, February 1861, Nos. 116 to 118.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE KHASI AND JAINTIA HILLS.

Proceeding westward from the Naga Hills and North Cachar we come to the Khasi-Jaintia Hills. The story of our early connection with this tract has been already written by Pemberton, and as his report is scarce and out of print, I cannot do better than reproduce here the portion\* relating to the acquisition of the Khasi-Jaintia Country the accuracy of which I have verified from the Records :—

“From the few scattered notices which are found in the works of Buchanan and Hamilton, little more information can be gleaned than

Pemberton's account of Jaintia. that the State of Jynteeah is situated between Cachar and Sylhet ; and until the Burmese war, our knowledge was almost entirely derived from those authors ; the Rajahs of the country having uniformly shewn the same unwillingness to admit foreigners within their boundaries as had been exhibited by the neighbouring princes of Assam and Cachar.

“In 1774, Jynteeah is said to have been attacked by a force under a Major Henniker, but of the causes which led to this step there appears to be no record in the archives of Government, though from its being one of the most considerable of the Cossya States it is probable that some aggressions against the inhabitants of the adjacent plains of Sylhet had rendered the chastisement necessary. It continued unnoticed until the year 1821, when some emissaries from this State were detected and punished in an atrocious attempt to carry off certain British subjects from the Sylhet District, for the purpose of immolating them : the circumstances were brought to the notice of the Supreme Government, and a solemn warning was given to the Rajah, that any repetition of so horrible an offence would be followed by the immediate confiscation of his territory.

“The invasion of Kachar by the forces of Ava in 1824, and the information that they were likely to march through Jynteeah to Assam, rendered some precautionary measures immediately necessary to prevent such an intention being carried into effect, which, if successful, must have seriously compromised the security of Sylhet. Mr. Scott, the Governor General's Agent, opened a negotiation with the Rajah of Jynteeah, proposing that he should enter into a treaty of alliance with the British Government ; but this, with the usual procrastinating policy of all natives, he declined doing, until the necessity for such a measure became more apparent. He was promised the assistance of the Government troops, if his own resources were actively employed in repulsing

\* Pemberton's Report : sub-sections 2 and 3 of section 2. See also volumes 27 and 38 of the Calcutta Review ; and Reports by Mills (1853) and Allen (1858). Reference should be made to these Reports for information as to the revenue and judicial administration of the Hills.





the enemy, and threatened with punishment if he admitted the Burmese into his territory. He had collected a force, which was said to consist of several thousand archers, but which most probably amounted to only a few hundreds; and he was conjectured to be favourable to the British power, though unwilling to compromise his independence by any engagements, until the destruction of his country, or compliance, became the only remaining alternatives.

"On the 2nd of February 1824, a letter was addressed by Mr. Scott to the Commander of the Burmese force in Kachar, prohibiting his entering the Jynteeah territory, on the ground that the Rajah's ancestor had received that country as a gift after conquest from the Honourable Company; that he had himself sought British protection; and that the Burmans having openly threatened war, they could not be permitted to occupy that, or any other favourable position, for commencing hostilities. Notwithstanding these representations, a letter was addressed by the Burmese Commander to the Rajah of Jynteeah, requiring his presence in the Burmese camp, on the affirmed ground of his known vassalage to the princes of Assam, which latter country had become tributary to Ava; and a party of Burmese appearing shortly afterwards near the Jynteeah frontier, a detachment of 150 men, under a British officer, was sent to reinforce the Rajah's troops, on which the Burmese force withdrew.

"In the course of the following month of March, the Rajah of Jynteeah entered into a treaty with Mr. Scott, who marched through his territory early in April, from Sylhet to Assam, with an escort of three companies of the 23rd Regiment Native Infantry, under Captain Horsburgh. On this occasion, Mr. Scott represents the reception he met with from the Rajah as most cordial; and his personal exertions in procuring porters for the party, and pacifying some differences amongst them, are said to have greatly exceeded any thing that could have been expected from a person of his rank. In the treaty formed with the Rajah, he formally acknowledged his dependence on the British Government, pledged himself to abstain from all independent negotiations with any foreign power, and to aid us with a military contingent in any wars waged east of the Burhampooter. None of these conditions, however, did he fulfil with sincerity; and it was notorious that during the war he permitted a Burmese detachment from Assam to occupy his territory, in direct violation of the treaty which had preserved his country from the calamities that overwhelmed the less fortunate States of Kachar and Munipore.

"During the unsettled state in which Assam continued for some time after the Burmese war, the Rajah of Jynteeah is affirmed to have appropriated considerable tracts of land, which properly belonged to the former province; and in 1830, he was repeatedly, but fruitlessly, ordered by Mr. Scott to remove a chokey, which he had established without authority at Chapper Mookh, at the confluence of the Kopili and Dimla rivers; and the remonstrances of Mr. Robertson, at a subsequent period, on the same subject, were treated with similar indifference.





"In 1832, four subjects of the British Government were seized by Chuttur Sing, the Rajah of Goba, one of the petty chieftains dependent on Jynteah, to whom the order was conveyed from the heir apparent (the present Rajah) by the chiefs of Nurtung; they were carried to a temple within the boundaries of Goba, where three were barbarously immolated at the shrine of Kali; the fourth providentially effected his escape into the British territories, and gave intimation of the horrible sacrifice which had been accomplished. The culprits were immediately demanded by the Supreme Government from Ram Sing, the Rajah of Jynteah, by whose express order, the seizure of the people was said to have been made; and two years of fruitless negotiation were expended in endeavouring to obtain them. The death of the Rajah Ram Sing, in November 1832, was followed by the accession of his nephew, Rajundur Sing, then about 20 years of age, upon whom the demand for the surrender of the culprits was pressed, with the earnestness which retributive justice so imperiously demanded. He was reminded of the consequences of refusal, and of the solemn warnings which had been given before, when similar, but unsuccessful, attempts were made on the lives of British subjects in the district of Sylhet, in the years 1821, 1827, and 1832. The requisitions of Government were met with the same evasive spirit which had characterised the conduct of his predecessor, and every minor expedient having been unsuccessfully resorted to, it was finally resolved to mark the atrocious nature of the crime, by proceeding to the extreme measure of dispossessing the Rajah of such portions of his territory as were situated in the plains, and confining him to the hilly tract, where fewer opportunities would be offered of again committing so serious an offence.

"Firm, however, in his determination not to surrender the guilty perpetrators of this most barbarous sacrifice, and led by a few crafty Bengallees to believe that they possessed influence sufficient to effect the restoration of his principality, he refused to continue in possession of any reduced portion of it. On the 15th of March 1835, Captain Lister, with two companies of the Sylhet Light Infantry, took

#### Annexation of Jaintia.

formal possession of Jynteahpoor, the capital of the country; and the determination of Government, to annex the plains to the British territory, was made known by proclamation.<sup>(1)</sup> The whole of the Rajah's personal property, amounting to more than a lakh and a half of rupees, was made over to him; and in the following month of April the district of Goba, in which the sacrifice had been perpetrated, was taken possession of by a detachment of the Assam Light Infantry. The Rajah of Jynteah retired to Sylhet, where he has since continued to reside; and the severe example will doubtless effectually check the repetition of a crime, which, there is every reason to believe, had been also frequently perpetrated in the adjoining provinces of Kachar and Assam, while they remained subject to native rule.\*

\* Orders of the 30th March 1835 placed Jaintia under the Political Agent, Khasi Hills. Act VI of 1835 provided for the judicial control of the Khasi Hills and Jaintia.

(1) Revenue Proceedings, 14th April 1835, No. 11.

Ditto, 28th " Nos. 17-20.





"The country which has thus become annexed to the British territories embraces an area of about 3,850 square miles, which, like that of Kachar, consists of three principal divisions: the first, comprising a very fertile and well cultivated tract of level country, extending from the foot of the hills to the north bank of the Soormah river, and a small portion on the southern bank, known by the name of the Seven Reaches, which are supposed to contain about 4,500 koolbas of the best description of land; the central division includes all the hills bounded by Kachar on the east, and the districts of various Cossya tribes on the west; the northern portion stretches from the foot of the inferior heights, to the south bank of the Kullung river, and is a tract of tolerably open level country, little if at all inferior in fertility to the southern plains, which form by far the most valuable portion of the principality.

"The boundaries of this State are formed, on the east, by the Keeroowah and Kopili rivers, which separate it from Kachar; the former flowing from the southern face of the mountain chain into the Soormah; and the Kopili, on the north, into the Kullung, which latter river separates Jynteeah from Assam, on the north: on the west, it is bounded principally by the hill district of the Kyrin Rajah, from whence the line runs south along the Pian nullah, and, on reaching the plains, is deflected in a south-easterly direction, crossing and skirting several other streams, until it reaches the Soormah, which river, with the exception already mentioned, forms the southern boundary of the whole district.

\* \* \* \* \*

"The whole of the mountainous country, until within a few miles of the descent into the plains of Assam, is inhabited by the people called by us Cossyas, but who denominate themselves Khyee. They are a handsome, muscular race of men, of an active disposition, and fond of material exercises. They always go armed; in general with bows and arrows, and a long naked sword and shield, which latter is made very large, and serves them occasionally as a defence against rain."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Between the State of Jynteeah and the hills on the west, occupied by the Garrows, is a tract of mountain territory inhabited by the Cossyas, which, until the year 1826, had never been visited by any European, although the fierce tribes who occupied it had at different times descended into the plains both of Assam and Sylhet, and ravaged, with fire and sword, the villages which stretched along the base of this lofty region: night was the time almost invariably chosen for these murderous assaults, when neither sex nor age was spared; and long before the dawn of day the perpetrators, glutted with slaughter, and loaded with plunder, were again far among the fastnesses of their mountains on the way home.





"On the side of Assam, from the year 1794, many of the various tribes on the southern borders of that valley, had gradually established themselves in the plains, from whence the Government of that country was unable to dispossess them; and conscious of its weakness, was glad to compound with them for an acknowledgment of supremacy, which they spurned and disavowed, whenever its exercise appeared likely to encroach on that independence of action which they rarely permitted to be controlled.

"On the Sylhet or southern side, the establishment of British supremacy brought these fierce marauders into immediate contact with a power which they in vain attempted to resist; they were driven back from the plains to the mountains, and redoubts were built along the line of frontier, in which guards were permanently stationed for the protection of the country. The most effectual check upon their conduct, however, was found in excluding them from the frontier markets, to which they had habitually resorted for the sale of their produce and purchase of grain; and this measure, when rigorously enforced, rarely failed to extort from them some compensation for the property they had plundered, though they never would consent to surrender the culprits.

"When the fate of war had transferred Assam to British rule, the expediency of endeavouring to open a direct communication between it and the more southern provinces of Sylhet and Kachar, was not likely to escape the penetration of Mr. Scott; and his march through the Jynteah territory in 1824, to which allusion has been already made, afforded a striking practical proof of the value of such lines of intercourse between the remote districts of our eastern frontier.

"It was not, however, until the year 1826, that negotiations to effect this desirable object were entered upon by Mr. Scott with the Cossya chieftains; when Teerut Sing, the Rajah of Nungklow, having expressed a desire to rent some lands in Assam, which had once been held by his ancestors under the native princes of that country, Mr. Scott's negotiations with Nungklow.

Mr. Scott promised compliance with his request, if he would endeavour to obtain from his people permission for the unrestricted passage of British subjects through his territory, from and to Sylhet, and Assam. The Rajah agreed to convene a meeting for the purpose of considering the subject, at which Mr. Scott's presence was requested. The principal chieftains of his own and the adjacent States having assembled at Nungklow, a debate, which lasted for two days, was followed by a decision in favour of Mr. Scott's proposition, and a treaty was concluded with the British Government, the Cossyas agreeing to aid in the construction of a road which was to pass through their territory.

"For upwards of eighteen months after the ratification of his agreement, the most cordial understanding appeared to exist between the British authorities and their new friends. Bungalows had been constructed at Nungklow, a road had been cleared, improved systems





of agriculture and gardening with many new vegetable products had been introduced, and the most sanguine anticipations of the benevolent spirit which influenced every act of Mr. Scott's life, appeared already realized. On the 4th of April 1829, these bright prospects were obscured by an act of the most atrocious cruelty, which completely

The Khasi insurrection, 1829. changed the character of the existing intercourse, and converted the powerful friends of the Cossyas into formidable and irresistible enemies.

"The immediate cause of the dreadful massacre, which consigned two most promising officers, Lieutenants Bedingfield and Burlton, with about 50 or 60 native subjects, to an untimely grave, is supposed to have been the speech of a Bengallee chuprassee, who in a dispute with the Cossyas had threatened them with Mr. Scott's vengeance, and told them that they were to be subjected to the same taxation as was levied on the inhabitants of the plains. False as was the declaration, it proved sufficient to excite the suspicions of the Cossyas, and to fan the flame of dissatisfaction which had been already kindled by the insolent demeanour and abuse of the subordinate native agents who had accompanied Mr. Scott into the hills.

