



The measure did to some extent prove successful. It was found <sup>(1)</sup> that the trade in cotton had become so material a source of profit to the Garos, that the closure of the hâts was really felt as a severe punishment. They gave up some of the offenders and promised to arrest and deliver over the others.

Colonel Jenkins, the Commissioner, was, however, strongly of opinion that our only hope of securing permanent tranquillity lay in our taking military possession of the hills. Mr. Mills, then on tour in Assam, remarked <sup>(2)</sup> on this, that—"unless a European functionary could reside in the interior and superintend the administration, which it was known he could not do, we should not attempt to extend our rule over unprofitable hills. All past experience showed that we cannot trust to native agency in the management of wild tribes." The climate was supposed to be deadly and such as no European could survive. Mr. Mills advocated severe treatment of villages concerned in raids; the opening of a road as had been before proposed; and the maintenance of more frequent intercourse with the Garos by the European Officers of Goalpara. Nothing, however, was done on his report (1853).

Up to the close of 1856 <sup>(3)</sup> there seems to have been a break in the story of Garo outrages. In that renewed raids, 1856-1859. year, however, they again re-commenced, and were numerous and atrocious on both the Goalpara and Mymensing frontiers. It is not necessary to enter into details. On each occasion attempts more or less futile were made to procure the surrender of the offenders, but no comprehensive policy was laid down, nor was any vigorous effort made to change the nature of our relations with the hillmen. The post of Garo Serbarakar, an Officer through whom our communications with the Garos had for many years been managed, was abolished, and various changes effected in the establishments kept up at the Garo hâts and in the Garo Frontier Police: but no radical reform of policy, such as the circumstances called for, was undertaken. Between May 1857 and October 1859 nine raids were made by Garos into Goalpara and 20 heads taken. The offer of rewards, closing of hâts, and summons to Chiefs, had no effect in getting surrender of offenders.

(<sup>1</sup>) Judicial Proceedings, 30th June 1853, Nos. 142-46.

Judicial Proceedings, 8th September 1853, Nos. 173-76.

Judicial Proceedings, 16th February 1854, Nos. 92-98.

Judicial Proceedings, 12th January 1854, Nos. 203-6.

(<sup>2</sup>) Judicial Proceedings, 21st June 1855, Nos. 120-25.

Judicial Proceedings, 22nd November 1855, Nos. 225-31.

Judicial Proceedings, 12th June 1856, Nos. 162-66.

Judicial Proceedings, 12th January 1854, No. 129. (Mills' Report.)

(<sup>3</sup>) Judicial Proceedings, 2nd January 1857, Nos. 251-52.

Judicial Proceedings, 18th June 1857, No. 345.

Judicial Proceedings, 9th July 1857, Nos. 279-80.





In 1859 the Commissioner of Assam reported<sup>(1)</sup> that Garo raids were on the increase, and the policy of closing the hâts had proved ineffectual, inasmuch as it was never followed up by a Military expedition to demand the surrender of offenders as had in the old days been usual. The Commissioner strongly recommended a return to the old policy, which had been abandoned with no good result, and urged the re-appointment of a Garo Serbarakar. Pending the sanction of Government, a small expedition was sent into the hills, and though it did not succeed in arresting the offenders in the late raids, its advance was said to have had a good effect. Government approved of the re-appointment of the Serbarakar, but took no further steps and laid down no definite policy for the future. Further raids in Mymensing followed close upon this. The Commissioner of Assam was called<sup>(2)</sup> upon to suggest a remedy. It was at length determined to send a strong expedition into the hills in the cold weather of 1860-61 to re-open communications with the upland Garos by annual visits of the Principal Assistant at Goalpara, and to increase the establishment of the Serbarakar.

In the beginning of 1861<sup>(3)</sup> the following proposals were laid before Government by the Commissioner of Assam intended further to secure the peace of the Garo frontier:—(1.) It was found that the Mymensing Zemindars had by encroachments on the hills irritated the independent Garos and led to many raids and murders. It was therefore proposed to bring the hill villages over which they claimed jurisdiction under the direct management of Government, as had been done on the Goalpara side, by Regulation X of 1822. (2.) A good road connecting the markets all along the frontier was suggested. (3.) The raising of a frontier Militia was advocated. (4.) It was proposed that a special Officer should be put in charge of the Garo Hills and Frontier, who should, however, reside on the plains. (5.) The re-imposition of the old duty on cotton at the Garo markets was to provide funds to meet the cost of these measures. Government approved only of the first proposal, and negatived or postponed all the rest. The appointment of a special Officer to the Garo Hills "could not," it was said, "be entertained."

The expedition to the hills in the early part of 1861 was made from both Mymensing and Goalpara, and was very successful. The troops remained a month in the hills, during which time they succeeded

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 22nd March 1860, Nos. 30-39.

(2) Judicial Proceedings, 22nd March 1860, Nos. 81-82.  
Judicial Proceedings, 14th June 1860, Nos. 72-73.  
Judicial Proceedings, August 1860, Nos. 263-66.

(3) Judicial Proceedings, September 1860, Nos. 371-76.  
Judicial Proceedings, November 1860, Nos. 234-35.  
Judicial Proceedings, January 1861, No. 359.  
Judicial Proceedings, March 1861, Nos. 267-69.  
Judicial Proceedings, April 1861, Nos. 254-56.  
Judicial Proceedings, July 1861, Nos. 277-82.





in reaching and punishing almost all the offending villages, in realising revenue from many of the dependent Chiefs who had withheld it for years, and in obtaining the submission and fealty of such of the independent Chiefs as were disposed to be friendly. The offenders in the Mymensing raids were arrested. In submitting the report of this expedition the Commissioner again urged the appointment of a special Officer, and the construction of two roads, one round the base of the hills, and the other right across them. This road, the Commissioner said, would do for the Garos what the road from Gowhatty to Cherra had done for the Khasias, reclaim the country. The proposal was referred to the Home Government on the one hand, and the Public Works Department on the other. The Secretary of State recorded the following remarks on these proceedings:—

However necessary it may be to teach the inhabitants of these wild districts that they are not inaccessible to the power of Government, it is very clear that we cannot hope to reclaim them from their savage habits, or to induce amongst them a higher state of civilization by the mere display of Military strength.

These objects can only be effected by peaceful means and by gradually increasing our intercourse with them, and I have therefore read with regret the statement of Colonel Jenkins that, 'although the Garos have been nearly a century under our jurisdiction, it is not on record that we have ever had a single Officer who could converse with them in their own language.' This unfavorable state of things will not, I trust, be of longer continuance, and I shall be glad to learn that the proposed annual visits of the Principal Assistant Commissioner, of which I fully approve, and of which a report should, from time to time, be submitted, have established the desired influence with the Chiefs. Should this not be the case, it will be for you to consider whether the permanent location in this territory of a special and carefully selected Officer will not be necessary.

I shall await with interest the decision of the Public Works Department as to the expediency of opening the two roads recommended by Captain Hopkinson. Should the funds necessary for the purpose be available, it should not be forgotten that, independently of the importance of lending every possible aid to the cultivation of cotton in a district favorable to its growth, there is nothing which will tend more to the general improvement and civilization of the country than the increase of its commerce.

The Garos were at this time grouped under three classes:—  
(1.) Zemindari Garos, those living within the acknowledged boundaries of the great zemindaries and treated by Government under Regulation X of 1822. (2.) Tributary Garos, who admitting our supremacy pay a small yearly tribute. (3.) Bemulwa or Independent Garos, over whom we exercised no control. The collections made from the Garos of the first two classes were realized through the Luskar or Headman of each village; and so long ago as 1824 Mr. Scott, the Commissioner for the north-eastern parts of Rangpore, had disbursed annual money rewards to certain of the principal Luskars who had maintained the peace in their respective jurisdictions. In 1865 proposals for extending and modifying this system were laid before Government<sup>(1)</sup>. The raids and murders by which our frontier had been harassed were as often as not the work of so-called Tributary Garos; and the want of any adequate Police machinery made it very desirable to adopt some means of securing delivery of offenders. It was proposed

(1) Judicial Proceedings, July 1865, Nos. 101-3.  
Judicial Proceedings, February 1866, Nos. 16-20.  
Judicial Proceedings, March 1866, Nos. 77-79.





therefore to appoint Zimmadars, who might be sometimes also Luskars, for villages and groups of villages, who should for an annual stipend be responsible for the arrest of offenders in their several jurisdictions, and should be vested with powers similar to those of the Dolloies in the Jaintia Hills. This was all approved by Government and settled at a meeting of the Chiefs.

These arrangements did not, however, extend to the Mymensing side of the hills, and early in 1866 <sup>(1)</sup> a most murderous raid was made

Raids of 1866. by Garos, supposed by us to be Independent, on the plains of that district. An expedition entered the hills and burnt the offending villages. But enquiry showed <sup>(2)</sup> that the main cause of the raid had been an attempt on the part of the Shoosung Rajah, a Mymensing Zemindar, to levy rents in the hills.

The existence of this chronic irritant on the southern border of the hills, and the fact that a dread of creating blood feuds prevented the Zimmadars from acting of their own authority against independent villages, made it clear to Government that something more was required. Appointment of a special Officer to the Hills. The Lieutenant-Governor accordingly in April 1866 proposed <sup>(3)</sup> to the Government of India the appointment of a special Officer to the charge of the Garo Hills. Sanction being accorded to this, Lieutenant Williamson, who had shown special aptitude for dealing with these tribes, was established on the Toora Mountain as Lieutenant Gregory had been established at Samoogoodting. Similar arrangements were made for roads, buildings, and Police as in the Naga Hills. <sup>(4)</sup> The offices of Luskar and Zimmadar were at the same time amalgamated, and a rough judicial system inaugurated under Lieutenant Williamson's control.

The success with which this experiment was attended was more immediate and complete in the Garo than in the Naga Hills. Hearty aid was at once given by many Garo Chiefs to Lieutenant Williamson. Relieved by the presence of a strong body of armed Police from the dread of retaliatory feuds, the Headmen became more ready to discharge their duty. Raids ceased, and numerous villages hitherto independent voluntarily became tributary. It was at the outset the policy that no attempt should be made to coerce any neutral independent clan, but all voluntary submission was frankly accepted.

<sup>(1)</sup> Judicial Proceedings, February 1866, Nos. 39-41.

<sup>(2)</sup> Judicial Proceedings, August 1866, Nos. 54-62.

<sup>(3)</sup> Judicial Proceedings, April 1866, Nos. 48-61.

Judicial Proceedings, August 1866, Nos. 63-74.

Judicial Proceedings, December 1866, Nos. 20-28.

<sup>(4)</sup> Judicial Proceedings, November 1867, No. 185.

Judicial Proceedings, October 1868, Nos. 156-57.





The history of the administration from this point is one of steady progress in the extension of our rule over the independent clans. In

order to secure this it became necessary to prevent effectually the interference of the landholders of the plains, and this was effected by the passing of Act XXII of 1869 which took the place of Regulation X of 1822. The provisions of the Act were these:—

*An Act to remove the Gáro Hills from the jurisdiction of the tribunals established under the General Regulations and Acts and for other purposes.*

Whereas it is expedient to remove the territory commonly known as the Gáro Hills from the jurisdiction of the Civil, Criminal and Revenue Courts and offices established under the general Regulations and Acts, and to provide for the administration of justice and the collection of revenue in the said territory; It is hereby enacted as follows:—

Short title.

1. This Act may be called "The Gáro Hills Act, 1869."

Commencement of Act.

2. This Act shall come into operation on such day as the Lieutenant-Governor of

Bengal shall, by notification in the *Calcutta Gazette*, direct.