"The vengeance of a savage is never satiated but in the blood of his opponent, and a general confederacy was formed for the extermination of the low-land strangers. Lieutenant Bedingfield, the first victim of this most atrocious conspiracy, had, from the first hour of his intercourse with the Cossyas, evinced the liveliest interest in their welfare; he had studied their language as the best avenue to their affections, and the great aim of his residence among them appeared to be an anxious desire to improve their condition, to instruct them in the arts of civilized life, and to create a relish amongst them for its humanizing enjoyments. This spirit of comprehensive benevolence was united to an amenity of manner, eminently calculated to conciliate regard; and so sensible did the Cossyas appear of his kindness, that an intercourse of the most friendly and intimate nature existed between them, the very moment preceding that in which their guilty hands were imbrued in his blood. He was invited to attend a conference, and disregarding the prophetic warnings of his companion Burlton, who suspected treachery, he entered the assembly unarmed, and was barbarously slaughtered.

"Lieutenant Burlton, with the aid of a small military guard, defended himself in his bungalow against vastly superior numbers, and at night succeeded in effecting his retreat a considerable distance on the road towards Assam; his route was, however, discovered on the following morning, and his exhausted party rapidly overtaken by their blood-thirsty pursuers: even under these depressing circumstances, the cool determination and unerring aim of Burlton, long protracted the struggle, and they were at length only overpowered, when a heavy fall of rain had rendered their firearms nearly useless: unable longer to keep their assailants at bay, the party dispersed; Burlton fell covered with wounds, and the faithful naick who commanded the small military party





refusing to desert him in his extremity, perished by his side. The remaining fugitives were overtaken and butchered by their merciless pursuers, with the most aggravated circumstances of diabolical cruelty, and few survived to describe the horrors that had been perpetrated by these misguided and infuriated savages.

"The unexpected departure of Mr. Scott from Nungklow for Churra Poonjee, saved him from the dreadful fate which befel his valued friends, and faithful followers, and some days had elapsed before he was made acquainted with the afflicting reality. Troops were immediately called up from Sylhet and Assam to avenge the atrocious murders which had been committed, and a harassing warfare commenced, in which the lives of many most valuable officers were sacrificed, and which continued to be waged up to a very recent period. The Cossyas, conscious that they had violated every pledge which even savages are accustomed to regard with superstitious reverence, viewed with suspicion every pacific overture; and despairing of pardon, protracted a contest, which their first skirmishes with our troops proved to be hopeless.

"Captain Lister, commanding the Sylhet Light Infantry, with a mere handful of men, drove the Cossyas from post to post, stormed their intrenchments, penetrated into their caves and fastnesses, and by the rapidity of his movements, and the boldness of his assaults, so completely destroyed the confidence in their own prowess with which they had commenced the contest, that they latterly confined themselves to attacks upon small parties of five or six individuals, for whom they lay in ambush, and rarely ventured to contend openly with any detachment, however inferior to them in numbers.

"On the night of the 5th of January 1831, a most serious assault was made by the chiefs of Ramryee (one of the Cossya States, which overlooks the Assam Valley), and a party of Garrows, amounting altogether to about 200 men, on the people of Pantan, Bogae, and

Outbreak of 1831.

Bongaung, three Dowars in the plains. Zubbur Sing, the chief of

Ramryee, had tendered his submission to the British Government in October 1829, and was murdered in November of the following year, by his kinsmen Nyeha Koonwur and Jall Chund, who were supposed to have instigated this outrage on the British territory. It has always been doubtful whether the murder of Zubbur Sing was the consequence of dissatisfaction at his submission to an authority which they disliked, or was the result of a conspiracy to usurp his authority; but Mr. Scott, in a letter of the 17th January, written very shortly after he had received intelligence of the outrage, gives a brief sketch of the relations of the British authorities with the occupants of the several southern Dowars, which accounts in some degree for an attack, the most serious that had taken place since the catastrophe at Nungklow in 1829.

"The estates in question,' says Mr. Scott, 'were under attachment; the first, in consequence of the part which the Rajah had taken against us in the hills, and the two latter, for the recovery of





arrears of revenue; and there is every reason to think, that the irruption of the mountaineers was favoured and connived at by the local authorities, most of whom are necessarily ill affected towards our Government, owing to the strict control now exercised over them, and to the deprivation of the illicit emoluments they used to derive from fines from criminals, and other illegal cesses, which they were in the habit of levying under the Assam Government.'

"The treacherous and refractory disposition of the people of the Dowars was frequently evinced during the Assam Government, and petty revolutions attended with the murder of rival chiefs and their adherents, was matter of frequent occurrence. Such acts the Assamese were latterly under the necessity of tolerating; and practically speaking, at the time of our accession to the government of the country, the chiefs of the Dowars exercised criminal jurisdiction, and made war upon each other with perfect impunity, or at the worst, subject to the payment, for forgiveness, of a fine.'

"As it was impossible to tolerate such proceedings under our Government, and as it clearly appeared that the chiefs of the Dowars possessed no legitimate independent authority in the plains, they were subjected, like other Assamese subjects, to the ordinary laws; but in order to conciliate them as far as practicable, and to ensure to them the observance of the peculiar customs of the tract in question, a separate court was established, composed of the chiefs themselves, and a few of their principal local functionaries, before which all civil and criminal cases have hitherto been tried.'

"Under the Assam Government, the estates forming the Dowars had not paid any regular annual revenue, but large sums were exacted on the accession of a new chief, and raised by contribution on the people, and they were bound to furnish *poyks* for the public service. This arrangement was commuted for a money payment; a few working *poyks* only being retained for local purposes; but although the revenue was fixed at a very low rate, and abatements made in favour of the chiefs, in some cases amounting to nearly 50 per cent. upon the *jumma*, few of them have been able to fulfil their engagements, owing chiefly to their total incapacity for business, and the roguery of their servants, under which circumstances, the temporary attachment of several of their estates became indispensable, and it has probably in some degree led to the recent catastrophe.'

"Under the above circumstances,' adds Mr. Scott, 'I am of opinion that the only course that can be advantageously pursued is that of reducing to practical subjection the tribes bordering on the Dowars, who have perpetrated the late outrages, and who are at present independent of our authority; and establishing amongst them the same sort of internal Government which has been maintained amongst the Garrows of the north-east parts of Lunglees since the year 1817.'

"A reward was offered for the apprehension of Lall Chund, the leader of the attack on the Dowars, but apparently without effect, as it was not until September of 1833 that he voluntarily surrendered





himself to the native officer in charge of the post at Nungklow, and of his subsequent fate there appears to be no trace. A heavy fine of Rs. 5,000 was imposed upon the eight villages composing the State of Ramryee, and Rs. 10,000 on the chiefs of six other States who were associated in the attack on the Dowars, making altogether a sum only equivalent to the estimated amount of loss incurred by the inhabitants of the plundered villages.

"A very few days after the attack on the Dowars in Assam, the border villages near Kanta Kal, in the Sylhet District, were invaded by a party of the same inveterate tribe, headed by Munboot, and some other less celebrated leaders of the petty States on the western confines of the Cossya territory. They were pursued and defeated by Captain Lister, and this appears to have been the last attempt made upon the settlements in the plains, though the unequal contest was still partially waged in the hills by a small band headed by Munboot.

"This, the most daring and successful leader among the Cossyas, and whose unconquerable spirit tended to perpetuate a contest from which almost every other had withdrawn in despair, was originally a slave to the Rajah Teerut Sing, but had risen by the force of innate courage and great personal prowess to considerable distinction amongst his comrades; and though frequently defeated, as constantly renewed the contest in some spot far removed from the scene of his recent disaster; with inconceivable rapidity he traversed his native mountains in every direction, wherever there appeared a probability of inflicting injury on his powerful foes; descending, as we have seen, even to the border villages in the plains, where his very name struck terror to the hearts of their timid inhabitants.

"He was opposed, however, to men of courage and perseverance fully equal to his own; and the names of Lister, Townsend, Vetch, and Brodie became so formidable to his followers, that seeing the hopelessness of his cause, they gradually deserted their leader, and left him to the destiny which appeared inevitable. In a quarrel with one of the followers of Teerut Sing, his immediate chieftain, he either killed or severely wounded him; and dreading that Teerut Sing would punish him with death, sought an asylum in the remote villages of his countrymen; but having at length obtained a promise that his life should be spared, he surrendered himself in October 1832 to Lieutenant Townsend, then commanding at Nungklow.

"The conspicuous gallantry which he had displayed on every occasion naturally excited a more than ordinary interest on his behalf in the minds of his generous opponents, and he was entrusted with the command of a small detachment of Cossyas, and received a monthly stipend for his subsistence. Secure of life, and raised to a situation of comparative affluence, the quondam patriot immediately commenced rendering his position subservient to his pecuniary advantage; and having been convicted of numerous acts of oppression, and of levying heavy





finer on his countrymen in the name of the Government, he was discharged two years afterwards, and appears to have again fallen to the degraded and menial condition which he originally occupied.

"Teerut Sing, the principal culprit, for whose apprehension large rewards had been offered, still eluded the pursuit of justice, and found a temporary asylum among the different chieftains, whose feelings of honour prevented their surrendering him to the British Government; but his situation becoming daily more precarious, as they tendered their submission, he was at length compelled to treat for his surrender through Sing Manick, the Rajah of Kyrim.

"On the 19th of September 1832, Captain Lister and Lieutenant Rutherford, with a party of 30 sepoy, were deputed by Mr. T. C. Robertson, the Governor General's Agent, to Nongkream, the residence of Sing Manick, for the purpose of negotiating for the surrender of Teerut Sing; the latter, still apprehensive that treachery was intended, refused to meet the officers, except at the residence of Sing Manick, and with the stipulation that they should go unarmed.

"On the 23rd an interview, at which Teerut Sing was present, took place, but without producing any effect, as the only proposition he made contained a requisition for the restoration of his country, and the abandonment of the line of road which had been cleared through it; neither of which could of course be granted. On the 24th, as the deputies were about to return to Charra, Sing Manick begged that they would grant another audience to two of Teerut Sing's principal Muntrees, Man Sing and Jeet Roy, which was conceded. From Man Sing they learnt that they were tired of opposing us, but that their fears of our wrath, the despair of some of the most hot-headed among them, and exaggerated ideas of our implacable enmity, kept up by the Churra and other interested parties, deterred them from coming in."

"Although no definite arrangement was made for the surrender of Teerut Sing, the interview was not unattended with advantages: the most prominent of which were thus stated by the officer who had been deputed to treat with the disaffected parties.

1st. "They were satisfied that Manick Sing was sincere in his intentions of effecting an amicable arrangement, and that he was deserving of confidence and encouragement.

2nd. "That although it would not be advisable to place much reliance on Teerut Sing, yet that an arrangement might be entered into for a peaceable adjustment of differences with his followers.

3rd. "That a schism would be effected amongst them, after witnessing our good faith, and finding that we were not so implacable as they had been led to suppose.

4th. "That should hostilities be renewed, the interview had afforded an opportunity of observing, and again recognizing the countenances of Teerut's followers.





5th. "They had ascertained that the rebels were enabled to continue their opposition by the people of Churra and other avowedly friendly States, from whom they obtained supplies."

"Subsequently to the interview on the 24th of September, several communications had taken place between Mr. Robertson and Sing Manick, the result of which was a second deputation of the same officers to Nongkreem, on the 20th of the following month, with permission to treat on the following terms:—

1st. "Teerut Sing to be given up, on an assurance that his life would be spared; but with no other condition whatever, and to be dealt with as the Government might direct.

2nd. "In the event of his being so given up, the confederate Rajahs were authorized, in conformity with the customs and usages of their tribe, to select a person to occupy his place, and a promise given, that the election would be sanctioned by the British Government, and the person selected be confirmed in all the possessions and privileges formerly enjoyed by Teerut Sing, subject only to such modifications as might be subsequently noticed.

"To all of the other chieftains full amnesty was offered on the following conditions: First—"That the British Government shall have a right to carry a road, in whatsoever direction it may think proper, across the whole extent of country lying between Churra and the plains of Assam.

Secondly.—"That the British Government shall be at liberty to construct bridges, and to erect halting bungalows, stockades, guardrooms or store-houses, at any point along this line of road." To render this condition less objectionable, the deputies were authorized to promise, if necessary, that no building should be erected at a greater distance than a hundred yards from the line of road.

Thirdly.—"That each chieftain shall engage to furnish as many workmen as shall be required, on their receiving the usual remuneration for their labour, to assist in the completion and keeping in repair of the road, and other works, above detailed.