3. On and after such day, Act No. VI of 1835 (so far as it relates to the Khási Hills therein termed 'Cossyah' Hills), and the Bengal Regulation X of 1822 shall be repealed: Provided that such repeal shall not

Repeat of enactments.  
Proviso.

affect any settlement of land-revenue or other matters made under the latter enactment with zamindárs or other persons in any place to which this Act applies.

4. Save as hereinafter provided, the territory known as the Gáro Hills, bounded on the north and west by the District of Gawálpára, on the south by the District of Mymensingh as defined by the Revenue Survey, and on the east by the Khási Hills, is hereby removed from the jurisdiction of the Courts of Civil and Criminal Judicature and from the control of the offices of revenue constituted by the Regulations of the Bengal Code and the Acts passed by any legislature now or heretofore established in British India, as well as from the law prescribed for the said Courts and offices by the Regulations and Acts aforesaid;

And no Act hereafter passed by the Council of the Governor General for making Laws and Regulations shall be deemed to extend to any part of the said territory unless the same be specially named therein.

5. The administration of Civil and Criminal justice and the superintendence of the settlement and realization of the public revenue and of all matters relating to rent within the said territory, are hereby vested in such officers as the said Lieutenant-Governor may, for the purpose of tribunals of first instance or of reference and appeal, from time to time appoint. The officers so appointed shall, in the matter of the administration and superintendence aforesaid, be subject to the direction and control of the said Lieutenant-Governor and be guided by such instructions as he may from time to time issue.

6. Any person liable to be imprisoned in any civil or criminal jail, or to be transported beyond sea, under any order or sentence passed by any officer or Court empowered as provided in this Act, may be imprisoned in any civil or criminal jail, or transported to any place, which the said Lieutenant-Governor may direct.

7. The said Lieutenant-Governor may prevent, by such means as he shall think fit, the collection by zamindárs or other persons of any cesses, tributes, or exactions, on whatsoever pretence the same may be levied, from the inhabitants of the said territory, and may

Power to prevent private collection of cesses.





make arrangements either for the remission of such cesses, tributes and exactions, or for their collection direct by the officers of Government, making such compensation to zamindars or others justly entitled thereto, for the relinquishment of the same, as may to him seem proper.

8. The said Lieutenant-Governor may, from time to time, by notification in the *Calcutta Gazette*, extend to the said territory any law, or any portion of any law, now in

force in the other territories subject to his government, or which may hereafter be enacted by the Council of the Governor General or of the said Lieutenant-Governor for making Laws and Regulations,

and may on making such extension direct by whom any powers or duties incident to the provisions so extended shall be exercised or performed, and make any order which he shall deem requisite for carrying such provisions into operation.

9. The said Lieutenant-Governor may, from time to time, by notification in the *Calcutta Gazette*, extend, *mutatis mutandis*, all or any of the provisions contained in the

other sections of this Act to the Jintia Hills, the Naga Hills, and to such portion of the Khási Hills as for the time being forms part of British India.

Every such notification shall specify the boundaries of the territories to which it applies.

10. Whenever a question arises whether any place falls within the boundary of the territory described in section four or within the boundary of any of the territories to which

provisions of this Act may be extended under section nine, such officers as the said Lieutenant-Governor shall from time to time appoint may consider and determine on which side of the boundary such place may lie, and the order made thereon by such officer shall be final.

It is perhaps desirable to give a fuller account of the circumstances

which led directly to the passing of this Act, and the action taken under

it, and the following extract from the Bengal Report of 1870-71 may here be reproduced :—

In the course of the revenue survey of Mymensing in 1857, it became necessary to lay down the northern boundary of that district, and, after due consideration, it was ruled that a line running along the foot of the Garo Hills should be accepted and laid down as the boundary of pergunnahs Shoosung and Sherepore, and that the burden of proving that any part of the hills was included in his zemindary should devolve on the Shoosung Zemindar. The Rajah disputed this order of Government, claiming a considerable tract beyond the survey boundary, as forming part of his permanently settled estate; and his case passed through several revenue and civil courts with varied success. At last it was decided by the full bench, High Court, that the Rajah had not established his title to the land specified in his plaint, but that on the other hand the boundary laid down in the survey map was not the true boundary of his estate, and that he was not bound by that map or by the order of the Collector on the point and the subsequent proceedings based thereon.

From this decision the Government appealed to the Privy Council. But the question involved a political difficulty which in the meantime demanded the serious attention of Government. The cause of many bloody raids committed by the Garo mountaineers, which had often disturbed the peace of the country, had been traced to the interference of the zemindars of the plains with those rude and savage tribes, and it was absolutely necessary, on grounds of public policy, that the zemindars and their agents should be strictly prohibited from having any direct relations with the Garos, and that the whole of the Garo Hills, including all such parts of it as were claimed by the Mymensing zemindars, should be administered by the officers of Government, and the revenues be collected by them. It was clearly with a view to secure these ends that Regulation X of 1822 had been passed, but that Regulation had now failed in its object. The decision of the High Court in the Shoosung Rajah's case declared that the powers given by it affected only the tract specified





in section 2, viz. the thannah jurisdictions of Dhoobree, Goalpara, and Kurribari, and that the latter part of section 8, which empowered the Governor-General in Council to separate from the zemindar's estate any tract of country inhabited by the Garos, applied only to estates within the tract above described.

Under these circumstances, the Lieutenant-Governor considered it expedient that a new law should be enacted to give effect to the intention of Regulation X of 1822, and also to empower the Government to appoint a commission with final authority to ascertain the actual rights of the Shoosung Rajah beyond the boundary of Shoosung, as laid down by the survey, and to award to him adequate compensation for the resumption of these rights; and that after such award, all right, title, and interests of the Rajah in the country beyond the boundary laid down by the survey should absolutely cease, the Rajah being bound in the interim not to attempt to exercise any authority or collect any revenue beyond the said boundary, under the penalty of being proceeded against under section 188 of the Penal Code, and of forfeiture of all claims to compensation.

The Government of India agreeing generally in these views, Act XXII of 1869 was passed. This Act repealed Regulation X of 1822, defined the Garo Hills "as bounded on the south by the district of Mymensing, as defined by the revenue survey;" removed this territory from the control of the civil and criminal courts and Regulations and Acts; empowered the Lieutenant-Governor to prevent the collection therein by zemindars and others of cesses, &c., on any pretence whatever; and authorized him to make such compensation to these zemindars as he might deem proper. It also provided that in case of boundary disputes the matter should be decided by such officers as the Lieutenant-Governor might appoint, whose decision should be final.

After consultation with the Commissioner of Cooch Behar, it was notified in the Gazette that the Act should take effect from 1st March 1870. The Rajah of Shoosung then appealed to the Secretary of State to disallow the Act. His Grace replied in September that he could not accede to the Rajah's prayer, but he desired that the pecuniary losses which the Rajah or any others might sustain in consequence of the policy enforced by the Act, might be compensated for in a liberal spirit.

Meanwhile, in June 1870, the Commissioner of Cooch Behar had been appointed to investigate the claim of the zemindar of Shoosung and other zemindars to compensation. In October following he submitted a preliminary report, which was mainly devoted to proving the utter worthlessness of the Shoosung Rajah's claim on its merits in the light of the fresh evidence which he had obtained. Several frauds practised by the Rajah were exposed. Looking, however, to the position in which Government had been placed by the acts or negligence of its servants, the Commissioner proposed to close the case without further investigation, by offering the Rajah, as compensation, the sum at which he had valued his suit originally, viz. Rs. 99,000, for his subsequent claim under Act XXII was for 21,00,000! But the Lieutenant-Governor was not satisfied with the grounds for the recommendation, and could not consent to a proposal which was utterly inconsistent with the Commissioner's own statement of facts. His Honor was quite prepared to give the Rajah a liberal compensation for the suspension of any rights which he might prove himself to have possessed, but, in justice to the public, nothing more could be given; and His Honor was therefore clearly of opinion that the Commissioner must fairly face the difficulties of the question, and decide the case upon the facts and evidence that might be forthcoming. The Commissioner was accordingly desired to proceed regularly with reference to Act XXII of 1869, and to report on certain specified points. His Honor considered it necessary that some award be arrived at, determining definitely which of the Rajah's claims were tenable, and to what extent; and that the Commissioner should then make an estimate for compensation that should be fair and at the same time liberal.

In September 1870 the zemindar of Sherepore also sent a memorial to the Secretary of State to disallow the Act. His Grace having already declined to comply with a similar request, it was not considered necessary to send this memorial to him, as it contained no grounds for disallowance which had not been urged with greater force by the Rajah of Shoosung. The Commissioner of Cooch Behar was, however, desired to report specially and fully the extent to which Sherepore was affected by the Act. From his report it appeared that there was no ground to modify the boundary line to which the zemindar of Sherepore objected, nor did it seem that the zemindar had established any claims to compensation. He was informed accordingly, and was further told that if he was dissatisfied he must present a formal claim under section 7, Act XXII of 1869, to the Commissioner of Cooch Behar, the officer appointed by Government to consider and adjudicate upon such claims.





The proposed appeal to the Privy Council in the Shoosang Rajah's case referred to above was abandoned on the advice of the law officers of Government, who were of opinion that Act XXII of 1869 having been passed, there was no object in proceeding with the appeal any further.

In 1872 a raid by the independent Garos upon the dependent village of Damukchiqui led to the adoption of more active measures for subduing the independent clans. I quote from the Bengal Report for 1872-73 :—

In consequence of outrages committed on our dependent villages by communities of independent Garos, the Lieutenant-Governor drew the attention of the Government of India to the absolute necessity which existed for thoroughly reclaiming that part of the Garo Hills which was still independent of control. It was stated that since the policy of direct management of the hill communities had been introduced in 1866, village after village had submitted to the jurisdiction of the Deputy Commissioner in charge, voluntarily enrolling themselves as British subjects, and proving the genuineness of their action by regular payment of the trifling dues imposed on them. It was shown that a considerable portion of the hills had been thus brought within the pale of regular government. It was explained that the Lieutenant-Governor would have been quite content to wait for the gradual submission of the remaining independent Garos had they on their part been content to live at peace with their neighbours now under our protection; but they had chosen to commence active hostilities by raiding on dependent villages, and frequently gave protection to criminals who had offended against our laws. Conduct like this threatened disturbance, not only to the peace of the Garo district, but danger to the plains of Goalpara and Mymensing, in which on more than one recent occasion the Garo raids had caused considerable panic. The Lieutenant-Governor proposed therefore to put an end to the independence of the savages inhabiting this nook in the midst of British territory, bringing them under the direct control of the Deputy Commissioner, and opening paths through the centre of the hills along which our police could patrol.

The Lieutenant-Governor's proposals met with the approval of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council, and the necessary preparations for an expedition were at once taken in hand. The Lieutenant-Governor, after consulting with Colonel Haughton, the Commissioner, considered it expedient to allow no possible chance of miscarriage in such an enterprise, and provided for the collection of at least 500 armed police, supported on the side of the Khasi Hills by three companies of regular troops. It was also decided not to commence active operations till the middle of November, by which time it was hoped the country would become tolerably healthy for men from the plains.

The expeditionary force was divided into three columns. One column, under Captain Davis, entered the hills from the Goalpara district on the north by the Nibari Dwar; a second, under Mr. Daly, entered from the Mymensing district on the south, the third or main column, under Captain Williamson, the Deputy Commissioner, marched from Toora, the head-quarters of the Garo Hills district. It was arranged that each column should follow a prescribed route through the independent tract, visiting and enforcing the submission of all villages on its way; and it was hoped that all would meet at a central rendezvous at about the same time. Lieutenant R. G. Woodthorpe, R. E., Assistant Superintendent of Survey, was deputed to conduct survey operations in communication with Captain Williamson.