Fourthly.—"That the posts of Myrung and Nungklow, with an extent of territory of not less than — cross or miles (the exact limits of which are to be fixed hereafter, and accurately marked out) shall be ceded in absolute sovereignty to the British Government.

Fifthly.—"That the chieftains shall engage to furnish, on being paid for the same, the undermentioned articles for the use of any establishment which Government may set on foot, either at Nungklow or Myrung: timber, stone, slate, and lime, for building.

Sixthly.—"That in consideration of no revenue or tribute being exacted of them, the chieftains shall engage to furnish grazing land for as many cattle as Government may deem it necessary to keep on the hills, and for which it may be impossible to find pasturage within the





limits laid down in the fourth article. The chieftains are severally to be responsible for the proper care of such cattle, as may be sent to graze on their lands.

Seventhly.—“The chieftains shall engage to arrest, and hand over to the British authorities, any person accused of committing an offence within the limits of the posts of Myrung and Nungklow; and to assist in apprehending any convict or other person who shall abscond from either of these posts.

Eighthly.—“The chieftains shall engage to pay such fine as may be imposed upon them by the Governor General's Agent for any breach of the preceding conditions of which they may be convicted.

Ninthly.—“In the event of their acceding to the preceding terms, the chieftains are to be at liberty to return to, and re-occupy, their respective villages; and to exercise over the inhabitants of the same, whatever authority belonged to them, according to the established practice of the country, before they placed themselves in a state of hostility towards the British Government.”

“As an additional motive for accepting these terms, the deputies were authorized to promise that the Agent's influence should be exerted, in case of their compliance, to obtain from Government restitution of all the lands formerly held by them in the valley of Assam; and, in the event of failing to effect a pacific negotiation, Captains Lister and Rutherford were instructed to direct an immediate cessation of intercourse on the part of those chiefs who professed to be friendly with those whose contumacy it would be necessary to punish by a renewal of hostilities.

“This negotiation, like the former one, failed to produce any beneficial result. Teerut Sing's illness was alleged in excuse for his non-attendance; but our officers had every reason for believing this to be a fabrication, and they were only met by chieftains of inferior note. Objections to the different articles of the proposed treaty were made; and to the most important one, which stipulated for the surrender of Teerut Sing, it appeared certain they would never subscribe. On this occasion it was that the chiefs, in justification of the catastrophe at Nungklow in 1829, mentioned the insolent tone and oppressive conduct of the inferior officers and servants belonging to our establishment at that time, and which, if not strictly guarded against, would, in the opinions of Captains Lister and Rutherford, inevitably create fresh cause of disturbance. Unable to effect any satisfactory arrangement, our officers returned to Churra, and a renewal of hostilities appeared inevitable.

“Before the expiration of the period for which a truce had been granted, Sing Manick again waited on Mr. Robertson, at Churra Poonjee, accompanied by Jeedur Sing, a relation of the fugitive Rajah Teerut, and one of the most influential persons among them, who had been actively opposed to our authority. In the interview which took place on the 25th of October, the principal object of Jeedur Sing





appeared to be the attainment of the Raj, forfeited by the misconduct of Teerut Sing, to which he affirmed the latter had consented, on the ground, that 'he had virtually ceased to live, from the moment that Mr. Scott's existence was terminated.' Large as was the prize at stake, Jeedur Sing steadily refused to purchase it by the surrender of Teerut, or the payment of an annual revenue, levied upon those villages in the hills over which his sway might be established; the one act would have effectually destroyed his popularity with the inferior members of his clan, and to taxation, he said, they would never submit.

"On the following day, the conference was renewed, when the friendly negociator, Sing Maniek, denounced Rajah Bur Maniek, Dewan Sing Dobashee and Oojee Koonwur, both of Churra and Oolung, a servant of the Rajah of Jynteeah, as the secret fomenters of the existing quarrel, from an apprehension that the surrender of Teerut Sing would be followed by a disclosure of the treacherous part they had been acting. This conference terminated with an assurance of protection to Jeedur Sing, if he accepted of Mamloo and its dependencies, on a tribute of Rs. 1,500 annually. He was allowed a further period of ten days for the purpose of going back to negotiate with the other members of his party; and he announced his intention of either returning with them or sharing the dangers to which their continued hostility might expose them.

"At the expiration of the ten days, nothing further having been heard from the party, measures were immediately taken for coercing the refractory chieftains, and instructions were issued by the Governor General's Agent, Mr. Robertson, to Captain Lister, in which he was desired to respect the territory of Sing Maniek, whose conduct had lately evinced so friendly a spirit; but he was directed, if necessary, to apprehend the neighbouring chief Bur Maniek, who, there was every reason to believe, had not only originally counselled the atrocious massacre at Nungklow, but had ever since secretly fomented the spirit of disaffection. Measures were adopted for opening a friendly communication with the chiefs of Mahran and Dwara (from whom petitions to that effect had been received), on the western frontier of the Cossya territory; and to enable such detachments as might be stationed along the foot of the hills to co-operate with the parties acting against the insurgents above.

"The consequences of this comprehensive and vigorous policy were very soon apparent. Teerut Sing, hemmed in on every side and unable longer to elude the vigilance of his pursuers, renewed his overtures for surrender; and on the 9th of January 1833 deputed Jeet Roy, his confidential Muntree, to treat with Mr. Inglis, who commanded the post of Oomchillung. The only condition required was, that the life of his master should be spared, and this having been promised, and ratified by the Khasia oath, of eating salt from the blade of a sabre, the 13th was the day finally determined upon for his surrender; the place to be named two hours before meeting, and Teerut Sing and Mr. Inglis to be each attended by only two unarmed servants,





"On the day appointed, the Rajah Teerut Sing met Mr. Inglis at Nursingare, a mile east of Oomehillung; but instead of the unarmed attendants, which by the terms of the agreement were the only persons who should have accompanied him, he was escorted by a party of 30 bow and spear men, with 11 musqueteers. This was complained of by Mr. Inglis as a breach of the agreement, but he was assured by Teerut Sing's wily counsellor, that it would not have been respectful in his master to come attended by a smaller retinue, and was necessary to convince the people that he had not been made captive, but had voluntarily surrendered. Mr. Inglis, to allay the suspicions of the Rajah, at his request, repeated the ceremonial form of oath he had before taken, and Teerut Sing was conveyed to Myrung, from whence he was taken to Gowhattee in Assam, and eventually confined in the jail of Dacca, where he remains a State prisoner for life.

"The submission of Teerut Sing was almost immediately followed by a general pacification; the other chiefs had, with few exceptions, previously adopted the sagacious policy of withdrawing from an unprosperous cause, and the few who had supported him were glad to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by his surrender to throw themselves on the clemency of the paramount power.

"As, however, there had been a marked difference in the conduct of the various chieftains, it became necessary to distinguish those who had been friendly from the guilty participators in the crimes of Teerut Sing. To have inflicted capital punishment upon the culprits, would have involved nearly all the principal leaders of the different clans in one common execution, which, though perhaps demanded by inflexible justice, was repugnant to the considerate mercy of a Government more anxious to reclaim than destroy.

"The more humane and hardly less effectual measure was adopted of subjecting all those who were proved to have participated in the murders and plunderings which had been perpetrated, both on our subjects in the hills and the villages in the plains, to the payment of pecuniary fines; this description of punishment was sanctioned by immemorial usage amongst themselves, and from it, a fund, it was anticipated, would accrue, which could be devoted to the improvement of the country, in the construction of roads, bridges, and other works of public utility. Subject to the previous sanction of the Government, this plan has been adopted with the best effects, and individual crime has been made an instrument of public benefit.

"Though grossly outraged by the wanton murder of its servants and subjects, the policy of the Government had been uniformly dictated by a wish to conciliate the misguided inhabitants of these hills; and the great obstacle to its accomplishment having been removed by the surrender of Teerut Sing, measures were shortly afterwards adopted for restoring the district of Nungklow to some member of the same family, who was undefiled by participation in the massacre of 1829.





"Rajun Sing, the nephew of Teerut Sing, a lad of between 13 and 14 years of age, fulfilling this condition, and being the heir apparent, according to the established Cossya law of succession, it was determined to confer the dignity upon him, and he was installed by Captain Jenkins, the Agent to the Governor General at Nungklow, on the 29th of March 1834, on the following conditions, which had been previously prepared and submitted for the approval of Government by Mr. T. C. Robertson, the preceding Agent:

1st. "That the British Government shall have a right to carry a road in whatsoever direction it may think proper across the whole extent of country lying between Sylhet and the plains of Assam.

2nd. "That the Government shall be at liberty to construct bridges, and to erect halting bungalows, stockades, guard-rooms, or store-houses, at any point along the line of road.

3rd. "That the Rajah and his Muntrees shall engage to furnish as many workmen as shall be required to assist in the completion, and keeping in repair, of roads and other works, above detailed.

4th. "That the Rajah and his Muntrees shall engage to furnish, on being paid for the same, the undermentioned articles for the use of any establishment, which Government set on foot at any place within the country ceded to him: timber, stone, lime, fire-wood for building, and such other articles as may be procurable in the country.

5th. "That the Rajah and his Muntrees shall engage to furnish grazing land for as many cattle as Government may deem it necessary to keep on the hills. The Rajah and his Muntrees to be responsible for the proper care of such cattle as may be sent to graze on their lands.

6th. "The Rajah and his Muntrees shall engage to arrest and hand over to the British authorities any person accused of committing an offence within the limits of any British post, and to assist in apprehending any convict or other person who shall abscond from any of these posts.

7th. "The Rajah and his Muntrees shall engage to pay such fines as may be imposed upon them by the Governor General's Agent for any breach of the preceding conditions of which they may be convicted."

To these articles, which had been prepared by Mr. Robertson, the following was added by Captain Jenkins:—

8th. "On condition of Rajun Sing agreeing to and fulfilling the several articles already stated, the Government promises to continue his stipend of Rs. 30 sicca per month for one year after the date of this agreement, which will tend to settle his country in a quiet and comfortable manner; the above Rs. 30 being given him for his support."





These conditions were signed on behalf of Rujun Sing by eight of his principal counsellors, and Nungklow has ever since remained under his authority.

“Of the remaining chieftains, who contribute to the formation of the confederated Cossya States, the only authentic account, at present obtainable, is found in an official report from Mr. T. C. Robertson to Government, dated the 14th of December 1832, where the principal amongst them are said to amount to seven, and are thus described.

“Sing Manick, the ruler of the country of Kyrim, is one of the most powerful, and apparently the most friendly of these mountain chiefs. He has lately done his utmost to effect an accommodation between us and the hostile party, and is perhaps the only man of influence connected with the hills (excepting the ruler of Churra), against whom there is not clear evidence of participation in the massacre at Nungklow. Circumstances enable him to exercise an authority by far more despotic than is enjoyed by most of the Cossya Rajahs, who generally have a council, without whose sanction no business of importance is undertaken. A feud of long standing between Sing Manick and the Rajah of Jynteeah renders it of importance to the former to obtain our countenance; but the immediate objects at which he aims are the possession of a rich village, called Sooparpoonjee, lying between Churra and the plains, and the recovery of Moosae, a strongly situated village, placed by Mr. Scott under the charge of the Rajah of Jynteeah, in consequence of some hostile chiefs having, though without Sing Manick's privacy, taken refuge in it. The armed force at this chieftain's command must be nearly commensurate with the adult male population of his domain, and that I have no means of very accurately computing. That he is friendly in his disposition towards us I have already said; but it would be a mere delusion to expect any active co-operation from him, excepting, perhaps, in the case of our wishing to put down his neighbour of Jynteeah.' The number of villages subject to his authority is said to be seventy, his armed followers to about 3,000 men, and he pays no contribution to Government.

“‘Bordering upon Sing Manick's domain and forming a part of the Province of Kyrim, stands that of Bur Manick. A large, and from what I saw of it near Moleem, I should say, for the hills, a fertile tract of this territory was reserved to the Government, when Bur Manick, after having been carried as a prisoner to the plains, was restored by Mr. Scott to a portion of his former possessions. The disposition of this chieftain is decidedly hostile, and I reckon upon it as probable that we shall soon have to treat him as a foe.' Twenty-eight villages acknowledge subjection to this chieftain, and his armed followers amount to between four and five hundred. He pays no contribution to Government, and lately compounded for a fine of Rs. 5,000 levied upon him by Mr. Scott, by agreeing to pay Rs. 1,000 immediately, and constructing for the remainder a good road from Churra, *via* Moleem, to Myrung.