The expedition was singularly successful. Captain Williamson occupied without opposition Dilmagiri, the leading independent village, which had been concerned in the recent raids, and received the submission of all the hamlets in the neighbourhood. Mr. Daly joined him on the 14th December, after repulsing, without loss of men on his side, an attack which the Garos made on his camp. He, too, had received tenders of submission from most of the villages on his route. Establishing themselves at Rongrengiri, Captain Williamson and Mr. Daly, while waiting for the arrival of the northern column under Captain Davis, visited all the Garo villages within reach, and after receiving their offers of submission, arranged for the payment of the usual small house-tax, occasionally indicting and realizing fines where opposition had been offered or orders disobeyed, and insisting on the surrender of all skulls kept as trophies of raids.





Captain Davis's column was longer on the road, and did not join the others till the 2nd January. He had, however, visited all the independent villages on both sides of his line of march, and though he had been twice attacked, he had been able to repulse the Garos and punish the offending communities without much difficulty.

During January the remaining independent villages were visited, and submitted. The Garos, convinced apparently that resistance was hopeless, accepted the terms offered them by Captain Williamson, and have, under his directions, been engaged in opening out paths across the hills in several directions, which they will be required hereafter to maintain. The survey had also completed its duty and filled up the blank which has hitherto disfigured the maps.

Captain Williamson has appointed Luskurs, or village representatives in the newly acquired tracts, who will be responsible for management on the system already in force in the dependent villages. The hills have been again traversed by him from end to end with a small guard, and found to be perfectly quiet. A strong police post has been established in the heart of the country hitherto independent; the new state of things has been accepted with a considerable amount of cheerfulness, and great eagerness for trade is manifested on all hands. The expeditionary force has been broken up, and men and officers have returned to their own districts.

Although the success which has been achieved has been rapid and is likely, as the local officers believe, to prove lasting, the Lieutenant-Governor was desirous to leave nothing to chance. The ordinary police force of the Garo Hills number 150 men. These are used solely as military guards, the administration being based on the village system of Luskurs already alluded to. The armed police has now been raised to 300 men, and posts have been so arranged that the authority of Government may be visible and beyond doubt.

Money has been granted to complete the system of roads across the hills, towards the opening of which much has been already done, and no effort is being spared to establish markets and develop trade. Roads and markets ought very speedily to create a social revolution in the hills. Liberal assistance has been promised for educational purposes.

There is much reason to believe that the country is rich in many natural products. Its cotton trade has always been considerable, and was known even in the days of the Moguls; and the Lieutenant-Governor hopes that instead of our having to burn large quantities of cotton in punishment of outrage, as was unhappily necessary in a few instances, we may find here a new source of supply to Manchester. The Deputy Commissioner is now doing what he can, by the introduction of improved seed and by encouraging trade, to develop this cultivation. The timber of the hills is also expected to prove valuable, and, while preserving all reasonable jungle rights of the Garos, Government may expect a fair return from judicious forest operations. Wild elephants are said to be very numerous, and probably khedda operations would prove profitable at an early date.

Since the close of the expedition the Deputy Commissioners of the Garo and Khasi Hills have succeeded in laying down a boundary between their districts, which will moreover soon be connected by a good hill road. The boundary between the Garo Hills and Goalpara is also in need of adjustment, and will in all probability be resurveyed and settled during the ensuing cold season.

The Assam Reports on the Garo Hills district are uneventful until we come to that for 1881-82, from which I take the following extract:—

Later events.

Some disturbances occurred towards the close of the year among the Garo villages in the neighbourhood of Randupara. The tract affected lies between the Didak river on the east, the Rompani river on the west, the plains of Goalpara on the north, and the villages of Ribugiri on the south.

The immediate cause of the outbreak was the demand for labour to open out a new road from Tura to Bangalkhata. The jungle clearing necessary for laying down the first trace was obtained without difficulty; but when the earthwork was taken in hand, the inhabitants of a group of some eighteen villages round about Randupara, who had been little visited by European officials, and had never been accustomed to contribute labour for public works, combined to make a strike against the demand for labourers, and threatened further





to injure any other villages which might obey the orders of Government. In consequence, all work was stopped, and some alarm was excited among the Hajong and Rabha inhabitants of the plains villages near Bangalkhata, many of whom left their homes. The Deputy Commissioner of Goalpara, however, pushed forward 50 police towards Bangalkhata, and confidence was restored. On the 13th March, the Deputy-Commissioner of the Garo Hills marched from Tura with 100 police, and in three days reached Ribugiri, the most southerly of the disturbed villages. Only the Lakma, or head of the village, and three men were found here, the rest having run away. The insurgents had expected him to march by the new road, and had assembled in numbers between 200 and 400 to resist his advance, but finding that he took the direct and little-travelled path through Ribugiri they dispersed. Next day Randupara, the head-quarters of the disturbance, was reached. On arriving at the first hamlet which was that of the Lakma Marsin, a man of much influence in this neighbourhood, and one of the ringleaders in the combination, only he and a few men were found seated in the village. No resistance was offered, but when called upon to give up their arms, the men disappeared into the jungle: but subsequently they gave up their arms. At this place the Deputy-Commissioner was joined by the Goalpara police, under Mr. Goad, District Superintendent of Police. Information was next sent to the remaining two hamlets, and the villagers were directed to bring in their arms; but no notice was taken, and on the following day these hamlets were visited. They were found to be perfectly empty, every article, including grain, having been removed; and, as the villagers still refused to come in and give up their arms, the village was fired.

On the 21st March the village of Hamongiri was visited, and here again, as every effort to induce the Lakma and people to come in with their arms proved unsuccessful, the village was burned. After this the remaining villages came in, and the whole combination collapsed, two others of the ringleaders having given themselves up, and a fourth having been arrested. These men have since been released without further punishment, subject only to the condition of reporting themselves periodically to the Deputy-Commissioner, and satisfying him that they are behaving peaceably and well. A stockade has been erected by the Deputy-Commissioner on the Rangai river, three or four miles south of Bangalkhata, to give confidence to the people of the plains.

The Deputy-Commissioner reports that the Lashkars, the fiscal officers in charge of circles of villages, and the Lakmas, or village headmen, have behaved well on the whole. The Lashkars, it is pointed out, have not at present very much influence or authority, but the Deputy-Commissioner is of opinion that in time this may be acquired.

A careful examination of the forests in the Garo Hills has been made, and proposals for the reservation of forests have been submitted.

By a Regulation passed as I of 1876, power was taken to prevent the entry into the hills for trading purposes of unlicensed persons, and to control the acquisition of land within the Hills District. These provisions were necessary to prevent complications and in view of the fact that the Inner Line Regulation could not be applied in a tract like this entirely surrounded by settled territory. Regulation I of 1879 gave legal effect to the finally-demarcated boundary between the hills and Goalpara, and Regulation II of 1880 enabled the Chief Commissioner to cancel the operation of any law in force in this and any other uncivilized frontier district.

Considering the character of the Garos, there is wonderfully little crime among them. Many trouble-some cases still arise out of old blood-feuds and existing customs which can only be decided by a punchayet of hillmen. The most remarkable of these customs is that of 'dai' or 'compensation.' Under this custom the village headmen demand large sums for the privilege of wearing the 'Tar'—an iron ring on the arm, which is regarded as the badge of respectability. The villagers





are now-a-days very unwilling to pay these fees. "Every Garo's life" (says the Deputy Commissioner) "is spent in giving (or refusing), and demanding 'dai.' A man accuses another *bonâ fide* of some offence; the accusation is not proved, the accused demands 'dai.' A man's great grandfather was killed 50 or 100 years ago, he demands 'dai' from the heirs of the murderer, and if it be not paid, his heir will demand it in turn, and so on for ever until it is paid. In fact every, even the most frivolous pretext is seized on as an occasion to demand 'dai', and in this way much ill-blood is caused." The Chief Commissioner has said that these fees and fines should be ascertained, recorded, and regulated, care being taken not to give authoritative recognition to customs which are in themselves mischievous and showing a tendency to die out.

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## PART III.

## CHAPTER XX.

## HILL TIPPERAH.

Having now completed the survey of the tribes dwelling around the periphery of the Assam Valley, I pass on to notice the hill tracts lying between Sylhet and Cachar on the north and Chittagong on the south.

South of Sylhet we find on the map a considerable tract of hill country marked out as the territory of an independent Ruler—the Rajah of Hill Tipperah. To the east this territory merges into hills inhabited by tribes of Kookies, now known as Lushais, who extend from Cachar on the north to Chittagong on the south—impinging on the east on the confines of Manipur and the Burmese Empire. Of them a full account is given in the next Chapter.

So little is known of the principality of Tipperah, that a sketch of its history,—if history it may be called,—will not be altogether without interest. There have also been discussions in past years in connection with its boundaries a notice of which may be useful for local purposes.

The kings of Tipperah were in their day conquerors and rulers of some consequence. Their glories have been sung in epic verse by the Brahmin bards of their court; and the oldest\* Bengali poem extant is the history of their state. Sprung from the lunar race of Indian princes, Kirát (*the hunter*), exiled by his father Yajāti, founded the city of Tribeg, on the banks of the Brahmaputra. To him succeeded Tripurá, from whom the raj took name, and who is execrated by the Brahmin historian as the opponent of Siva worship, which was then alluring the imaginations and exciting the passions of the people. Tripurá's efforts to suppress the rites of Siva were ineffectual, and to reward the devotion of the people, the deity of the Lingam vouchsafed to Tripurá's widow a son, named after himself, Trilochun, devoted to the worship of the fourteen gods, who increased in wisdom and stature, and presented the unmistakable royal marks.† Blessed with such heavenly favour he of

\* The Ráj Málá, or Annals of Tripurá, very fully analysed by the Reverend J. Long in Vol. XIX of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. To this I am indebted for the account of Tipperah before our accession to the Dewani. According to Elphinstone Tipperah was formerly called Yajnugger. This name is not however locally known.

† *To wit.*—A medium height; a moderate nose; a rounded body; well-shaped ears; a deep chest; a modest paunch; elephantine neck; plantain tree legs; with arms turned like the stem of a palm.





course grew great, and neighbouring kings offered him at once their homage and their daughters. In due time Trilochun chose for himself a wife, and married with much pomp and prolonged ceremonies the daughter of the Hindu monarch of Kamrup, which at that time included Hiramba or Cachar. By her he begat twelve sons, after which he lived many days and died in the odour of sanctity and the arms of the Brahmins. Fifty-seven kings, whose names alone are chronicled, succeeded in due course: and the only fact to note in this part of the tradition is, that from the beginning we read of the Kookies in close connection with the reigning Rajah, some serving and some opposing him, just as we find them at the present day.\* On the occasion of a visit paid by one of the kings to the abode of Siva, it would seem that the Kookies brought trouble even into the celestial mansions; for we are told that Siva conceived a violent passion for a Kookie woman in the Rajah's retinue, and that her neck was thereupon broken by a divine kick delivered by Parvati, the jealous spouse of the enamoured deity.

Jajārpha, the seventy-fourth Rajah, invaded Rungamati (Udipur), and in spite of the valour of Nikka, its king, made conquest of the country and fixed there his capital. From this he attacked Bengal, and extended his dominion as far as Amarapura, in Burma. Ratnáfah, the hundred and first Rajah, was a younger brother, who obtained the throne by the aid of 4,000 Mahomedan troops lent him from Gaur. This was probably about 1279 A. D. Ratnáfah received from the king of Gaur the title of Manik, by which all succeeding Rajahs have been known.