“The Rajah of Churra, with whom Mr. Scott treated, has long been dead, and his sister's son, Soobha Sing, according to the Cossya law of succession, now occupies his place. It is difficult for one in the habit of seeing this little chief, inferior as he is in appearance to many a menial, to elevate him to the dignity of an ally of Government. As such, however, he has been, and is still recognized. The disposition of the Rajah and his councillors may be called friendly, because they know our power, and fear to provoke us, and are so sensible of the benefit of a connection with us, that they are anxious to debar all others from sharing in it. Their conduct, however, has, on one or two recent occasions, been so equivocal, that I should not feel much surprised at their ere long striking, by some folly of their own, their chieftain's name out of a catalogue, in which it is so much their advantage that it should continue.’ Twenty-five villages are dependent upon Churra, whose population is estimated at 30,000 souls, of whom 2,000 may be assembled as armed followers. Nothing is contributed by this petty State to the Government.

“Omeer Sing, of Nurtung, is the next on the list. Of this chieftain, Mr. Robertson says—“he has large possessions in the direction of Goalparah, where he, last year (1831), made an inroad, in consequence of which several of his villages on that frontier were taken from him and annexed to our dominions. But little is known of the state of the interior of his domain.

“The Kala Rajah of Nuspung, to whom about 20 villages are subject; the Oolar Rajah of Nuspung, Muriow, and Murram. Muriow, whose sway extends over twenty-five, and the Omrap Rajah of Murram, who has twenty-four villages, are the only other chieftains meriting particular notice, and of these, little more than the sites they severally occupy appears to be known.

“‘Among the many peculiarities’ (says Mr. Robertson) “‘apparent in the form of society and government, existing among the Cossyas, the absence of any recognized organ of supreme power is very remarkable. The nation or horde presents the appearance of a congregation of little Oligarchical Republics, subject to no common superior, yet of which each member is amenable, in some degree, to the control of his confederates. It was, he adds, to an oversight as to this feature of their political system that the massacre at Nungklow may perhaps be traced, since Teerut Sing seems to have been merely an instrument on that occasion, of executing the will of the confederates, who were displeased at a treaty which he had without their sanction entered into.’ A treaty in this case was, in my opinion, a superfluous formality; for such were the aggressions annually committed by the Cossyas, on the districts of Sylhet and Assam, that the British





Government, when possessed of both of these countries, became entitled to take possession of the hills as a measure of retaliation, and the only means of securing their subjects on the plains from molestation.

‘In alluding to the subject of tribute, Mr. Robertson adds—  
“It may be as well to observe that the revenue of the hill chieftains appears to arise from duties on bazars in the plains, on the borders of their territory, from fines imposed for offences, and in some parts from offerings of various articles of consumption. As an example, I may mention that I am informed by a native officer, who was at Nungkreem during the late conferences, that while he was there, Sing Manick imposed a fine of Rs. 300 on one of his subjects for speaking disrespectfully of one of his female relatives.’

“All opposition having been at length overcome, and the principal chieftains having tendered their submission to the British Government, it was resolved to place the whole mountain tract under the superintendence of the officer, whose skill and gallantry had so largely contributed to its pacification; and Captain Lister was shortly afterwards appointed Political Agent for Cossya affairs, over which he exercises a general control. The judicial customs, which prevailed among the tribe, previous to the establishment of our supremacy, continue to be observed with such occasional modifications, as experience proves necessary to temper the sanguinary nature of their penal enactments; and there is now reason to hope that the tranquillity they at present enjoy will be productive of a more extended intercourse with the inhabitants of the plains than has hitherto been practicable; and that conscious of the advantages to be derived from so intimate an association with superior civilization and wealth, the Khasia will carefully avoid the commission of any act likely to interrupt the existing harmony.

“That they can yet view us with any but feelings of apprehensive jealousy, is most improbable; and the lamentable catastrophe at Nungklow clearly shows that they are subject to sudden ebullitions of feeling against which it will always be necessary to be prepared; and that the most prompt and energetic measures, in checking any future exhibition of a refractory and hostile spirit, will be no less necessary than a mild and conciliatory policy to those who are more amicably disposed.

“One of the most important objects contemplated by Mr.

Description of the Hills and Plateau. Scott in establishing a post at Nungklow was the acquisition of a salubrious spot, to which the European inhabitants of the plains might occasionally resort for the renovation of health, and the eventual establishment of sanatory depôts for invalid soldiers. His own experience, derived from a residence of some duration, on the lofty table-land of these hills, in the cold weather of 1826, appeared to confirm the favourable reports that had been made upon it; and the most extensive schemes were rapidly formed for the improvement of this hygienic land of promise, and the civilization of its wild and independent tribes.





"The tract of country, in which the various scenes that have been described were enacted, forms an irregular parallelogram, the length of which, from north to south, may be assumed at about 70 miles, and its average breadth at 50, giving an area of about 3,500 square miles: on the north, it is bounded by the plains of Assam; on the south, by those of Sylhet; on the west by the Garrows; and on the east, by the central portion of Kachar. This area consists of three portions of unequal breadth and diversified character: the first or most northern is a closely wooded tract, rising from the Assam Valley, and stretching by a succession of gentle undulations for 20 miles, to the heights on which stands the village of Mopea, 2,746 feet above the sea, and from which, the northern crest of the more elevated central plateau is seen, resting at an elevation of between four and five thousand feet above the same level.

"From Nungklow, which stands on the edge of the northern crest, to Moosmye, which is similarly situated on the southern verge of this elevated region, the direct distance is about 35 miles: and it is within these limits that the region is included, whose salubrity has been so much extolled by its friends, and so much questioned by its opponents.

"Between Moosmye and Tara Ghaut, at the foot of the hills, a distance of about seven miles, is comprised the third division of this mountain tract, which consists of the steep face of the range, and like that on the Assam side, is densely wooded, and at certain seasons of the year, highly insalubrious. Viewed from the country below, it appears to spring almost perpendicularly from the plains to an elevation of five thousand feet; in some places, deep chasms are seen penetrating far into its massive flanks, forming the natural channels of numerous torrents, which reach the open country by a succession of rapids and falls, over rocky beds, of considerable depth. In other spots, during the cold and dry seasons of the year, the sites of numerous cataracts are marked by a thin silvery line, extending in some instances from the very crest of the elevated central plateau, nearly one-fourth down the perpendicular face of the ascent; and in the rains these attenuated and glittering lines become foaming cataracts, which pour a vast column of water over the rocky ledges of the table-land. The one most celebrated is situated near the village of Moosmye, where there is an unbroken perpendicular descent of one thousand feet, through which the column of water is precipitated, upon the rocky masses below.

"The groves or plantations, from which the whole of Bengal is supplied with oranges, occupy a belt of from one to two miles in breadth, at the sloping base of the mountains, and in a soil formed of the detritus of the limestone, which constitutes the principal rock on this side of the range; limes and pine-apples, the jack-fruit and mangoes, betul-nut and plantains also grow luxuriantly, to an elevation of nearly 2,000 feet above the plains, when the character of the products indicates a change, from a tropical to a more temperate region; and the wild raspberry and strawberry are detected, on the borders of the numerous small springs, which issue from fissures in the rocks.





"Throughout the whole of this ascent, from the base of the mountain to the crest of the table-land, the most luxuriant vegetation is seen; and the road, by which the more elevated regions are attained, has been so much improved, that the whole distance from Teerea Ghaut to Moosmye may now be traversed on horseback with perfect safety. The country at the foot of the ascent is during the rainy season almost entirely inundated and remarkably unhealthy; but even at an elevation of about 1,300 feet, this character of insalubrity ceases to exist, and the inhabitants of Soopar Poonjee appear to be altogether exempt from the diseases, which prevail in the country immediately below them.

"On the Assam side, the inferior hilly tract, which unites the lofty table-land and the plains, is covered with dense jungle, as far as the village of Oongswye, where it becomes more scanty, and is succeeded by a more open tract, in which the fir begins to appear, extending from the village of Mopea to the Sari or Bor Panee, which rushes over its granitic bed, at the foot of the ascent, leading up to Nungklow, on the northern crest of the central plateau. This tract, extending from Ranagaon to Mopea, is so decidedly insalubrious, that it can only be traversed with safety between the months of November and March; and this, which, from a very early period, was fatally manifested, almost entirely neutralized the advantages anticipated by the residents of Assam, from the vicinity of so elevated and temperate a region.

"The superior facility of access, and the shorter distance from the plains to the table-land, where alone health was to be obtained, soon marked the southern side of the range, as the one best adapted for the object in view; and Nungklow ceased to be considered more than a convenient intermediate post, for those, who, anxious to escape the evils of a protracted residence in Assam, were proceeding in search of health to Churra or Myrung.

"The central tract, which for want of a more appropriate word has been called "table-land," is very imperfectly described by such a designation; for though unmarked by any very lofty elevations, still it is so much undulated, and diversified, by numerous hillocks and knolls, valleys and chasms, that it resembles much more strongly the troubled surface of the ocean, than the flat extended plateau indicated by the term "table-land," but which, for want of a better, we shall probably still continue to use.

"Within the limits which have been examined from Nungklow to Moosmye, and from the road through Jaintiah, to the domains on the west, of the Oomap and Oolar Rajahs, the elevation of this lofty region appears to vary from four to six thousand feet above the sea; which would give an annual mean temperature of from 59° to 65° of Fahrenheit, or from 19° to 13° lower than that of Calcutta, which is nearly 78°. At such an elevation, and with such a temperature, the change, from a residence in the plains, to one on the hills is,





during the hot and cold seasons of the year, the most delightful it is possible to conceive. In the month of May, when the exhausted inhabitants of Calcutta were panting under a temperature which fluctuated from 90° to 100°, the parties which were pursuing the Cossyas, over this elevated region, found woollen clothing essential to comfort, and fires were almost invariably kindled at night, with the same object. During the rains, the climate, from excessive moisture, has been considered far less salubrious than was anticipated, from an experience of its effects at other seasons of the year: but I am inclined to think, that a conclusion so completely at variance with the opinions of men unquestionable talent and observation, has been deduced from imperfect data; and that a judgment condemnatory of the whole tract has been pronounced from a few observations made at Cherpa Poonjee, situated almost on the southern verge of the table-land, and peculiarly exposed, from this circumstance, to the unmitigated severity of the south-west monsoon.”<sup>(1)</sup>

At the present day the Government recognizes twenty-five petty States in the Khasi Hills, fifteen of the first class presided over by “Siems”\* who, though taken always from one family, are chosen by popular election; one confederacy under elected officers styled Wahadadars; five under Sirdars; and four under Lyngdohs, both of

\* The native title was first officially recognised in 1867—cf. Political Proceedings, March 1867, No. 14.

(1) The following are the principal references to the earlier records for the period treated by Pemberton:—

Secret Proceedings,	5th September 1828,	Nos. 11-14.
Secret Proceedings,	20th June	1829, No. 2.
Territorial Cons.,	14th April	1829, Nos. 27-28.
Political Proceedings,	7th May	1830, Nos. 49-50.
Political Proceedings,	18th June	1830, No. 52.
Political Proceedings,	11th February	1831, Nos. 26-32.
Political Proceedings,	25th February	1831, No. 39.
Political Proceedings,	22nd October	1832, Nos. 60-61.
Political Proceedings,	3rd December	1832, Nos. 100-101.
Political Proceedings,	5th November	1832, Nos. 56-58.
Political Proceedings,	12th February	1833, Nos. 24-26.
Political Proceedings,	30th March	1833, No. 110.
Political Proceedings,	13th June	1833, Nos. 83-84.
Political Proceedings,	5th September	1833, Nos. 71-72.
Political Proceedings,	10th September	1833, Nos. 3-6.
Political Proceedings,	12th December	1833, Nos. 85-93.
Political Proceedings,	10th April	1834, Nos. 135-138.
Political Proceedings,	8th May	1834, Nos. 61-76.
Political Proceedings,	14th August	1834, No. 79.
Political Proceedings,	30th October	1834, Nos. 25-27.
Revenue Proceedings,	7th March	1835, No. 110.
Revenue Proceedings,	14th July	1835, Nos. 6-10.





which classes of offices are entirely elective. The names of the States as now settled are these :—

*A.—Under Siems.*

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|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Bhawál, or Warbah ;   | 8. Máoiong ;        |
| 2. Cherra, or Sohrah ;   | 9. Máo-syn-rám ;    |
| 3. Khyrim, or Nongkrem ; | 10. Myllem ;        |
| 4. Lyngkin, or Langrin ; | 11. Nong-soh-phoh ; |
| 5. Malái-Soh-Mat ;       | 12. Nongkláo ;      |
| 6. Maháram ;             | 13. Nongspung ;     |
| 7. Máriao ;              | 14. Nongstain ;     |
| 15. Rámbrái.             |                     |

*B.—Under Wakadadars (4 in number).*

1. Shellá.

*C.—Under Sirdars.*

- |                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Dwará Nong-tyr-men ; | 3. Máolong ; |
| 2. Jirang ;             | 4. Máodon ;  |
| 5. Nonglong.            |              |

*D.—Under Lyngdohs.*

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. Lyniong ;  | 3. Nong-lywái ; |
| 2. Máoflang ; | 4. Sohiong.     |

The constitution of the States is democratic, the chiefs being in no sense territorial sovereigns, but merely elected heads of village confederacies. The appointment of the chiefs and headmen is in every instance subject to the confirmation of the Government, which reserves to itself the right of removing them in case of oppression and misconduct. The States of Cherra, Khyrim, Nongstain, Lyngkin, and Nongspung were originally classed as semi-independent, having always been friendly or never having been actually coerced by a British force. In practice, however, no important distinction has been recognised between their position and that of the dependent States.\* Up to the year 1858 it was the custom to report to the Government of India only the succession to the State of Cherra. In that year it was arranged that successions to the five semi-independent States and the four principal dependent communities (Myllem, Maharam, Mariaio, and Nongkláo) should be reported for confirmation. This was the practice until 1878 when it was decided that the sunnuds<sup>(1)</sup> of succession should in all cases be granted by the Chief Commissioner of Assam. The form of sunnud prescribed in 1878 binds the chief to be subject to the orders and control of the

\* The Nongstain Chief in 1861 asked to be treated as entirely subject and to receive by sunnud the title of Rajah Bahadur. (*Political Proceedings, February 1861, Nos. 86-88, April 1861, No. 13, May 1861, Nos. 28-30.*)

(<sup>1</sup>) *Political Proceedings, (India) May 1878, Nos. 60-68.*





Deputy Commissioner of the District, who will decide any dispute between the chief and the chief of any other State. It empowers the chief to adjudicate and decide all civil cases and all criminal offences, except those punishable under the Indian Penal Code with death, transportation, or imprisonment for five years and upwards, which may arise within the limits of the State and in which only subjects of the State are concerned. Cases excepted as above and cases concerning subjects of other States are to be referred for the orders of the Deputy Commissioner. The Government of India is declared at liberty to occupy rent-free lands required for sanitarium, cantonments and posts. The right of Government is recognized in all lime, coal, and other mines, metals and minerals, in all wild elephants, and waste lands subject to payment of half profits to the chief.<sup>(1)</sup> The chief is bound not to mortgage State property: and is to set apart reserved areas for forests as Government may require. He is declared liable to punishment at the pleasure of Government for violation of the conditions of his sunnud, using any oppression, or acting contrary to established custom.

In 1853 the results of our occupation of the Khasia and Jaintia

Results of British administration.

Hills were thus summarized:—The simple character of the Khasias had to some extent become corrupted by civilization and increased wealth; civil wars which continually distracted the country in old times had been put down; trade had been augmented; an increasing demand for hill products had set in; the condition of the people, materially, had vastly improved; education had taken a start; while we had also reaped the benefits of our position in having obtained an entire cessation of the murderous inroads which these mountaineers constantly made into the plains, murdering our subjects and pillaging our villages.

Since that date the trade of the hills has gone on increasing; the Khasias have become altogether reconciled to our rule, and the district is now one of the last in which Government would expect to hear of any outbreak or disturbance beyond the management of the local police.

It will be remembered that when the Rajah of Jaintia was

Later history of Jaintia.

deprived of his possessions on the plains, he preferred to give up entirely the tract in the hills which was nominally subject to him, and to become a pensioner of Government. This hill tract contained nineteen petty districts, fifteen of which were each under a Dolloie or headman elected by the villagers; the other four being managed by thirteen hereditary Sirdars.

The only tribute derived by the Jaintia Rajah from the hills was one he-goat from each village, with a few seers of parched rice, and firewood for his annual religious ceremonies. The villages were also bound to cultivate by turns the Raj lands. It is possible that dues levied on hill produce imported to the plains formed a further source of income.

(<sup>1</sup>) Political Proceedings, August 1867, Nos. 25-26.





On the resumption of the hills by the British Government, from 1835 to 1855, the Sintengs, as the Jaintias are called, were left almost entirely to their own devices. The Dolloies heard all civil cases,—at first without exception, and after 1841 up to a certain limit,—and all criminal complaints not of a heinous character in which only people of their own villages were concerned. Their administration was, however, flagrantly corrupt; and they managed to secure for themselves most of the Raj lands of which no accurate inventory had been taken by Government. No taxes of any kind were imposed by us in the Jaintia Hills for many years. The tribute of he-goats continued to be annually paid, and in 1853 credit was given to the officers at Cherri for effecting a slightly more favourable sale of these offerings than had been usual theretofore. In that year Mr. Mills, a Judge of the Sudder Court, who had been deputed

Mr. Mills' deputation.

to enquire into certain abuses in the Khasia Hills, judicial administration, drew attention to the state of the Jaintia Hills. He pointed out that in 1849 Colonel Lister had suggested the imposition of a house-tax "in consequence of the disposition evinced by some of the people to assert their independence." This had, however, been negatived by Government. Mr. Mills strongly urged that the error should be repaired, and a more intimate knowledge of the people acquired by the English officers. He also advocated the establishment of a Police Thannah to check the lawless proceedings of the Dolloies. Lord Dalhousie quite concurred in these views. In neighbouring Hill Tracts house-tax was paid, and we were acting unwisely and inequitably in exempting Jaintia. The Agent was directed to proceed into the Jaintia Hills and prepare a full report on Revenue, Civil, and Criminal Justice, and all other matters connected with the Jaintia Territory. On receipt of these orders a thannah was established at Jowai, but not much else was actually done at this time to give effect to them, so far as I have been able to discover.

In 1858 Mr. Allen, another high official from the Presidency

Mr. Allen's proposals.

deputed to enquire into local matters, submitted another elaborate report upon the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. After the fullest consideration he came to the conclusion that the Sintengs should be required to contribute something in acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Government. He said—"I am of opinion that a light and judicious taxation would contribute to the preservation of tranquillity and good order in the Jaintia Hills. A moderate taxation had a very beneficial effect upon the savagery of the Lurka Coles of the Singhbhoom district of the south-west frontier agency. It was found to make them less turbulent and aggressive, and more thrifty, diligent, and submissive to the authorities; and I am disposed to think that a very moderate taxation, fixed for a term of years, would improve the condition and strengthen the peaceful and industrious inclinations of these wild mountaineers also." He proposed a moderate house-tax, to be collected through the village





authorities. Enquiry was also suggested into the condition of the Raj lands, and the allotment of waste to European settlers was discussed. But Mr. Allen insisted strongly on the necessity of stationing a European Civil Officer in the centre of the tract to administer justice to the people, and be to them a visible representative of that Government of which they then knew almost nothing. Unfortunately, the proposal to levy a house-tax was adopted, while the Sintengs were left as before to the management of their Dolloies.

In 1860 the house-tax was imposed, and, within a few months, the people were in open rebellion.

Sinteng rebellion, 1860.

Fortunately, a large force of troops was close at hand, and before the revolt could make any head, it was stamped out, and the villages were awed into apparent submission. It was supposed at the time that the ex-Rajah had been in some way mixed up with this movement in the hills, but to this idea little weight should be attached. For five and twenty years the Sintengs had been content to pay their tribute of he-goats to the British officers. They never respected the Rajah while he did rule over them; and they had openly affronted his family more than once since his abdication.

On the suppression of this partial rising measures were taken for the improvement of the administration. The Civil Officer at Cherra was empowered to remove the Dolloies for misconduct, while at the same time the powers of those functionaries were increased. All crimes were to be reported by them to the Police, who were not, however, to interfere vexatiously in village affairs.

Scarcely had the agitation of this disturbance had time to settle, when the necessities of Imperial

The income tax.

Finance imposed the income tax

throughout British India. The local officers applied to Government to know whether this new impost was to be levied in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills: and if the last named tract was to be affected by it, whether the house-tax was also to be maintained. It was ruled that the house tax was not to be given up on account of the income tax, the incidence of the two being different, and that the income tax "was to be introduced only in those parts of the hills where taxes had been previously levied, i. e., in the Jaintia Territory, and those other villages near the station of Cherra Poonjee which belong to the British Government." It seems to have been the belief at Calcutta that, practically, the tax would be inoperative in the hills. Fortunately, the whole of the Khasi States escaped it, and the loyalty of their chiefs was not tried by this severe and practical test.

In the Jaintia Hills 310 persons were taxed, on whom the whole amount assessed was Rupees 1,259. The highest rate levied, and that only in one case, was Rupees. 9. One person paid Rupees 5; twenty-seven paid Rupees 4-8 each; and the rest were taxed the minimum amount, Rupees 4 each per annum. The tax for 1860-61 was paid without a murmur. The Deputy Commissioner travelled through the hills in 1860-61, and again in November 1861 without



detecting a sign of disaffection. But the material was all there. The mass of the people had been subjected to the house tax in 1860. The leaders were further brought under the income tax in 1861. There were rumours of pān and trade taxes in the air.\* What spark actually began the conflagration it is hard to tell. Whether it was the rash talk and interference of some bullying policeman, or an injudiciously executed order against the use of arms, we do not clearly know. There is some evidence to show that the Police had made themselves very offensive at Jowai, by getting restrictions imposed on the burning of the dead near the station house, and by interfering with some religious ceremonies. There were doubtless many concurrent causes. The small number of troops then available gave an opportunity which had been

Second rising, 1862.

wanting in 1860; and on the 20th of January 1862, the Sintengs rose in fierce rebellion. "A people who had neither been left to their own guidance, nor yet fairly brought under ours; upon whom our yoke had pressed with just sufficient force to gall, but not to break into order; who had been denied the boon of having our rule represented among them by an English Officer, and of all our institutions, who had known only our system of Police as illustrated by a thannah on the Bengali model, and our latest experiments in taxation; who, just after they had been taught the lesson that they could only be compelled to pay an obnoxious tax by the application of military force, are straight-way further taxed, the means of compulsion being at the same time withdrawn, when such a people rise in rebellion" (said the Commissioner *ex-post facto*) "it may not be difficult to explain its origin and object, without searching after recondite causes."

Into the history and progress of the rebellion there is no need to enter. Crushed apparently in four months after its outbreak, it again almost immediately burst out afresh, and it was not till November 1863, when every glen and jungle had been searched out by our Troops and Police, that the last of the rebel leaders surrendered, and the pacification of Jaintia could be said to be complete.

It fell to the lot of Sir Cecil Beadon who had inherited this rebellion, as well as various other disturbances on the frontiers and elsewhere, from his predecessors, to re-organize the Hill Administration. The policy laid down by him was thus represented—

"A main principle to be adopted in dealing with these people when they have been made to understand and feel the power of the Government and have submitted to its authority is not to leave them in their old state, but, while adopting a simple plan of Government suitable to their present condition and circumstances, and interfering as little as possible with existing institutions, to extend our intercourse with them, and endeavour to introduce among them civilization and order."

\* See Bengal Record Selections No. XXXIX for a full account of these disturbances.





An English Officer with full powers was accordingly posted to the Jaintia Hills, where he was personally to reside. He was to visit every village in his jurisdiction at least once a year, and, with his subordinates, was required to qualify in the Khasia language sufficiently to dispense with all interpreters. The village Dolloies were to be chosen by the people, subject to the civil officer's approval, and to hold office during good behaviour. With other village officers they were to form punchayets, by whom specified civil and criminal powers were to be exercised, subject to the revision of the British officer in important or heinous cases. The Dolloies and Sirdars were to be responsible for the Police of their respective jurisdictions, and the Regular Police were only to interfere to repress disturbance or support the authority of the Dolloies. Proceedings were to be *viâ voce* as far as possible. Education was to be liberally encouraged; the Welsh Mission already established in the hills being made the instrument of its extension. The country was to be thoroughly opened up by eight lines of road, aggregating in length 218 miles. The income tax had been virtually withdrawn by the Act repealing it on all incomes below Rs. 500 a year. The house tax was to be retained, due care being taken that no inequality or injustice was allowed in its assessment.

On these general principles the administration of the Jaintia Hills has been reformed, and the policy of direct management, by resident European Officers, has, here, as in the Naga Hills, proved successful. Their history has for years past been uneventful. A complete and detailed settlement of the land in Jaintia has recently been carried out, due care being taken to avoid overassessment.

The head-quarters of the Chief Commissioner of Assam have been located at Shillong in the Khasi Hills. The station is on a plateau 4,000 feet above sea-level and 67 miles south by road from Gowhatty on the Brahmaputra. It is conveniently situated between the Assam valley districts on the one side and those of Cachar and Sylhet on the other. The climate is mild and equable, the rainfall averaging 83·65 inches in the year. The District Officer of the Khasi Hills moved his head-quarters there from Cherapoonjee\* in 1864 to avoid the excessive

\* David Scott lies buried at Cherpa Poonjee. The following is the inscription on his tomb :—

*In Memory*

Of David Scott, Agent to the Governor General of the North-East Frontier of Bengal, and Commissioner of Revenue and Circuit in the District of Assam, North-Eastern part of Rangpore, Sheerpore, and Sylhet, died 20th August 1831, aged 45 years and 3 months.