In 1512 we find Rajah Chachag Manik conquering Chittagong, and the history becomes full of the contests that raged between the Tripurás and the Mahomedans of Gaur and Dacca. Then we read of Braja Manik, who seems to have exacted fealty from both the Khasi and Sylhet Rajahs, against the former of whom he despatched an army of 1,200 Hâris, or scavengers, armed with hoes (*kodulis*),—a novel idea in warfare, but in this instance of undoubted moral effect, for rather than be defiled by conflict with such base opponents, the Khasi Chief made humble submission. Braja Manik, we are told, employed 1,000 Pathan horsemen, and his successor led an army of 26,000 infantry and 5,000 horse against Bengal. Such was the warlike consequence of the state as recorded in its ancient annals. In 1587 Tripurá came into collision with the Mughls of Arracan and their Portuguese mercenaries. This was the beginning of troubles. Udipur was taken and the Rajah died by poison self-administered. Then came up again the Mahomedans under Futteh Jung Nawab, by order of the Emperor Jehangir, who wanted horses and elephants for his court and camps. Disaster befell the arms of Tripurá, and Jashadhur Manik was sent captive to Delhi. There he was offered his kingdom, if he would pay tribute like many greater princes, and do homage to the peacock throne, but the chronicle tells us he would none of their favors, declaring that his country had been so

\* A quaint description of the habits and manners of the Kookies, as reported to our officers of last century, will be found in Vol. II of the Asiatic Researches.





harassed by their ravages that no fresh burden could be borne by it. Jashadhur died an exile at Brindaban, 'meditating on the excellency of Vishnú.' The imperial troops were meantime plundering and impoverishing the Tripurás till pestilence compelled them to desist. In 1625 Kalyán Manik obtained the throne, propitiated Siva and the Brahmins, and defied the Emperor of Delhi. Against him came the Nawab of Moorshedabad with a Mahomedan host and a leather cannon, only to be ingloriously defeated and turned back. Kalyán's successors, however, became subject to the Nawab, and though they ever and again made fierce attempts to shake off the yoke, they never long succeeded. The Mahomedans were able to regulate the succession and exact tribute, and converted the raj into a simple zemindari. The very name of Tripurá\* was changed to Roushanabad. One of the puppet kings set up by them, Bijai Manik, was allowed indeed only a monthly salary of Rs. 12,000, the whole remaining revenues of the country being sent to Dacca. For twelve years after him a Mahomedan, Shumsher Khan, was the virtual ruler, but his oppressions became so great, and his remittances so uncertain, that the Nawab of Dacca, acting with strict impartiality, had him blown from the mouth of a gun.

In 1761 the contumacy of Kishen Manik, the Raja who succeeded,†

Annexation by the British.

led to the last phase in the history of the kingdom. On the 20th

January of that year, Governor Vansittart, representative of the Company now entering on its strange career of empire, writes from Calcutta to the President and Council of the Factory at Islamabad as follows: "With regard to the Tipperah Rajah, as the Nawab's Foujdar has been obliged from his ill behaviour to take up arms against him, we desire that you will use your endeavours to reduce him to his due state of obedience to the Government of Islamabad, acquainting us then what advantages may accrue to the Company from the possession of that country, and *we* will answer any representations the Nawab may make on the subject." In accordance with this order Mr. Verelst, the chief at Islamabad (Chittagong), despatched Lieutenant Mathews with 200 sepoys and two guns to Tipperah, where the Nawab's Dewan

\* The conquest of Tippera by the Muhammedans is thus described in Stewart's History of Bengal, page 427, on the authority of Muhammedan writers:—"The Moghul Troops crossed the Burhampooter and entered Tippera before the Raja was aware of their intentions; and having the young man with them whose cause they had espoused (a refugee nephew of the Raja's:) he pointed out to them the road by which they should advance. Aided by such a guide they reached the capital before the Raja could make any preparation to oppose them: he was obliged to flee to the mountains: and the nephew was raised to the Raj upon condition of paying a large portion of the revenue to the Governor of Bengal. The whole country in consequence quietly submitted, and thus the province of Tippera which, from time immemorial had been an independent kingdom, became annexed to the Moghul empire; and in order to support the Young Raja against his uncle and at the same time to secure his fealty, a considerable number of Muhammedan troops were left in the country under the command of Aka Sadik who was nominated Foujdar."

† See the case of Rangunga Deo, *Appellant*, vs. Durgamoni Jubraj, *Respondent*, in the Select Reports of the Sudder Dewani Adalat for 1809, where a complete pedigree of the Tipperah kings from Kalyán Manik downwards is given.





was already operating with Mahomedan troops. The Dewan had reported that "he had obliged the Rajah to take to the mountains, and had got possession of every fort in his country." On the arrival of our troops the Rajah at once put himself in their hands. A collector of revenue was dispatched from Chittagong with instructions to inquire into the resources of the country and demand payment of the expenses of the expedition. The collector found the province desolated by the Nawab's troops, and was compelled to take payment by instalments "as the Rajah was very low in cash." The revenue for the first year was fixed at one lakh and one sicca rupees.

Not a word is found in these old papers recognising the independence of the Rajah in any part of his dominions. In fact, no reference is made to the hills in connection with the arrangements. The officers of the Company had more regard to substantial advantages than to theoretical symmetry. The paying part of Tipperah lay on the plains, and appeared in the Mahomedan revenue roll as *pergunnah* Roushanabad. For this of course a settlement was made. We found it a *zemindari*, and as such we treated it. But of the barren hills that fenced it on the east we took no cognizance. Covered with jungle and inhabited by tribes of whom nothing was known, save that they were uncouth in speech and not particular as to clothing, the hills were looked upon as something apart. The Rajah claimed to exercise authority within them, but did not, as it seemed, derive much profit from them. Accord-

The hills become Independent Tipperah. ingly the hills became 'Independent Tipperah,' and the Rajah who is an ordinary Bengali *zemindar* on the plains, reigns an independent prince over 3,000 square miles of upland, and was for many years a more absolute monarch than Scindia or Puttiala,—owning no law but his sovereign will, bound by no treaty, subject to no control, safe in his obscurity from criticism or reform. And yet nothing can be more certain than the fact that the Mogul Government, through whom our paramount title comes, would have recognized no such vital distinction between the highlands and lowlands of the Tipperah State. It may be true that they never carried their armies in victorious march through the bamboo thickets of the hills, or harried with fire and sword the wattled wigwams of the Kookie tribes; but when they appointed whom they would as Rajah, both hill and plain passed with the one *sunnud* which they gave. They would have scoffed at the idea of independence in any fragment of the entity they conveyed. Indeed the chief object of their invasion having been to secure horses and elephants for purposes of state or war, to have excluded the hills from the periphery of their conquest would have cut them off from the very source of these\* supplies.

The Company sought rupees, not elephants, and so the hills were left to their native ruler, and no misgiving seems to have cropped up that trouble would hereafter result from such a course. Trouble did result, not so much from the actual independence of the Rajah as from

\* For elephant-catching in Tripurá, see Volume III. of the *Asiatic Researches*, 1792.





a want of definiteness in our relations to him, from the absence of any means of knowing what went on in his territory, and from the denial of that salutary control and advice, without which our best feudatories come to certain grief.

Kishen Manik, the last Rajah appointed by the Moguls, died in 1780. Rajender Manik who succeeded him was invested by the British Government, but not till 1785. He appears to have been in trouble for the greater part of his reign. The zemindari was taken into *khas* or direct management by the Resident. The Rajah was in 1783 sent prisoner to Chittagong on a charge of harbouring dacoits, and it was not till 1792 that he was admitted to settle for his estate on the plains. He was from the outset, however, undisturbed in his possession of the hills, where he married a daughter of the Manipur Rajah, and was victorious over the outer Kookies who made a savage inroad into his territory. As he grew old he became devout, made an image of eight metals for the shrine of Brindaban, and died in 1804, an ascetic of the holiest grade. From 1804 to 1810 the affairs of Hill Tipperah were the subject of constant debate in the Council Chamber of Government and in the Courts of law. The succession was disputed, and *quoad* the zemindari the disputants were referred to the ordinary tribunals, the strongest meantime seizing on the highlands and making the most of the opportunity which law delays allowed him.

The correspondence of the time and the proceedings in the courts throw a curious light upon the customs and internal economy of

Disputed successions.

this little State. It is the prerogative of the reigning Rajah to devise the succession by appointing in his own life-time a Jubráj, or crown prince, who may or may not be his own son, but must be a scion of the royal house. He also appoints another of the stock to be Burra Thakur, who would succeed in default of a living Jubráj at the time of the Rajah's death. Rajender Manik had so nominated Durgamoni, descended from an elder branch, to be Jubráj, and Ramgunga, his own son, to be Burra Thakur. On the death of the Rajah, Ramgunga seized on the *guddi*, or cushion of sovereignty, and had he been able to seize also Durgamoni, would have speedily made himself *de jure* as well as *de facto* rajah. Durgamoni, however, escaped, and lost no time in gathering together men and means for the expulsion of the usurper. All the feelings of the people turned to the anointed Jubráj. Ramgunga was disliked for the sacrilege of his conduct, and the tyranny and suspicion which he evinced upon all occasions. Durgamoni was soon able to advance on his expedition, but the British authorities interfered, and insisted on his bringing a suit to establish his right to the zemindari, promising at the same time to postpone recognition of the Rajah until the case was concluded. Durgamoni acquiesced in this decision. Ramgunga was, however, permitted to remain in possession of the zemindari, though his authority was not acknowledged in the hills beyond Agurtolla. The evidence of the principal officers of the raj was taken by the Court of Circuit at Dacca, and was entirely in Durgamoni's





favor. Ramgunga avenged himself by loading with indignities and chains the families of the witnesses which he had in his power. He also oppressed the Poitoo Kookies in such fashion as made them ready allies of the other malcontents, who at length, in 1808, made a determined attack on Hill Tipperah from the side of Chittagong. The local officers, at Ramgunga's request, lent him troops and police, and but for this assistance he would assuredly have been expelled, for we are told the whole country not occupied by our arms was hostile to him. The invaders not understanding our action boldly charged us with inconsistency, for we had told them, they said, some years before that 'the Company had no concern with the Tipperah territory.\*' The Council at Calcutta were not, indeed, even now altogether satisfied that its local officers had done well in preventing revolution and bloodshed. At any rate they forbade the adoption of further active measures against the insurgents, and deputed a Special Commissioner to enquire into their grievances and endeavour by arbitration to restore quiet. In 1809 the Sudder Dewanny Adalat gave judgment in Durgamoni's favor, declaring the zemindari an integral portion of an impartible raj, to which he, as nominated Jubraj, should succeed. The Government accordingly invested him with the insignia of kingship as regarded the hills, while the courts gave him possession of the lands on the plains.<sup>(1)</sup>

No one can fail to see how inconveniently the fiction of independence worked in this case. Years of misery to the people might have been avoided, had Government assumed the paramount position which it historically occupied, and which the application for investiture virtually recognized. The zemindari and the raj being treated as impartible, Government might well have decided forthwith whom it would accept as heir. But the case was too petty to demand a policy, and the succession of the Tipperah raj has three times been disputed in our courts.†

\* How much doubt as to our position existed is seen from the fact that in 1800 offers were made to the Board for a farm of the mountains of Tipperah. In rejecting this the Board say that 'they conclude that the mountains form a part of the estate of the Raja of Tipperah, and that they are included in his existing engagements executed by him for the general settlement of his zemindari.' In reply to this the Collector reports that "on a reference to the tahood, &c., executed by the Raja for the general settlement of his zemindari, it does not appear that the mountains of Tipperah are included, but they have always been considered as constituting his property; neither does it appear from the records that he ever paid any revenue to Government for them for the last twenty-two years (since the time of Mr. Campbell)."

In 1827, Sumbhoo Chunder Deb Thakur, a relative of the Raja's, offered to farm the hills at a jumma of Rs. 25,000. This offer was rejected, as they had been so long unassessed, and had come to be looked upon as independent territory.

† Now that an appeal lies also to the Privy Council, the delay in the settlement of opposing claims is very great. Birchunder Manik succeeded in 1862, but was only invested in 1870.

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 15th October 1808, Nos. 1 to 10.  
Judicial Proceedings, 4th November 1808, Nos. 6 to 10.  
Judicial Proceedings, 6th January 1809, Nos. 50 & 51.  
Judicial Proceedings, 3rd February 1809, No. 22.  
Judicial Proceedings, 11th February 1809, Nos. 11 & 12.





The visits of Europeans to the interior of the country were until lately so few and far between, that Description of the country in 1808. it is interesting to note the description given of its internal economy by the Special Commissioner in 1808. The territory was, he says, 120 miles in length, and varied in breadth from 20 to 80 miles. The inhabitants were of two very distinct classes: One 'which doubtless originally came from China, but was now of the Hindoo persuasion; the other, a people called Kookies or Coochis.' The former lived in the valleys, the latter on the hills. "The persons composing the Government or possessing the chief management of the country (says the narrative) are Hindoos. Among the Kookie vassals, however, as well as amongst the Hindoo inhabitants, a distinction of rank prevails. The chief men among the Kookies are called Roys, Ghalims, Chuppiahs, and Gaboors; those of the Hindoos are called Senaputty and Burroahs. The persons holding the rank now mentioned are called Sirdars or petty Chiefs, and they, in all classes, are the intermediate authority and sole connection between the Government and the inferior vassals. The power or influence of these Chiefs over the vassals within their respective jurisdictions is of the strongest kind. A person who has influence to bring over all these Sirdars to his party has actual possession of the country." (This referred to their attachment to Durgamoni.) For the protection of the country there were three or four military or police posts. The fighting men numbered about 1,000 Hindoo matchlock men and 3,000 Kookies, armed with spears and bows, all under the command of their respective Sirdars. The officers of the raj were four in number. First, the Soobah who acted as Commander-in-Chief; second, the Vizier in charge of the revenue; third, the Nazir, who managed the police; and, lastly, the Dewan, who controlled the accounts. These offices, though in the Raja's gift, were practically hereditary.

In 1813 Durgamoni Manik died, and as he had appointed no Jub-ráj, Ramgunga, his former antagonist, succeeded, as being the Burra Thakur named by Rajender Manik. His title was disputed\* in the courts, but was affirmed by the Sudder Dewanny Adalat in 1815. So strong appears to have been the reverence entertained by the people for the custom of their kingdom, that Ramgunga had now no difficulty in securing their allegiance, and we hear of no disturbances in his territory down to time of his death in 1826. He was succeeded by Kashi Chunder Manik, his brother, who died early in 1830, and was succeeded by another brother Krishen Kishore Manik. In 1850 Ishan Chunder Manik, son of Krishen Kishore, came to the throne, and his application to be let off payment of the succession fee (111 gold mohurs) was refused by the Government. In 1862 Ishan Chunder died and was

\* See Select Reports, Sudder Dewanny Adalat, for 1815, Vol. II., page 177, Urjun Manik Thakur and others vs. Ramgunga Deo.





succeeded by Bir Chunder Manik, the present Rajah, whose title was, as we have noted, finally affirmed in 1870.<sup>(1)</sup>

It would seem that as soon as the Tipperah Rajahs had assured themselves of the mild character of our Government, and realized the fact that in some part, at any rate, of their ancestral territory they were to be completely free from control, they diligently set themselves to enlarge the borders of their independent kingdom on its further sides. They carried on a desultory warfare with the various Kookie tribes living on the east of their State and reduced many villages to subjection. The various septs of Poitoo Kookies to this day acknowledge a sort of allegiance to Tipperah, which varies according as the Rajah is strong or weak, but which drags him into their quarrels with the outer tribes, and has more than once involved in disaster neighbouring villages in British territory. Until very recently Tipperah would admit no definite limit to its territory on the north-east.

During the war with Burma much correspondence took place regarding the topography and routes of the north-east frontier.<sup>(2)</sup>

Notices of Tipperah in 1824.

At the request of Government the Tipperah Rajah garrisoned, or said he had garrisoned, all the passes leading through his hills to Cachar and Sylhet to repel any possible invasion of the Burmese.

There was, indeed, a very general fear that Tipperah would suffer as did Cachar and Manipur. Other elements of danger and disturbance was also present. In June 1824 intelligence<sup>(3)</sup> was received that Sumbhoo Thakur, brother of the Rajah, whose claim to succeed had been rejected by the Sudder Dewanny Adalat, had set up the standard of rebellion in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and prohibited the Joomea cultivators from paying revenue to Government. A reward of Rs. 5,000 was offered for his apprehension. His property, both in Hill and Plain Tipperah, was ordered to be confiscated; and if caught, he was to be summarily tried by martial law.

It has been mentioned that one of the Tipperah Rajahs married a daughter of the Manipuri stock. This fact seemed to indicate a means of direct communication between those kingdoms, and Government caused efforts to be made to discover the line of route. It was

(1) Secret Proceedings, 30th March 1826-27, Nos. 17 to 20.  
General Proceedings, 28th November 1849, No. 77.  
Political Proceedings, April 1862, No. 22.

(2) Secret Proceedings, 14th May 1824, No. 10.  
Secret Proceedings, 18th June 1824, Nos. 28-29.  
Secret Proceedings, 3rd September 1824, No. 23.

(3) Secret Proceedings, 18th June 1824, No. 40.  
Secret Proceedings, 2nd July 1824, No. 46.





found that a road did exist, but instead of passing into the interior right across the Tipperah Hills, it ran along the outer margin of the hills on the north-west through parts of Sylhet into Hylakandy, in Cachar, and thence through "a Kookie village called Thanghum" into Manipur.<sup>(1)</sup> There were disputes between the Cachar and Tipperah Rajahs as to the possession of parts of Hylakandy, and the Tipperah Rajah set forth claims to the all egance of all the Kookies lying south of Cachar. Thanghum mentioned above was on the right bank of the Surmah, three days' journey from Bansbandi, in Cachar. In an interesting report submitted to the Secret Department in 1824, we find that the Poitoo Kookies, numbering 50 to 60 thousand, and occupying the whole of the eastern and part of the northern hills were said to be the most turbulent and formidable of the tribes; and the Rajah to reduce them to obedience was anxious to establish a thanna at Thanghum, the inhabitants of which place were described by him as orderly and obedient. Government, while raising no objection to his doing so, declined to associate British troops with his guards on that frontier. It is very clear that the authority exercised over the Kookies was more nominal than real, for in every case we find the roads from post to post take long detours so as to pass through the plains, and not across the hills; the reason given being always "for fear of the Kookies." In this same report the Raja is described as a weak and stupid man, entirely in the hands of one or two Bengali amlah.

In 1828 representations<sup>(2)</sup> were made from Manipur that the Tipperah Rajah was about to attack Tanghun or Thanghum, although the Manipur Chief had a thanna in the place. Enquiry was made by the Commissioner in Sylhet, who found that, though originally attached to Tipperah, Tanghun had been held by Manipur for four or five years. A report by Pemberton showed that it was a village of Khonjais, lying west of the Surmah or Barak in the bend of that river and close to Manipur. This shows how far Tipperah reached at one time. Government refused to let the Tipperah Rajah march men to Tanghun.

On the north the Raj was for a long time almost equally aggressive. From the main cluster of hills lying south of Sylhet, branches and spurs run northward into the plains, enclosing valleys of varying breadth, whose drainage falls into one main stream, having its sources well to the south and flowing northward into the Sylhet rivers. Long before the Musulman conquest these valleys were under cultivation. They belonged to Tipperah in its palmy days: and even now one stumbles on ruined palaces and ghats and tanks, attesting the civilization of a former age. But the country had long since lapsed to jungle; and when the British took possession of Sylhet, there interposed between that district and Tipperah a broad belt of deadly forest into which

(1) Secret Proceedings, 30th July 1824, Nos. 6 & 7.

(2) Secret Proceedings, 15th July 1828, No. 8.

Secret Proceedings, 17th January 1829, Nos. 5 to 10.





the Joomea\* went annually with trembling to raise a scanty crop, thankful if ravenous beasts and savage men permitted him to return in safety. Cultivation under our rule began to extend once more into these valley bottoms: and from the earliest years of our records we find that they were held to belong to the Sylhet District. Large tracts were permanently settled with lowlanders in 1790. As their possession became an object of value, attempts were made by the Tipperahs to encroach upon the plains, and pretensions have been from time to time up to a very recent date advanced, which have given much trouble to Government, chiefly from the fact that our record rooms serve only as the tombs of past transactions, for which there has hitherto been no resurrection.

In 1809, on the Sylhet frontier, a bitter enmity subsisted between the land-owners of the plains and the Rajah's people. Every outlying hill was claimed as belonging to the Rajah. Small properties were bought by him at auction or by private contract, and occupied by bands of armed Tipperahs, who bullied their Bengali neighbours and produced a state of terrorism now-a-days unknown. The Government had to interpose in the most determined manner, and one or two resolute Magistrates soon restored order. In 1819 things had again come to a crisis. The chronic irritation subsisting between the Hill Tipperahs and the outer Kookies led to frequent depredations, in which British villages were sacked and plundered, and orders were at last given for laying down a definite and easily recognised boundary which would enable Government to fix upon the Rajah the responsibility of keeping order in his own markets, and preventing the passage of marauders to the defenceless plains. An attempt was at the same time to be made to gain a knowledge of and conciliate the tribes taking part in these attacks. In three years' time such a boundary was laid down by Lieutenant Fisher.<sup>(1)</sup> The Rajah was, however, dissatisfied with it, though it had been settled in communication with his own agents, and its declaration was immediately followed by a murderous attack upon a party of cultivators going into the British hills to joom, the perpetrators of the outrage being undoubtedly Tipperahs.<sup>(2)</sup> The Rajah, when applied to, of course threw the blame on the independent Kookies, and took no real pains to discover the murderers. He was startled from his apathy by receiving a letter from Government, worded in the most peremptory terms, stating at

\* The Joomeas cultivated by cutting down and burning the forest and sowing mixed seeds among the ashes. For correspondence regarding "Joomka Jummas" in Sylhet reference may be made to—

Judicial Proceedings, 8th May 1823, No. 22.  
Judicial Proceedings, 5th June 1823, No. 15.  
Judicial Proceedings, 21st August 1823, No. 31.  
Judicial Proceedings, 9th April 1824, Nos. 1 to 5.

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 22nd May 1822, No. 42.  
Judicial Proceedings, 6th June 1822, No. 44.  
(2) Judicial Proceedings, 6th June 1822, Nos. 39 & 40.  
Judicial Proceedings, 15th May 1823, Nos. 7 to 12.





length the proofs of the complicity of his people if not of himself, and containing the following remarkable passage :—

You seem to have adopted the plan of committing these murders and other acts of violence as a means of taking revenge on the zemindars and ryots of this Government who have opposed you. Considering the very strong presumptions against you, resulting from the above circumstances, the Governor General in Council was prepared to have ordered you personally to be called in to be put on your trial in the courts of Government for instigating the murders in question. In his consideration however for you, he has now ordered that you shall in the first instance be called upon by this letter, through the Magistrate of Tipperah, to state whatever you may desire to urge in explanation, within twenty days from the receipt of this.

The Rajah's defence consisted in a reiteration of his former excuses. The proof against him, though morally strong, was not legally perfect, and the Government was content to drop the case with a solemn warning as to his future conduct. At the same time he was told that, if he could shew to the satisfaction of the civil courts that the boundary line was incorrect, Government would alter it; nay, further, if he could prove that he had any right to collect dues from the Jomnas within British territory on the ground of protection afforded them, or for any other reason, these rights should be acknowledged. He was at the same time permitted to purchase any lands he chose, but was warned that in these he would have no sovereign rights.

The Rajah at this time had not, it would appear, any efficient control over the Kookies to the eastward.

Relations with the Kookies.