This monument is erected by order of the Supreme Government as a public and lasting record of its consideration for the personal character of the deceased, and of its estimation of the eminent services rendered by him in the administration of the extensive territory committed to his charge. By his demise the Government has been deprived of a





rainfall of the latter place, where although only 30 miles south of Shillong the average rainfall is 368 inches and in 1861 amounted to as much as 805 inches. The transfer to Shillong has been from every point of view advantageous, and the Chief Commissioner of Assam has perhaps the most desirable head-quarters of all the Local Governments.

most zealous, able, and intelligent servant, whose loss it deeply laments, while his name will long be held in grateful remembrance and veneration by the Native population, to whom he was justly endeared by his impartial dispensation of justice, his kind and conciliatory manners, and his constant and unwearied endeavours to promote their happiness and welfare.





## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE GAROS.

West of the Khasi are the Garo Hills. There appears, however, to be little or no intercourse between their inhabitants. Our communications with the Garos have been entirely from the sides of Goalpara and Mymensing, and they are the first of the Assam mountain tribes with whom we came in contact. Our knowledge of them dates from our occupation of Rungpore and Mymensing.

The chief earlier sources of authentic information in regard to the Garo Hills are—

- (1.) A paper by Mr. Elliot in the 3rd Volume of the Asiatic Researches.
- (2.) Reports<sup>(1)</sup> on the Rahdari duties of Sherepore and Shoo-sung by the same gentleman, dated 1789.
- (3.) An account by Dr. Buchanan, the substance of which appears in Volume 3 of Martin's Eastern India.
- (4.) A Report<sup>(2)</sup> by Mr. Sisson in 1815.
- (5.) A Report<sup>(3)</sup> by Mr. Scott in 1816.

Under the Moguls the whole of the north-east parts of Bengal were divided into great estates, held for the most part by their original

owners, who, while paying a small Early history of the Garo frontier. tribute to the Muhummadan Foujdar of Rungamatty as acknowledgment of fealty, were, to all intents and purposes, independent. They were bound, in fact, merely to supply a certain number of elephants, or a small quantity of aghur (a precious wood), to support certain petty garrisons, and to contribute to the maintenance of the Dacca Artillery park. Their estates were never subjected to a land revenue assessment. They paid what they did pay to the Supreme Government from 'Sayer' or miscellaneous revenues and not from 'Mal' or land revenue. The Foujdar generally made advances on account of cotton to the *Choudries*, as these Zemindars were called, and received from them yearly consignments of that article; but as no account was ever taken of the Foujdar's collections so long as he paid the stipulated assignment at Dacca, the transactions were carried on mainly for the benefit of himself and the *Choudries*.

The *Choudries* of Kurribari, Kaloomaloo para, and Meeaspara (or Mechpara) in that part of Rungpore now called Goalpara, were the

(<sup>1</sup>) Revenue Consultation, 30th September 1789, Nos. 26-30.

(<sup>2</sup>) Criminal Consultation, 25th April 1815, Nos. 17-18.

(<sup>3</sup>) Criminal Consultation, 16th February 1816, Nos. 15-16.





chief landholders of this kind at the time of our accession to the Dewani. They held all the low country under the Garo Hills on the Assam side, and it was their principal duty to repress the incursions of the savage tribes of the uplands, who even then were a source of terror to the cultivators of the plains. As all the cotton, then the staple of the internal eastern trade, came from these hills, the Choudries had established at the principal passes *hâts* or markets guarded by their retainers, to which the low country merchants, with their permission, resorted; and at which they extorted from the merchants engaged in the Garo trade dues either in kind or cash, which formed one of the main sources of their income. It would appear that at this early period the Choudries had not attempted to secure any footing in the hills, save perhaps on those outlying and lower spurs which intersected their own estates. The Garos of the upper hills only came down annually to trade after the people of the villages near the foot of the hills had given hostages who were detained in the hills till the fairs were over. The Garos stipulated that these hostages should be always *smiths*—that the hillmen might have their services to make weapons in case war broke out.

After our accession to the Dewani, things continued on much the same footing as before. A *Sezawal* was annually appointed, who contracted to pay the Government demand, making his own arrangement with the Choudries. This left them as independent as before, and up to the year A. D. 1787-88 we find that their revenue was always paid in cotton. After 1788 the collection of Sayer dues or miscellaneous cesses was made illegal, Government compensating all Zemindars for any consequent loss of revenue. The Choudries of the Garo frontier received compensation just as others did, and Government was for some time under the impression that the dues formerly levied at these Garo fairs had been given up, but as the Government did not itself proceed to realise them, the Zemindars continued to levy them illegally here, as they in fact levy illegal dues to this day in all parts of Bengal.

In 1775-76 the Choudries of Meeaspara and Kurribari, to avenge some Garo raids of more than usual severity, invaded the hills bordering on their respective estates and entered on a career of conquest. They remained two or three years in the hills, and brought the tribes of a large tract entirely under their control. They maintained their authority over the hillmen apparently for many years. Even the great Chief of the southern part of the hills (Renghta) became in course of time subject to Kurribari. This, however, brought the Choudrie of Kurribari into conflict with the Choudrie of Sherepore in Mymensing, for Renghta's people had been in the habit of trading at the markets of Sherepore and Shoosung. The Zemindar of Kurribari, Mohendronarain Choudrie, was not the man to brook Sherepore interference. He built forts in the passes on the Mymensing side to stop the Garo trade, and arrested Renghta himself when on his way back from a visit to the Sherepore *hâts*. Mr. Elliot, who was at that time (1789) on the Mymensing frontier, got Renghta released, and he and all his people then offered to become Government ryots, provided they were protected from the





Kurribari Zemindar. Mr. Elliot, eager to avail himself of the great trade advantages promised by such an arrangement, strongly supported the proposal. The Commissioner of Cooch Behar reported that the Kurribari Zemindar had no rights in the hills save those he maintained by force. The Government in 1790 accordingly directed<sup>(1)</sup> that Renghta should be made a Zemindar under the Company, and that the Kurribari Choudrie should be forbidden to molest him, but be offered a remission of revenue should he be unable, in consequence, to pay the Government demand. This interesting negotiation fell through, owing to the unparalleled audacity of the Kurribari Choudrie, who simply arrested the messengers sent to Renghta to conclude the arrangements. The Choudrie occupied all the passes leading to Mymensing and defied the Company's Officers to their face. In 1798 Government had to send troops to realise his arrears of revenue. In 1794<sup>(2)</sup> and again in 1805 he even invaded Sherepore itself. All attempts at this time to define the boundaries of his Zemindari were defeated by him. At last in 1809 the estate was sold, by the orders of the Board of Revenue, for arrears of revenue, but the auction purchaser was ruined in the attempt to get possession. Mohendronarain threw himself into the hills, and set up a claim to hold free of revenue the greater part of his estate in the plains. It was not till April 1815 that Government succeeded in arresting him.<sup>(3)</sup> The estate had to be attached and managed by Government Officers, as the purchaser could do nothing with it.

Meantime the Garos had not ceased to make incursions into the plains<sup>(4)</sup> to avenge themselves on the Choudries for the extortion and oppression suffered at their hands, and in 1816, after a particularly atrocious raid in which the hillmen had invaded Kurribari, and burnt the Zemindar's residence, the passes were closed to trade, and Mr. Scott was deputed by Government to visit the frontier. That gentleman gives the following account of the position of the four principal Zemindars and of the Garos on their estates at the time of his visit:—

1. *Kurribari*.—The Choudrie of this estate having been the most vigorous and least under control had reduced nearly all the Garos actually living on his estate to the condition of ordinary ryots, but

(1) Revenue Consultation, 15th June 1790, No. 179.

(2) Judicial Consultation, 21st November 1794, Nos. 7-8.

(3) Criminal Consultation, 16th February 1816, Nos. 15-16.

(4) Criminal Consultation, 2nd October 1807, No. 14.

Criminal Consultation, 22nd April 1808, No.

Judicial Consultation, 9th April 1811, Nos. 22-3.

Judicial Consultation, 28th May 1811, No. 37.

Judicial Consultation, 18th June 1811, Nos. 15-16.

Criminal Consultation, 31st December 1811, No. 9.

Revenue Consultation, 14th November 1812, No. 8.

Criminal Consultation, 17th July 1813, Nos. 7-8.

Criminal Consultation, 7th February 1815, Nos. 19-21.

Criminal Consultation, 1st March 1816, Nos. 12-15.





a few of the frontier Chiefs still remained merely tributary, subject to the provision of cotton on terms highly favorable to the Zemindar, and paying sums of money on the occasions of Hindu festivals. Of these the chief was Renghta, who had been prevented as before shewn from emancipating himself from the Choudrie's supremacy.

2. *Kaloomaloopara* had been in feeble hands. The Garos on its borders were virtually independent, though some paid a nominal cotton tribute.

3. The *Meckpara* Choudrie had in 1776-77 effected large conquests, but was succeeded soon after by a minor, and now only a few outlying Garo villages in the plains remained in the condition of ordinary ryots' villages, and in these the Regulations of Government were current. But in the Hill Tracts the Garo Chiefs were merely tributary, paying cotton on terms favorable to the Zemindar, and occasionally admitting him as their criminal Judge.

4. *Huhraghat*.—Here the Garos on the first ranges of hills had been reduced to unconditional submission, but had been liberally treated, and their Sirdars transformed into Jaghirdars, charged with the defence of the passes against the tribes of the interior. They were quite under the Regulations of Government.

The problem Mr. Scott had before him was to make arrangements for bringing to reason the Tributary Garos, who had committed all the late raids. He found that the cause of the raids had been the fact,

that, in spite of the orders of Government repressing all internal duties levied by Zemindars and Sayer of all kinds, the Zemindars on this side had continued to exact them from Garos frequenting their markets. A system of exacting cotton in return for advances forced on the Garos also prevailed, and was defended on the ground that it was a sort of rent, although none of these Tributary Garo villages appeared in the Collectorate Registers of the estates. These pretensions were shown to be groundless, and it was urged that the Zemindars, now no longer Government Officers, had no claim, on the grounds of proprietary right, to exercise any interference with the Hill Garos. Mr. Scott accordingly proposed to separate all these Tributary Garos from the Zemindars' control, compensating the Zemindars if they could show any claim to consideration, but bringing the Garo tract under Government management; the Chiefs to pay a slight tribute as acknowledgment of our supremacy. The frontier markets were also to be brought under Government control, and the Garos were to be permitted to trade there only on entering into engagements to keep the peace. Those Garo Chiefs who had been receiving a black mail from persons on the plains, as a bribe not to attack them, were to get annual presents instead. Light duties were to be collected at the markets from *independent* Garos, but not from tributaries. Other custom duties, then levied by Government, were to be managed by Government Collectors.





The Governor General in Council accepted<sup>(1)</sup> Mr. Scott's suggestions, on the grounds of the 'absolute necessity of effectually preventing the recurrence of the oppressive practices on the part of the Zemindars which had led to the most violent acts of revenge and bloodshed,' and appointed him to the direct charge of the country east of the Berham-pooter to enable him to carry them out. The Government said the Zemindars had already received liberal compensation for loss of Sayer, and as the Tributary Garo villages were not among the assets on which their land revenue had been settled, they were entitled to nothing more now. The Government was clearly of opinion that the only relation between the Zemindars and Tributary Garos was the payment and reception of Sayer, which was abolished in those estates in 1813, and for which (including all taken from Garos) compensation had been given in that year.

It further suggested for Mr. Scott's consideration—

- 1st.—The introduction of a plan of internal management of the Garo Hills like that successfully adopted by Cleveland in Bhagulpore.
- 2nd.—The raising a local corps of Garos to hold the frontier passes, &c.
- 3rd.—The appointment of a permanent Officer to have separate charge of these eastern parts of Rungpore.
- 4th.—The regulation of the frontier trade.

All the arrangements so far as they concerned the Tributary Garos were carried out by Government without any hint of legislative sanction being necessary. The arrangements were looked upon as political, and as affecting only a tract of country in which the Regulations were not current. The first hint of legislation is found in a letter of

#### Legislative proposals.

9th September 1817, where the Government directed Mr. Scott not to scruple to separate from the estate of Kurribari, and treat exactly as the Tributary Garos were being treated, any Garo villages nominally under the existing Laws and Regulations. "It will of course" (ran the letter) "be ultimately necessary formally to recognise arrangements of the latter description (affecting villages within the permanently-settled estates) by a legislative enactment," but before this could be done, a survey and settlement of boundary was absolutely required. Legislation was also said to be necessary to frame a procedure for judicial trials of the Tributary Garos. Mr. Scott, in reply, urged that the whole Garo Frontier should be treated on the same plan. He said—"the Regulations are evidently inapplicable to the existing state of society amongst them, a people in general entirely ignorant of the Bengal language or any other dialect understood in our Courts. If the plan of separation from Zemindars (he urged) prove

(1) Criminal Consultation, 16th February 1816, Nos. 15-18.





acceptable to the Garos, in the tracts, where on account of the raids\* it is necessary to introduce it, we shall have, if any exceptions are made, the Garos of the excluded parts committing similar atrocities to bring themselves within the pale."