He did, indeed, lay claim to their homage and tribute, but it is doubtful whether he was strong enough to coerce any who did not choose voluntarily to give these. The hill ranges over which his nominal supremacy extended ran southward from Sylhet, and were inhabited by Poitoo, Thanghum, and other Kookies, who visited the plains for purposes of trade and barter, and were in the habit of receiving yearly presents from the frontier zemindars either as a sort of blackmail, or as an inducement to bring down their forest products. Wood-cutters going into their hills also, no doubt, made them payments of some kind as the price of safety. Failure to acknowledge their claims invariably led to bloodshed. In September

Kookie murders in 1826.

1826, a party of Sylhet wood-cutters was massacred by the Kookies under a Chief called 'Buntye' in the hills above the Simla River, ten miles to the west of the Dullessuri.<sup>(1)</sup> Messengers sent up by the Magistrate visited the village of 'Buntye,' three days' journey into the hills on the Lungai River, and ascertained that the alleged cause of the outrage was that the zemindars of Pertabgur had withheld the annual presents. Two of the messengers were detained by Buntye. The third, after being favoured with a ghastly inspection of the wood-cutters' heads, was allowed to return to bring up the blackmail due. He was not allowed to communicate with the 'Linden' and 'Laroo' Kookies living further up the stream, but was sent back hot-foot into the plains. Government to save the lives of the two unfortunates left in Buntye's hands authorized the payment of the ransom demanded, but ordered the closure of the markets to all Kookies, and directed enquiry as to the possibility of

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 15th February 1827, Nos. 30 to 32.

Judicial Proceedings, 22nd February 1827, Nos. 30 to 32.





reaching Buntye with troops. The Tipperah Rajah was also called upon to help. Nothing however came of this. In the records the story ends as abruptly as it begins.

The apathy with which the Rajah of Tipperah, notwithstanding repeated warnings, treated every demand made upon him for assistance either to redress outrage or surrender offenders, save when his own interests were threatened, is again well illustrated by the following case: In July 1836, Ram-kanoo Thakur, a relative of the Rajah,\* at the head of a band of Mughls, Chuckmas, Kookies, and Tipperahs, numbering some three or four hundred men, attacked the homestead of Meroki Chondri, a substantial land-owner of Kundul, in Zillah Tipperah, killed fifteen persons, wounded others, plundered the premises, and burnt them to the ground. This was a most atrocious massacre. The leading perpetrators were well known. Their band had been got together in the Rajah's territory. The Rajah was fully able to give the most effective assistance in their apprehension. To the demand for this he sent merely a curt return that they were not resident in his jurisdiction. This was known to be false. Fortunately for the ends of justice, it happened that at this time the Commissioner of Chittagong raised several important questions as to the proper limits of the Raja's territory, and his right to levy certain dues within his zemindari. No sooner had this matter also come before Government, than the Rajah, to improve his position with the authorities, sent in Ram-kanoo Thakur, who had been residing quietly in a village of Hill Tipperah from the very time of the outrage.<sup>(1)</sup>

So anomalous has the position of Hill Tipperah been, that it is only of late years that the principles of the extradition law have been applied in our dealings with that State. We find that sometimes British subjects were surrendered at the Raja's request; at others our courts were directed by the Government to inquire into cases beyond the border when it was doubtful whether either of the parties were British subjects. No treaty existing to define the limits or conditions of extradition, the demands both of the Hill Tipperah and of the British authorities have extended to all classes of criminals. But in every instance it has been the monotonous and never ceasing complaint of our Magistrates that real and hearty assistance was never to be looked for from Agurtolla.

\* Every rebellious member of the Raja's family sought refuge among the Kookies and incited them to outrage. In May 1843 Bugwan Chunder Thakur, son of Shumboo Thakur, who had intrigued against the Raja, brought down a band of Kookies and burnt the village of Burmatoca, in Thannah Chagalneya, Zillah Tipperah. Though the Raja could not be held responsible for the acts of his enemies, it is certain that had his police been at all efficient, war parties of savages could not have passed across his territory and down the ghâts ostensibly held by his posts, without due notice having been given and some attempt being made to stop them. This view of matters was strongly pressed upon him but without much ultimate effect.

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 13th September 1836, Nos. 43 to 46.  
Judicial Proceedings, 25th October 1836, No. 86.  
Judicial Proceedings, 8th November 1836, Nos. 35 to 37.  
Judicial Proceedings, 29th November 1836, No. 71.  
Judicial Proceedings, 16th May 1837, Nos. 66 & 67.





I may notice here a very interesting discussion as to the nature and extent of the Rajah's privileges as an independent chieftain which arose in 1836.<sup>(1)</sup> It had always of late years been the policy of the Rajah's advisers, European and Native, to insist on the absolute independence of his hill territory as never, according to them, having been subdued by the Mogul. They urged accordingly that in treating with him the British Government should be guided only by the law of nations, and they repudiated, so far as they were able, the existence of any paramount authority or any real control over the actions of their master in the hills. Now, in the years 1790, 1791, and 1792, the Government had abolished throughout Bengal all those internal transit duties and cesses which, under the generic name of *sayer*, were a fruitful source of revenue to the zemindars. Regulation XXVII of 1793 consolidated and perpetuated the policy of Government on this subject. Compensation and remissions of revenue were given to all zemindars affected by this order, and among others the Rajah, as proprietor of 'chuckla Roushanabad', got a remission of Rs. 28,000 from his annual jumma on this account. In 1836 the Commissioner of Chittagong found that duties similar to those abolished were levied on bamboo, cotton, and other articles of hill produce, under the Rajah's orders, within the permanently-settled estate of Roushanabad. The Rajah's contention was that these duties were not those for which he got compensation forty years before; that as an independent prince, he was entitled to impose what taxes he pleased in his own kingdom; and that the collection of these at the frontier of his zemindari was a mere matter of convenience, with which he prayed that Government would not interfere.

The nature of the duties was thus described in 1788 :—

The Sair Noornugger and Sen Ghât principally consist of a variety of ghâts, chowkies, and phandies along the foot of the hills, from one extremity of the province to the other, an extent of about 100 miles. At these ghâts, &c., are collected duties upon every article brought out of and carried into the hills. The interior parts of the hills are cultivated by those uncivilized tribes of people called Tipperes, Kookies, Lushias, Kungas, &c., who are subjects of the Raja and entirely independent of the English Government. The chief produce of the hills is cotton, rice, pepper, and different kinds of turkerry. The cotton is cultivated for the purpose of bartering it for the different necessities of life with which they require to be furnished from the low countries, such as salt, tobacco, dried-fish, earthen pots, spirituous liquors, &c. This, of course, induces numbers of bearers to carry those articles into the hills. In return they bring down cotton; and as they are obliged to pass these ghâts, &c., they are taxed highly not only for what they carry up, but also for what they bring down. The rates of taxes vary upon each article at every different ghât, of which there are no less than fifty-two. Upon an average, fifteen and twenty thousand maunds of cotton are brought down yearly, which is purchased in common seasons for Rs. 2 and Rs. 2-4 per maund, and the duties collected are nearly equal to the prime cost of the cotton. Dependent on the Sair Noornugger and

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 11th October 1836, Nos. 92 to 94.  
 Judicial Proceedings, 25th October 1836, No. 35.  
 Judicial Proceedings, 15th November 1836, Nos. 57 to 61.  
 Judicial Proceedings, 6th June 1837, Nos. 70 to 79.  
 Judicial Proceedings, 15th August 1837, Nos. 38 to 41.  
 Judicial Proceedings, 27th December 1838, Nos. 71 to 75.  
 Judicial Proceedings, 12th June 1843, Nos. 28 & 29.  
 Judicial Proceedings, 14th August 1843, Nos. 52 & 53.





Sen Ghât are numbers of assemblies,\* who are taxed with an unceasing jumma; that is to say, they are obliged to bring down yearly a certain quantity of cotton the duties of which, according to the established rates, should amount to the jumma with which they are respectively charged, and they are obliged to pay the amount of the jumma, whether they have brought down the cotton or not; and they have no way of ridding them of the burden but by flying the province. This custom has existed from so long a time back, that it is impossible to trace its origin. Any person carrying on a traffic in the hills for two or three years together renders himself liable to it. It is customary also for the farmers of the sair mehals to exact arbitrary fines from those whom they detect smuggling any goods past their ghâts. This also is a source of great oppression, but the practice has existed from time immemorial. Timbers, bamboos, ratans, and straw, pay also a heavy duty as they pass by the ghâts of the sair mehal. Besides these ghâts, &c., within and along the hills, there are several situated in many of the pergunnahs which are also dependent on the sair mehals, and nothing passes them without paying a duty. This is also levied at times on passengers and on ready money.

Upon this, Government in 1788 authorized the abolition of such part of the sayer duties of Noornugger and Sen Ghât as were levied in the ghâts and roads leading to the hills and came under the description of *choluta* or *rahdari*, and likewise the remission of such portions of the jumma of the sayer as on inquiry might be deemed adequate to the amount realized from the collections. In reply to enquiry upon this point it was reported that "the whole of the duties were *choluta* or *rahdari*, and they fell heaviest on the Tippieree, Kookie, Lushai, Ruang, &c., all inhabitants of the hills; for if it was not for the high duty with which their cotton is charged, they would get a better price for it; and again, if it was not for the duties with which the goods they receive in barter were charged, the beparees would be able to sell them cheaper." The Government resolved accordingly to abolish the whole of these duties as oppressive from their nature and the mode in which they were levied, the object avowedly being the protection and welfare of the inhabitants of the hills, as well as of their more immediate subjects. As already stated, when Rajender Manik was admitted to settlement he got a remission of Rs 28,000 from his jumma on this account.

Now, however, the Rajah claimed to levy as independent Chief that portion of these duties which was imposed on the produce of the hills. The Government at first held that the Raja could have no claim to enjoy at the same time the remission in perpetuity granted in 1792 and the proceeds of the duties then forbidden to be levied. It decided that he was neither as chief nor as zemindar entitled now to impose such.

Subsequently this decision (of Lord Auckland's) was reversed by his successor on grounds which are fully set out in a letter printed in the Appendix.

I have already referred to the need which had been felt for a proper determination of the boundary between Hill Tipperah and the adjoining District of Sylhet. We have seen that in 1822 the Rajah objected to Lieutenant Fisher's survey, although this had been made in company with his own agents. Government had, however, adopted the line so laid down, informing the Rajah that, although he could not himself be sued

Further discussions regarding the Sylhet boundary.