Accordingly paragraph 24 in the Draft Regulation framed by Mr. Scott ran as follows:—

The authority of the Special Commissioner shall extend from the Berhampooter eastward over all lands occupied by Garos or other hill tribes formerly considered as tributary to, or dependent upon, the Zemindars of Hubraghat, Mechpara, Kaloomaloo para, and Kurribari. The Governor General in Council will, however, exercise his discretion in releasing the inhabitants of any of the above villages from the control of the British Government. He will also exercise similar discretion in extending its authority over other Garo communities which may be at present independent. A proclamation to that effect by order of Government shall suffice without any further special enactment.

The Regulation was not passed in the precise shape submitted by Mr. Scott, but sufficient discretion to meet all cases that could arise was left in the hands of Government by Regulation X of 1822, which is here reproduced:

*A Regulation for exempting the Garo Mountaineers, and other rude Tribes on the North-Eastern Frontier of Rungpore, from the operation of the existing Regulations; and for establishing a special system of Government for the tract of country occupied by them, or bordering on their possessions: Passed by the Governor-General in Council, on the 19th September 1822.*

I. There exist in different parts of the territories subordinate to the presidency of

Preamble.

Port William, races of people entirely distinct from the ordinary population, and to whose

circumstances, therefore, the system of government established by the general Regulations is wholly inapplicable. Such were the mountaineers of Bhaugulpore, for the reclaiming of whom to the arts of civilized life special arrangements were made by Government with the Chiefs, some time before the introduction of the present system. These arrangements still subsist, having been incorporated into the code by the provisions of Regulation I, 1796, under which an entirely distinct system has been established for the administration of justice amongst the inhabitants of that mountainous tract. Savage tribes, in some respects similar, exist on the north-east frontier of Rungpore, of which the race denominated Garos, and occupying the hills called after them, are the principal. As yet little has been done to reclaim or civilize these people. The reciprocal animosity which subsists between them and the inhabitants of the cultivated country prevents any extensive intercourse of a pacific nature; while, on the contrary, their mutual injuries have produced feuds leading frequently to disturbance and bloodshed. The Zemindars of the frontier have, there is reason to believe, usually been the aggressors, by encroaching on the independent territory of the Garos and similar rude tribes, until, despairing of other resource, the latter are driven to seize occasions of private revenge and retaliation. These encroachments having

\* I extract here a statement of Garo raids between 1807 and 1819.

						Villages burnt.	Persons killed.
1807	...	...	...	...	...	3	27
1810	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
1811	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
1812	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
1813	...	...	...	...	...	2	24
1814	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
1815	...	...	...	...	...	2	15
1816	...	...	...	...	...	150	94
1818	...	...	...	...	...	...	3





been of long standing, several Zemindars were, at the time of the perpetual settlement, in the receipt of incomes derived from cesses of various kinds levied from the tribes, and hence a portion of the tract of country occupied by them has been considered to lie within the operation of the general Regulations as forming part of the zemindariaries. This, however, instead of conducing to reclaim the tribes to civilized habits, has rather had a contrary effect, the system being totally inapplicable to their savage and secluded condition, and being calculated to leave them at the mercy of the Zemindars, rather than to offer any substantial means of redress. The condition of the Garo Mountaineers, and of the other rude tribes on that frontier, has, for some time past, attracted much of the attention of the Governor-General in Council, and the circumstances which have conduced to check the progress of civilization amongst them have been fully investigated and ascertained. With a view, therefore, to promote the desirable object of reclaiming these races to the habits of civilized life, it seems necessary that a special plan for the administration of justice, of a kind adapted to their peculiar customs and prejudices, should be arranged and concerted with the head men, and that measures should at the same time be taken for freeing them from any dependence on the Zemindars of the British provinces; compensation being, of course, made to the latter for any just pecuniary claims they may have over them. Preparatory to the execution of measures adapted to this end, it has been deemed indispensable to suspend the operation of the existing rules for the administration of civil and criminal justice, and generally of the Regulations of Government within the tract of country comprised in or bordering on the hills and jungles occupied by these tribes, and to appoint a Commissioner with full power to conclude arrangements with the Chiefs, and to conduct the entire administration of the tract in question, subject only to such orders and instructions as he may receive, from time to time, from the Governor-General in Council. The following rules have accordingly been enacted, to take effect from the date of their promulgation, in the manner and within the limits therein described.

II. The tract of country now comprised in the thannah jurisdictions of Gwalpara,

Separating the tract of country comprised in the thannahs of Gwalpara, Dhoobree, and Kurreebaree, from the jurisdiction of the district of Rungpore, and declaring the operation of the existing Regulations to be suspended, except so far as provided hereafter.

Dhoobree, and Kurreebaree, in the district of Rungpore, is hereby declared separated from the said district; and the operation of the rules for the administration of the police and of civil and criminal justice, as well as those for the collection of the land revenue, customs,

abkaree, and stamp revenues, together with all other rules contained in the Regulations printed and published in the manner prescribed by Regulation XLI, 1793, are suspended, and shall cease to have effect therein from the date of the promulgation of this Regulation, except in so far as may be hereinafter provided.

III. The administration of civil and criminal justice, the collection of the revenue,

A Civil Commissioner appointed for the north-east parts of Rungpore above described, vested with the powers of administering civil and criminal justice, the collection of revenue, and the superintendence of the police in the manner prescribed in this Regulation.

the superintendence of the police, and every other branch of Government within the tract above described, are hereby declared to be vested in an officer appointed by the Governor-General in Council, and denominated the Civil Commissioner for the North-Eastern

parts of Rungpore; the said officer shall conduct the same agreeably to the principles and spirit of the existing Regulations, subject to the restrictions and modifications hereinafter provided, and to such other alterations and amendments as may from time to time be ordered by the Governor-General in Council.

IV. First.—In the administration of criminal justice, the Commissioner shall be

competent to exercise all the functions and authorities now exercised by Magistrates in respect to the apprehension and trial of persons charged with offences; and further to hold trials and pass sentence to the extent permitted by the Regulations to a Judge of *circuit*; but without reference of the proceedings for futwa to a Mahomedan law-officer.

competent to exercise all the functions and authorities now exercised by Magistrates in respect to the apprehension and trial of persons charged with offences; and further to hold trials and pass sentence to the extent permitted by the Regulations to a Judge of *circuit*; but without reference of the proceedings for futwa to a Mahomedan law-officer.

Second.—In the exercise of the powers and authorities above conveyed to the Commis-

sioner, and other Officers acting under his control, shall ordinarily conform to the principles and spirit of the Regulations applicable to such subjects; so likewise the Police Officers, and all other Officers acting under his control: provided, however, that the Commissioner and all such Officers shall be bound to conform to any special rules or orders that may

But shall obey and conform to all special rules and orders of Government.

conform to any special rules or orders that may





from time to time be issued by the Governor-General in Council for regulating the process before trial, or the forms of trial to be observed in the case of different classes of the

Reservation to the Governor-General in Council of the power of regulating sundry matters connected with the Commissioner's criminal jurisdiction.

population, and the same shall be to all intents and purposes legal and valid. Moreover, it shall be competent to the Governor-General in Council to extend, limit, or modify any part of the authority to be exercised by Police

Officers, and likewise to confer on the Commissioner the power of granting conditional pardon to accomplices without previous reference to the Nizamut Adawlut, as required by the existing Regulations, or in any other way to extend or modify the magisterial and judicial functions vested in the Commissioner by the preceding clause of this section. An order or resolution of Government, under the official signature of a Secretary to Government, shall be sufficient authority for such modification; anything in Regulation XLI, 1793, or in any other Regulation of Government, to the contrary notwithstanding.

*Third.*—If the Commissioner shall deem an offender brought to trial before him to be liable to a punishment exceeding that which by the existing Regulations a Judge of circuit is competent to adjudge, without referring the case to the Nizamut Adawlut, he shall not pass any final sentence thereon, but shall transmit to the Nizamut Adawlut the record of the proceedings held on the trial, together with a full English report of the circumstances of the case, and of his opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the prisoner or prisoners tried, as likewise an explanation of any special custom of the parties or witnesses that may be necessary to the proper understanding of the proceedings.

V. Upon the receipt of any trial referred by the Commissioner under the preceding section, the Nizamut Adawlut shall, without submitting the proceedings for the futwa of their Law Officers, proceed to pass a final judgment, or such other order as may, after mature consideration, seem to the Court requisite and proper, in the same manner, with exception to the requisition of a futwa, as if the trial had been sent up in ordinary course from a Judge *en circuit*.

VI. In the exercise of the duty of administering civil justice within the tract defined in Section II. of this Regulation, the Commissioner shall hold a Court, and proceed, in cases wherein persons not of the race of Garo Mountaineers, or other rude tribes, are exclusively concerned, according to the existing Regulations, subject to the modifications provided for by this Regulation, observing as far as practicable the rules prescribed for Zillah Judges holding and presiding in the Adawluts of the country; provided, however, that there shall be no limit to the amount for which a suit shall be cognizable by the Commissioner, and an appeal from his judgment shall not lie to the Provincial Court. If the stake or interest involved (calculated according to the rule contained in Section XIV, Regulation I, 1814) do not exceed in amount

Substitute B, Schedule B, Regulation X, 1829.  
or value the sum of five thousand sicca rupees, the decision passed on the case by the Commissioner shall be final. If the interest involved, calculated as above, exceed in value or amount the sum of five thousand rupees,

Suits exceeding in amount Rs. 5,000 to be appealable to the Sadder Dewanny Adawlut.  
an appeal shall lie in such cases direct to the Sadder Dewanny Adawlut, who will proceed in the hearing and adjudication thereof in the same manner as in the case of appeals entertained by the Court from judgments of the Provincial Courts of Appeal. The Sadder Dewanny Adawlut shall likewise be competent

Special appeal allowed, if under Rs. 5,000.  
to grant a special appeal in cases of a less amount than five thousand rupees, should there appear, either on the face of the decree, or from circumstances established to the satisfaction of the Court, substantial reason for concluding that there has been a failure of justice in the award of the Commissioners.

VII. If the parties in a civil action be Garo Mountaineers, or of any other similar rude tribe, or if either of them be of that description, the form and process that may be sanctioned and prescribed by the Governor-General in Council shall be adopted in the trial and adjudication of the matter at issue, and in the execution of the award; and any civil judgment that may be passed according

The process and form of trial in civil actions between Garos, and the like, or in which one of the parties may be of this description, to be as prescribed by the Governor-General in Council.





to such form shall have full authority and effect in the same manner as a decree passed by a competent Court of final jurisdiction.

VIII. *First.*—In the conduct of the revenue duties of the tract of country placed under the Commissioner, as well as those relating to the customs, abkaree, stamps, and other miscellaneous items as to the land revenue, the Commissioner shall observe the rules and principles of the general Regulations, with such limitations and restrictions as to the authority to be exercised by himself, as may be provided in the instructions he may receive from time to time from the Governor-General in Council; provided, however, that it shall be competent to the Governor-General in Council to direct the separation, temporarily or permanently, of any tract of country occupied by Garo Mountaineers or other rude tribes from the estates of any neighbouring Zemindars to which the same may now be claimed to be attached; also to discontinue the collection by Zemindars or others of any cesses, tributes, or exactions, on whatsoever pretence the same may be levied from such people, and to make arrangements either for the remission of the same, or for their collection direct by the officers of Government, making such compensation to Zemindars or others justly entitled thereto for the relinquishment of the same, as may to him seem most equitable and proper.

Rules under which the Commissioner shall conduct the revenue duties in the tract of the country placed under his control.

Proviso, declaratory of the competency of Government to separate tracts occupied by Garos or the like from zemindaries, and to discontinue the levy of cesses or the like, giving compensation when justly due.

Zemindars to which the same may now be claimed to be attached; also to discontinue the collection by Zemindars or others of any cesses, tributes, or exactions, on whatsoever pretence the same may be levied from such people, and to make arrangements either for the remission of the same, or for their collection direct by the officers of Government, making such compensation to Zemindars or others justly entitled thereto for the relinquishment of the same, as may to him seem most equitable and proper.

*Second.*—No suit or action shall be entertained by any Civil Court having jurisdiction, or that may hereafter have jurisdiction, within the tract of country subject to the authority of the Commissioner, on account of any act of the above description done under the authority of the Governor-General in Council.

IX. In all matters connected with the tract of country specified in Section II. or with the races of mountaineers and rude tribes above described, if from the want of any special provision, or from doubts as to the applicability of the rules in existence, any difficulty shall arise as to the course to be pursued, a reference shall be made to the Governor-General in Council, to whom it shall be competent to prescribe, by an order under the official signature of a Secretary to Government, what specific measures shall be adopted in the particular instance, as well as to annul, modify, and explain any existing rules or orders.

All questions regarding the application of the rules in matters connected with the tract of the country described in Sec. II. of this Regulation shall be referable to the Governor-General in Council.

After the passing of that Regulation, Mr. Scott proceeded to conclude engagements with the independent Chiefs, and no fewer than 121 of those living west of the Soomasiri are said to have entered into terms with him.\* The dues at the Garo hâths were in future to be levied on behalf of Government only.

\* A proof of the lively interest taken by Mr. Scott in the Garos will be found in the following correspondence:—

*Extract of letter from Scott to W. B. Bayley, Secretary to Government, dated 27th April 1825.*

"In reply to a Commission that I sent to my Agent in London for one or more Missionaries of the sort suited to convert the Garos, I have been referred to the Bishop of Calcutta by the person, probably a friend of his, whom my brother consulted. Would Government have any objection to my applying to the Bishop on the subject? I am satisfied that nothing permanently good can be obtained by other means, and that if we do not interfere on behalf of the poor Garos they will soon become Hindoos or half-Hindoos, retaining and acquiring many of the bad parts of both their present and improved creeds. I would greatly prefer two or more Moravian Missionaries of the old school who along with religion would teach the useful arts. If Government would ensure them subsistence only in the case of success or of my death, I would willingly take upon myself the expense in the first instance, and £300 per annum would suffice. Of success I have no more doubt than that, if allowed, you could make Christians of the Hindoo boys; and the great error of the Missionaries appears to me to be that of directing their attention to polished natives





The breaking out of the Burmese war stopped Mr. Scott's work, as he had to take a prominent position in the affairs of Assam Proper, being appointed Governor General's Agent for North-Eastern frontier on 20th November 1823.

But little is known of what went on in the hills between 1824 and 1836. I may however notice briefly certain disturbances in Sherepore on the Mymensing border in 1826 and 1833, in which the lower Garos were to some extent implicated, though it does not appear that the upper clans had anything to do with them.

'Sherepore,' says a report<sup>(1)</sup> of 1826, 'the extreme pergunna of Mymensing, is bounded on the west and south by the Great Berhampooter,

The 'Paghul' riots in Mymensing, on the south and east by the old Berhampooter and Pergunnas Alapsing and Soosung, and on the north by Sersung and Kurribari Hills inhabited by Garos. From north-west to south-east it runs about 30 to 40 miles, and from north to south about 20 or 25 miles. The belt of country which unites the plains of Sherepore with the foot of the Kurribari Hills, called Gird Garo, or the Doon, is contested as hereditary property between the Zemindars of Sherepore and the Chiefs of the Kurribari Hills. The soil is rich, but the cultivators oppressed. This tract is inhabited by highlanders—truthful, industrious and superstitious, and also by lowlanders, destitute of moral qualities as well as of religion.' The tract of Sherepore, with the corner of Alapsing to the north of the Brahmaputra, had been long in a disturbed state. About 1775, a Muhummadan Fukir called Kurreem, had set himself up as a reformer and soothsayer. The Shoosung Raja allowed him to live in Loterkandi where he got together a band of followers called by their neighbours Paghuls or Fools, and among themselves Brethren (Bhai Sahib). About 1813 Kurreem had died, and been succeeded by his son Tippoo. Tippoo and his mother (called 'Mah Sahibah' or 'lady mother' by the Paghuls) both according to local belief possessed miraculous powers. Under their spells wooden guns and swords became in the hands of the 'Paghuls' effective weapons. English artillery fire had no effect against them. The 'Lady Mother' had only to blow on her clothes, and shake her under garment, to call a hidden army into existence; and to her alone was restricted the power of seeing into the future. It was perhaps from the want of this power, and a failure duly to consult the powers of his mother, that Tippoo ceased to be a mere religious fanatic, and betook himself to more dangerous courses. He gradually formed a following of armed men, acquired much wealth by

instead of rude tribes who are still in that state of national childhood which enables the stranger priest to enact the schoolmaster and to teach them what he likes. There are many instances of success in cases of the latter description in modern times, but not one by fair means in those of the former since the age of miracles or very near it."

To this the Secretary replied demi-officially, approving generally. "The Government could not however give a salary to the people who might be employed in their capacity of Missionaries, but they might call them schoolmasters, and give assistance in that shape."

(1) Revenue Consultation, 9th March 1826, No. 3—(Report by R. Morrison).





plunder, and perpetrated many crimes. In the state of the country, racked by the feuds of conflicting Zemindars, he formed a centre of intrigue for all the discontented ryots. The Sherepore Zemindars had never carried out the permanent settlement rules, and always collected cesses from their tenants at their discretion. In November 1824, when called on by Government to provide supplies for troops passing to Assam to fight the Burmese, they made this as usual the excuse for imposing heavy exactions on the ryots. The ryots appealed to Tippoo who promised them a time when they should only pay nominal rents. On this the peasantry took up arms and entered into closer alliance with the Paghuls, and began to refuse to give the customary tale of labour or pay rent. These ryots were many of them Garos, who had settled on the low lands under the hills. The rent of Gird Garo, the lowland tract cultivated by these settled Garos, was put down in the settlement of 1793 at Rs. 20. In 1825 it was paying Rs. 20,000 to Zemindars. In view of an enhancement of rent like this we cannot wonder that these half-civilised cultivators rose in arms. In January 1825 a body of 700 men assembled to attack the Zemindars at Sherepore, and serious fighting took place. The district authorities intervened, and after some trouble Tippoo was caught and put into jail. Instead of keeping him there, the Magistrate very soon released him, and for months the Paghuls carried on a desultory warfare along the border. Tippoo was the only person who benefitted by the troubles, and of him we read that he built himself a Palace, and styled it the "Royal Court of King Tippoo Paghul." But eventually the police and sepoys got the best of it, and Tippoo and his principal adherents were finally shut up in jail. The grievances of the Gird Garos were met by a resettlement of the tract, which was held not to be within the permanently settled estates of the Zemindars, and for some time the district was quiet. In 1833 however the Paghuls are again heard of as stirring up a peasant insurrection, but nothing serious came of this. The rent grievance had been killed by the action of the revenue authorities.

In July 1836 the independent Garos of Seebkujora tried to stop our collecting tribute from dependent villages, and the Commissioner of Assam recommended our subduing by force every Garo village that shewed a turbulent spirit. "Scott's plan<sup>(1)</sup> had (the Commissioner said) been to march into a village and give notice that if the Chief did not surrender himself in two days and pay tribute, the village would be burnt and cultivation laid waste." This had succeeded, and the Commissioner wanted liberty to try the plan again. Government sanctioned the proposal; but in December he visited Singamari, where most of the Garo Chiefs of that quarter came to meet him; and then enquiry proved that most of the Garo disturbances had arisen from the oppressive conduct of our own Native Officers at the frontier markets. If Scott had inflicted sharp punishments, he had still more relied on kind demeanour and personal intercourse. When Scott

Revival of troubles on the Assam side,  
1836.

(1) Political Proceedings, 25th July 1836, Nos. 45-46.





was called away to Assam, no one took his place, and until a special assistant was given to Goalpara for Garo work, as had recently been done, no one even visited the markets or Chiefs. Hence the disturbances. The old policy was now to be reverted to. An expedition sent up early in 1837, under Mr. Strong, effected its object without any bloodshed. He collected easily all arrears of tribute and received the voluntary submission of many Garo villages.<sup>(1)</sup>

In July 1839 the Commissioner proposed an expedition to the hills, to punish the Garos of Dumra Dwar for outrages and contumacy. Mr. Strong who had been in the habit of making yearly tours among the clans had, he reported, done much good, but had not sufficient power. Hence Captain Jenkins now proposed a survey<sup>(2)</sup> of the hills on which the Zemindars had, he said, encroached much, and the appointment of a special Officer to manage all the Garos. The Governor General in Council did not think the Garo race of sufficient importance to call for the services of a special Officer to superintend their affairs in connection with the Zemindars<sup>(3)</sup> and the people of the plains. The expedition was nominally allowed, but did not come off for want of troops. Government was not very ready to find these for such expeditions at this time.

The unwillingness of Government to punish the crime of a few by an indiscriminating military raid was expressed<sup>(4)</sup> in the following year when a murder by the Garos of Dwar Dasanni was reported.

In August 1844 there were fresh Garo murders. Government again refused<sup>(5)</sup> to allow a display of military force, but in 1848 the contumacy of a tributary clan called the Dasanni Garos led to more active measures.

The Dasanni Garos had been in arrears since 1834. In February 1847 they murdered one of their Lukmas<sup>(6)</sup> with all his family for demanding their tribute. Small parties of troops were sent up but failed to secure the murderers, and a stronger expedition was at last in 1848 proposed and sanctioned. The Dasannis were subdued after some opposition.\*

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\* For an account of the Dasanni Garos by Captain Reynolds, reference may be made to Political Proceedings, 21st October 1848, Nos. 22-24.

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- (1) Political Proceedings, 10th April 1837, Nos. 114-15.
  - (2) Political Proceedings, 24th July 1839, Nos. 95-97.
  - (3) Political Proceedings, 24th February 1840, Nos. 132-33.
  - (4) Political Proceedings, 27th April 1840, Nos. 142-43.  
Political Proceedings, 7th September 1840, Nos. 95-96.
  - (5) Political Proceedings, 16th March 1844, Nos. 17-21.  
Political Proceedings, 2nd September 1843, Nos. 124-25.
  - (6) Political Proceedings, 24th April 1847, Nos. 46-48.  
Political Proceedings, 29th May 1847, Nos. 29-30.  
Political Proceedings, 24th December 1847, Nos. 78-80.  
Political Proceedings, 7th April 1842, Nos. 145-46.





In 1845-46 and 1846-47 visits to the Garo Hills were paid by Sturt and Dalton<sup>(1)</sup>, but no very noteworthy additions were made to our knowledge of the tribe.

Between July and October 1852 seven Garo raids took place on the Goalpara frontier, in which forty-four persons were killed. The local authorities proposed an expedition to demand the surrender of the principal offenders, to levy a fine on their village, or burn it in default of payment, to exact hostages and written engagements from the Chiefs, and to survey the hills. They also urged the construction of a road through the hills, and the education of Garo children.\* The Government of India approved<sup>(2)</sup> generally of these proposals with the exception of that in regard to taking written engagements which it considered useless in the case of such savages. An expedition was accordingly despatched which burnt a village, but the road was never made, and the survey was not begun. As no overtures were made by the Garos for the surrender of the raiders, the Commissioner next proposed to Government the closing of the frontier markets. The objection to this plan in the case of the Garos was, that no blockade however rigid could prevent them from getting supplies from Mymensing, while the innocent inhabitants of the plains, who depended for their livelihood on the cotton trade carried on with the Garos, were the principal sufferers. Still, if the blockade could be made tolerably severe, it might have some effect on the hillmen, and it was determined to try it. Lord Dal-

housie's views on Garo policy. Lord Dalhousie recorded at this time the following Minute on the subject :—

I have already said that I deprecate these extreme measures, while anything else remained untried. But as these savages will neither treat, submit, nor rest, it is due to our own subjects, whose lives and property are in jeopardy, that we should have recourse to punishment, which, though severe, is the only thing that they comprehend or feel. I consider that further Military operations would be a waste of life uselessly.

It is probable that the exclusion of the Garos from the plains will be effectual. It has been so when tried on the hill people on the opposite frontier to the north-west.

I request, therefore, that they may be rigidly excluded from the plains, and that the Chiefs may be informed that the exclusion will be continued till satisfaction is made by the delivery of the murderers. They are at the same time to be informed that, if they are found in the plains while thus in resistance to the Government, they will be seized and disposed of as the Government may think fit.

I am aware that these measures will probably inflict injury on the innocent while punishing the guilty. I regret it, but individual interests must yield to the public interests, when there is, as in this case, no alternative.

\* The education of Garo children had been carried on at Government expense for many years, not with any great success; an attempt to secure upland Garos for the Frontier Police had also failed.

(1) Political Proceedings, 12th December 1846, Nos. 36-39.  
Political Proceedings, 17th July 1847, Nos. 22-24.

(2) Judicial Proceedings, 20th January 1853, Nos. 126-29.