\* "Ryots," "dependants."





in the courts of Sylhet, yet he was at liberty to sue the Government and the zemindars jointly in those courts, if he thought he could establish his claim to any lands outside the line, and Government would honour the decision of its own tribunal and make over to him any lands he might prove to be his. No advantage was taken of this offer till 1832, when he instituted four suits in the Sylhet Court in the manner suggested. The cases were pending many years. The local court at first held that it could not try the suits, inasmuch as to assert jurisdiction therein assumed the case against the plaintiff at the outset. On appeal the Sudder Dewani ruled by summary order that, as the question of sovereignty and jurisdiction had not been raised, the cases should be decided on their merits. The District Judge then proceeded to hear them, and ultimately gave judgment upholding in the main Fisher's boundary line, but decreeing certain minor points in favor of the Rajah. The Rajah appealed, but while the case was pending in the Sudder, arrangements were made in 1846 between Government and the plaintiff to refer the whole question to arbitration; no allusion being made to the zemindars, who were also defendants in the suits. When the arbitrators went to Sylhet and applied to the Judge for the necessary papers, the zemindars intervened and protested against the proceedings as undertaken without their consent. The Sudder Dewani held that in their absence the arbitration could not proceed, and the case was restored to the file. The question of jurisdiction was then taken up by a full bench, which ruled, on the 19th September 1848, that questions affecting the boundary of two independent powers were not properly cognizable in municipal courts, and the Rajah's suits were dismissed after being sixteen years pending. Of this, the Rajah naturally complained: and Government determined again to have recourse to arbitration, excluding therefrom however all minor claimants and confining its scope to the settlement only of the question as between State and State. The principle laid down for the arbitrators was that "all land included within the decennial settlement had been, and shall be, within the Company's territories." Any evidence on this point therefore which the zemindars could adduce should be heard and considered. Further, it was ordered that the mere fact that any land had not been settled in 1790 should not alone be proof that it belonged to the Tipperah State. Mr. George Yule, Collector of Dinagepore, was appointed arbitrator for Government, Mr. Campbell, the Rajah's Agent, acted for his master, and Mr. Coull, a planter of Mymensing, was referee. Mr. Campbell found the Rajah's claims established throughout: Mr Yule admitted them only in one case: and the whole thing had to be left to the referee, who came to the same conclusion as Mr. Yule on nearly every point. The record of their very careful enquiry is preserved, and is in itself a convincing proof of their fairness and painstaking. In submitting his report to Government in January 1851, Mr. Yule described the country thus finally declared to be British territory, as consisting both of hill and plain covered for the most part with swamp and jungle. The hills however produced cotton, the cultivation of which might be greatly increased; while the plains bore here and there rich crops of rice not liable to inundation; and also mustard and sugarcane. Much





of this land was not included in any existing settlement; and Mr. Yule strongly urged that colonies of Manipuris or others should be encouraged to take it up on lease, and that effectual measures should be adopted for protecting such settlers from the incursions of the Kookies over whom he thought the Rajah had no real power.<sup>(1)</sup>

On the side of Tipperah the boundary between the hill territory and the plains was quite as ill-defined as it had been on the Sylhet frontier; but this had not given rise to the same amount of mischief, as the zemindari of Roushanabad belonged to the lord of the hills, whose interests were identical on upland and lowland. In 1848, doubts were entertained whether the general indebtedness of the Rajah would not speedily bring the settled estate to the hammer, and in view of this contingency a speedy demarcation of the boundary line was urged upon Government. The measure was sanctioned, and the survey was ultimately carried on till the whole boundary between Independent Tipperah and the British Districts of Tipperah, Bulloah, (or Noakhali) and the remaining portion of Sylhet had been laid down. It was completed in December 1852, and arbitrators were immediately appointed to settle all disputed lines. Every obstacle was thrown in the way of a final settlement by the Rajah's native agents, and it was only when Lord Dalhousie peremptorily ordered the adjustment to proceed whether the Rajah were represented or no that any actual progress was made and the Rajah's arbitrator attended. In January 1855 the results were reported. It had been discovered that no definite boundary between the hills and the plains had heretofore existed; but as the Government arbitrator liberally gave the Raja the benefit of every doubt, no application to a referee was found necessary. Agartolla, the Rajah's place of residence, was by the line now laid down included in the hill territory.<sup>(2)</sup>

Notwithstanding all that had been done, we find in 1861 disputes pending between the Tipperah Rajah and Government regarding the boundary between his territory and some parts of Sylhet not affected by the proceedings of Mr. Yule. The nature of the country made it extremely difficult in places to identify the line laid down by Lieutenant Fisher, and fresh demarcation had to be undertaken. In all the operations connected with the re-survey of Sylhet and Tipperah, Government

(1) Revenue Proceedings, 23rd September 1846, Nos. 37 to 43.  
Revenue Proceedings, 17th March 1847, Nos. 12 to 40.  
Revenue Proceedings, 31st October 1849, Nos. 62 to 73.  
Revenue Proceedings, 10th April 1850, No. 16.  
Revenue Proceedings, 12th June 1850, Nos. 54 & 55.  
Revenue Proceedings, 26th February 1857, Nos. 40 to 44.  
Revenue Proceedings, 24th September 1857, Nos. 77 & 78.  
Revenue Proceedings, 31st March 1853, Nos. 2 & 3.

(2) Revenue Proceedings, 30th May 1849, Nos. 28 to 34.  
Revenue Proceedings, 20th January 1853, Nos. 47 to 51.  
Revenue Proceedings, 17th March 1853, Nos. 18 to 21.  
Revenue Proceedings, 2nd November 1854, Nos. 8 & 9.  
Revenue Proceedings, 15th March 1855, Nos. 3 to 5.  
Revenue Proceedings, 1861 to 1863.





firmly declined to re-open questions already settled ; the only point for discussion being the marking out of the line long since determined upon. The Raja was induced to consent at this time to a topographical survey of his dominions.

I have now described the settlement of the relative boundaries of the Tipperah State and the neighbouring British districts in all quarters save one. Between Hill Tipperah and Chittagong the Fenny River Question of the Chittagong boundary. had always been considered the line of demarcation. The question whether the river itself lay in Tipperah or Chittagong gave rise to some trouble. In 1848 an affray with murder took place at Ramghur, high up on the Fenny, at which the Raja had established a toll house. The Magistrate finding that in Tassin's map the river is included in British territory, forbade the levy of any such duties on the south bank of that river or on the river itself, on the ground that such exactions had led to disturbance and bloodshed. In February 1849, the Magistrate punished for assault certain servants of the Rajah, who had forcibly taken tax upon the river from people bringing down bamboos cut in British territory (1). The Judge reversed the order as illegally convicting Tipperahs of an offence committed out of British territory, at the same time declaring that the Rajah had a right to levy tolls at his ghâts on the Fenny. Upon this the matter was referred to Government, which pointed out that the right claimed for the Rajah was not merely that of levying tolls on goods brought to his side of the river or within his own territories, but of imposing duties on all traffic passing up and down a stream, which was either neutral or British. Further reports on the claim so put forward were called for accordingly. On receipt of this, the Government decided that the Rajah had not established any prescriptive or other right to hold undivided possession of the river. It was to be free and open to the subjects of both Governments without let or hindrance. The river was thus declared neutral territory. The Rajah kept up his toll houses on the north bank ostensibly to tax produce brought from his hills, but no doubt boats passing down were also taxed. In 1853 we hear of outrages upon such boats, and of affrays attended with murder, in which the offenders were farmers of the Tipperah ghâts. The Rajah persisted that, so long as the produce forming the cargo of the boats came from his hills, he had a right to stop them for toll. On further consideration Government laid down the following principles : first, that the Rajah had a right to levy toll on all persons and things within his own independent territory, either on the banks of the River Fenny, or on the river itself above the point at which it becomes the boundary between his territory and Chittagong ; second, that westward from the point where the river is common to both countries, the Rajah has a right to levy tolls on boats or produce belonging to his own subjects only ; third, that for any attempt to levy tolls

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 29th May 1850, Nos. 83 to 89.

Judicial Proceedings, 10th February 1853, Nos. 19 to 22.

Judicial Proceedings, 1st September 1853, Nos. 81 & 82.

Judicial Proceedings, 8th September 1853, Nos. 116 to 127.

Judicial Proceedings, 20th April 1854, Nos. 126 to 129.



on, or detain boats or subjects of the British Government, the Rajah would be held responsible, whether the acts of his agents were done with or without his knowledge and consent; fourth, that if it proved practically difficult to let him thus levy tolls on his own subjects and produce on the river, the right must be foregone.

It will thus have been seen that the boundaries of Hill Tipperah had been in course of years tolerably clearly defined on the north, west, and south where they marched with cultivated British districts. But the precise limits of the territory to the east were still quite conjectural. In Pemberton's\* Report we find that all the Lushai country east to Manipur was once considered to belong to Tipperah. It is certain, however, that the Tipperah Rajah had never anything like settled or absolute authority over the tribes of this tract. What the British Government has had to do with them we shall see in the following chapter.

In 1871, on the suggestion of the Bengal Government a separate Political Agent was appointed to Hill Tipperah to reside at Agurtollah and assist the Rajah with advice. The appointment was abolished in 1878, the conduct of our political relations with the State being entrusted to the Magistrate of Tipperah and an officer of the status of a Deputy Magistrate being stationed at Agurtollah. This arrangement has worked satisfactorily, and will continue to do so as long as the Rajah adheres to his present policy of not interfering in any way with the Kookie tribes outside what is now recognized as his eastern limit. Under the advice and direction of British officers marked improvements have taken place in the internal management of the Tipperah State. Rents are no longer collected at the point of the bayonet, as the Magistrate of Tipperah reported to be the case in 1863. Civil and criminal justice is now fairly administered; schools have been started; and some road making has been done. The population of the Hills according to the last census is 95,637; and the revenue raised there nearly two lakhs of Rupees.

\* The south-eastern and southern boundaries of each are thus given by Pemberton in 1835:—

"From the source of the Jeeree River along the western bank, to its confluence with the Borak; thence south on the western bank of the latter river to the mouth of Chikoo (or Tipai) nullah, which marks the triple boundary of Manipur, Cachar and Tripurah. On the south the limits have never been accurately defined, and we only know that on this side the line is formed by the northern foot of lofty mountains inhabited by the Poitoo Kookies and by wild and unexplored tracts of territory subject to Tripurah. This densely wooded and mountainous region appears to commence at a distance of between 40 and 50 miles from the southern bank of the Soormah."

The southern extremity of the Suddashur Hills was the south-east corner of Cachar. It would appear from this that the narrow hilly tract running down between Hill Tipperah and Manipur, and represented in our most recent maps as part of Cachar, was in Pemberton's time considered to be part of Hill Tipperah.





## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE LUSHAI OR KOOKIE TRIBES.

From a very early period the plains of Cachar were subject to inroads from the southern Hill tribes known as Kookies or Lushais. Of late years it has been discovered

Description of the Lushais as known in 1853.

that these are more or less intimately related to the Howlungs and Syloos whom we encounter on the frontier of Chitagong. But it will be most convenient to leave the latter for separate treatment and to bring together here all that is known of the Lushais viewed from a Cachar standpoint. In a report on the district by Colonel Lister in 1853, the following account is given of these tribes :—

I have the honor to state first, with reference to the southern portion of the district, that for many years back, and long before we obtained possession of the province, the inhabitants of the plains to the south were in constant alarm and dread of the tribes of Kookies who resided both within our boundaries and without to the south and south-east, in the independent Tipperah Hills and in the Manipur territories. They used to come down and attack the villages in the plains, massacre the inhabitants, take their heads, *loot* and burn their houses. These aggressions used principally to be made after the death of one of the Kookie Rajahs, when the having human heads to bury with him is in the idea of the Kookie a matter of great consideration.

The principal tribes then known were the Cheeloo, Rankul, Tangune, Chansen, Tadoé or Tewtangs and the Poitoo Kookies, and in consequence of the aggressions made by some of them at different times, some of the inhabitants towards the south deserted their villages, left their lands and homes, and settled in some of the more northern pergunahs of the district, and the lands which they deserted have not in some places up to the present time been resumed, they being now jungle.

It would appear that the tribes to the south have been gradually driving one another in a northerly direction; for, first, some Nagas that were located in the Boobun Hills and in southern Cachar were obliged by the Tangune Kookies to flit and to take up their abode in the hills north of the Borak, when the Tangunes took possession of their ground, and they having in their turn been driven up by the Chansen and Tadoé tribes, the Tangunes were also afterwards obliged to vacate and to move on into the northern hills, and after them the Chansens were obliged to do so likewise; and the Tadoés, who had been driven up by the Luchyes, a very powerful tribe, first settled about seven years since within eight and ten miles south of this station, and became Company's ryots, and made themselves useful by cutting timber, bamboos, cane, &c., which they used to bring to market, but after having been located there for some four years, the Luchye Kookies in November 1849 attacked them, burnt three of their villages, killed several of the inhabitants, and took away several of them into slavery, and then the whole of the Tadoé tribe flitted, left the south and settled down in the northern hills.

About the same time that the Luchye Kookies attacked the villages in Cachar, they committed other atrocities in Sylhet and in Manipur. It was the first that had ever been heard here of the Luchyes, and from the inquiries I made, it appeared that they were a very powerful, warlike, set of people, consisting of Luchyes, Chillings, and Gattaes, and who were said to be also well armed and independent, and residing from eight to ten days' journey south of this. And to the south of them again there are the Poe Kookies, who are said to be still more powerful than the Luchyes, and who it is said exact a kind of tribute from them.





The Poitoo Kookies who are located towards the south-west used also to be very troublesome, and made many descents in the southern portion of Pergunnah Hylakandy, and they too drove the inhabitants away from thence, and caused lands that were under cultivation to run to jungle.

After the British Government obtained possession of the district, in order to protect the natives to the south, there were two small out-posts established, one at Cazeedur, in Pergunnah Bundraj, and the other to the south of Hylakandy, with a detachment of the Sylhet Light Infantry at each, posted in a guard, surrounded by a stockade, but these out-posts used to be occasionally withdrawn and again replaced when necessary.

About the years 1834 and 1835 a Manipuri Prince, "Tribowanjee," who was unsettled and inclined to be troublesome, got a considerable grant of land at Jafferbund, in south Hylakandy, and tagavie advances were with the sanction of Government made to him to the extent of Rupees 2,636, with a view to causing him to settle down, and he undertook with his Manipuri ryots to keep the Poitoo Kookies in check, and for which purpose twelve muskets were made over to him, and he on one or two occasions attacked the Kookies in their own villages, and during his time no attacks were made on that part of the district; but in 1841 he and his brother, Ram Sing, made arrangements with some of their countrymen and attacked the Rajah of Manipur, and in his endeavour to obtain possession of the guddee of that country he lost his life, and so did also his brother.

In order that he should be remunerated for the protection he afforded the people, he was permitted to levy a toll on all timber, bamboos, &c., coming down the Dullesur River, and his estate having after his death fallen into the hands of two of his other brothers, they continue still to levy a toll, as they say, from those only who agree beforehand to pay them, for giving them protection during the period they are cutting the timber in the hills.

This was what Colonel Lister knew about them at the date of his report. The earlier records contain more detailed information of their raids upon Cachar.

I have already in the preceding chapter noticed a massacre of British subjects belonging to Sylhet by Kookies, which took place in 1826. The next raid of consequence was also on the Sylhet frontier and occurred in 1844.

Laroo, whose name was mentioned in connection with the massacre of 1826, appears to have been a chief of some importance among the Poitoos. In the beginning of 1844 or end of 1843 he died, leaving his son Lal Chokla to lead his tribe.<sup>(1)</sup> Now no Kookie Chief could go on his last long journey unaccompanied by attendants to do his bidding in the unseen world. The affection of his clansmen was not, however, put to too great a strain. They had not themselves to go away before their time, so long as they could supply Bengali slaves, whose heads piled round the corpse of the Chief were earnest that their ghosts were keeping company with his. But slaves were scarce in the hills since the British Government had discouraged this trade; so Lal Chokla and his cousin, Botai (not the Buntye of 1826), hung their great relative's body in the smoke, and set forth on the war path to slay the

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 11th May 1854, Nos. 81 to 83.

Judicial Proceedings, 27th May 1844, Nos. 103 to 109.

Judicial Proceedings, 29th July 1844, Nos. 46 to 49.

Judicial Proceedings, 3rd September 1844, Nos. 42 to 45.

Judicial Proceedings, 16th October 1844, Nos. 46 & 47.

Judicial Proceedings, 13th November 1844, No. 88.

Judicial Proceedings, 8th January 1845, Nos. 192 to 194.

Judicial Proceedings, 12th February 1845, Nos. 104 to 106.





prescribed number of victims. Spies sent before marked out as the doomed village, the Manipuri colony of Kochabari, in Pertabgur. On the night of the 16th April, 200 savages surrounded it, and amid the horrors of darkness the bloody work went on, till twenty heads were secured and six live captives taken. One eye-witness escaped by clinging to the thatch of the inner roof, while the ghastly struggle went on below him. Once the ropes gave way and he fell, but, favoured by the darkness, regained his place and there remained till all was still. The Magistrate was informed of the tragedy, and the Tipperah Rajah was called in to aid, with the usual result. 'He had no authority over the tribe in question.' But a grave suspicion arose not only that this excuse was false, but that the Kookies had been actually directed to the Manipuri village by the emissaries of the Rajah who had a dispute with the colonists about the land on which it stood. Further remonstrance induced him to despatch a Darogah and ten burkundazes to arrest the murderers,—a proceeding in itself a farce. Panic spread along the frontier. The cultivators deserted the neighbouring Government estates, and troops and police had to go down in numbers to restore confidence.

At this time the Magistrate of Sylhet bethought himself of applying to Mr. J. P. Wise, who managed the Rajah's affairs on the plains. This gentleman took up the matter warmly and brought all his influence to bear on his employer. It was discovered that some connection did exist between Hill Tipperah and these Kookies, for Lal Chokla had, it appeared, applied to the Rajah to protect him against any measures of retaliation on our part. At last it was ordered that if the Tipperah Chief could not secure by force or negotiation the surrender of the offenders before the 1st of December, British troops should enter the hills, and with the co-operation of the hill police—if such there were—inflict summary punishment on Lal Chokla and his tribe. The effect of this decision was curious. Before the date fixed, the Rajah sent in four Kookie prisoners and twenty-seven witnesses, with depositions taken in Hill Tipperah, proving the defendants to have been concerned in the raid. When brought before the Magistrate, the witnesses one and all denied any knowledge of the affair. Next he sent in 'Botai,' declaring at the same time his own conviction of his innocence. All this and the Rajah's earnest entreaties did not avail

Blackwood's Expedition. to stay the departure of our troops.

Captain Blackwood led a party of the Sylhet Infantry into the hills on the day fixed. But little assistance was received from the Rajah. He himself professed to be anxious to help, but his people did nothing,—a fair index to the real wishes of their master. Mr. Wise's Assistant, Mr. Watt, ignored court intrigue and gave substantial help, and a valuable auxiliary turned up in the person of Lallmee Sing, himself a Kookie Chief and cousin of Lal Chokla. Lal Chokla's village was surrounded, his supplies cut off, and on the 4th December he surrendered himself into Captain Blackwood's hands. The fact of the raid he admitted freely, but declared that he attacked the Manipuris, not knowing they were Company's ryots, and





to avenge injuries done to his father Laroo by two Manipuri adventurers, Ramsing and Tribonjit, who, in 1841, tried to penetrate into the Manipur valley through these hills with a view to attack the reigning Chief. The story was a doubtful one. The Kookies knew well that Kochabari was under British protection. Lal Chokla was tried and transported. Botai, against whom there was no proof, was released, and for some years the frontier was undistributed.\*

It seems to have been a common practice of the tribes on this frontier to make the villages of any emigrants from their midst into British territory a special object of attack. In June 1844 the Thadoe

Kookies living under Manipur attacked a Kookie village in Cachar, and carried off eight heads. The people murdered were emigrants from the attacking tribe. The Rajah of Manipur professed to have these tribes under control, and he was appealed to in this case, but with what success does not appear.

In 1847 Colonel McCulloch, Political Agent in Manipur, drew Reports from Manipur, 1847. attention to the increasing power of the Lushais, whose conflicts with the Changsels and other Kookies living under Manipur had attracted his attention. He speaks of raids in which two and three hundred persons were captured or killed. He also notices the presence among them of persons dressed like "Burmese," armed with muskets, and said no other tribe could stand before them. No military posts could, he thought, protect Manipur from their attacks, and therefore, as they were understood to belong to Hill Tipperah, he urged that they should be restrained from thence. The Rajah of Tipperah was asked what he knew of them. He replied that he had heard of them, but knew nothing more about them, as they were not his subjects.

In June 1847, the Magistrate of Sylhet reported<sup>(1)</sup> a series of massacres by Kookies in what was alleged to be British territory. Upwards of 150 persons had been killed, and the case wore a most

\* In the papers we find the following account of the connection of the chiefs in this quarter *inter se*: "Sheeb Boot, a chief subordinate to Tipperah, declared himself independent and took away 25,000 householders. He was succeeded by his son Chung Polun and his grandson Lal Koleem. The latter had two sons. One Kojasir, the father of Botai, to whom Lal Koleem gave 4,000 households as dependents; the other, Lal Pooce May, who took the rest of the 25,000 houses. Lal Pooce May had three sons—Lindoo, father of Lal Holun; Laroo, father of Lal Chokla; and Bontai, father of Lalme Sing."

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 28th July 1847, Nos. 101 to 107.  
Judicial Proceedings, 4th August 1847, No. 105.  
Judicial Proceedings, 25th August 1847, Nos. 109 to 111.  
Judicial Proceedings, 17th May 1848, Nos. 61 to 141.





serious aspect. The Rajah of Tipperah, however, declared that the outrage had taken place in his jurisdiction, and protested against any interference on the part of the Magistrate. The Sylhet authorities persisted that the spot was within the district boundary as laid down by Captain Fisher, and a detachment of troops was sent out to protect the neighbourhood. The persons murdered were themselves Kookies, and there was no doubt that they held a lease of land from the Sylhet Collector; but the Rajah alleged that the pottah had been procured by the relatives of Lal Chokla to injure him and Lallmee Sing for having assisted in the capture of the first-named Chief, and that the lands were really far within the Tipperah Hills. The so-called massacre was the result of a fight between Lallmee Sing and Dokunipor, a son of Lal Chokla. It will give some idea of the confusion prevailing as to the boundary in this quarter when it is stated that four local investigations—one by the Magistrate of the district—made out the scene of the slaughter to be within British territory. But when matters became more serious, the troops having been attacked by large bodies of Kookies, aided, it was said, by Tipperahs, and Colonel Lister was ordered to the spot with reinforcements and a professional surveyor, it was discovered that Fisher's boundary line lay far north of the place. The troops were withdrawn and nothing was said of the attack on them.

In November 1849, the Magistrate of Sylhet reported a further series of Kookie outrages on the Raids of 1849. Simla River, and within British territory. Wood-cutters returning from the hills had been attacked, a village of Halams, a class of Tipperahs living within our border, had been cut up, and another village plundered. The assailants were said to be of the tribe of the Khojawul Chief, and as usual subject to Tipperah. Almost at the same time reports were received from Cachar that Lushai Kookies, subjects of Lalingboong Rajah, had attacked a settled Kookie village ten miles south of Silchar, belonging to one Seyahpow. Here they killed twenty-nine persons and took forty-two captives. After this they attacked the villages of Leelong Rajah and Angum, Kookie settlements in the vicinity of the station, burnt them and went their way.

The Government resolved on this occasion to take active measures. Punitive measures. The Rajah of Tipperah was called upon to deliver up the guilty Chiefs and their followers, and to restore the captives. He was informed that, if he was unable to comply with this demand, Government would march a force into his territory, as it was impossible to allow such bloody and wanton outrages to pass unpunished.

The management of the whole business was placed in the hands of Colonel Lister, Commandant of the Sylhet Infantry and Agent for the





Khasi Hills.<sup>(1)</sup> He was instructed, as regards the Sylhet outrage, not to be deterred by any claims the Rajah might make to the site of the massacre. If it was *de facto* in our possession and rent paid us for it, he was to proceed to ascertain the guilty tribes and punish them if possible. Inquiry showed that the scene of the Sylhet outrage was far within our territories, and it was alleged in Cachar that the raids, both in Cachar and Sylhet, were the work of Lushais. Lalingboong, it was reported, had sent out his two sons, Barmoolal and Lalpor—the one east, the other west—to plunder and slaughter.

Meantime the Magistrate of Sylhet had not been idle. Friendly Kookie scouts were employed to follow up the trail left by the raiders on that district, and the result of their reports was stated to be that the attacking party belonged to the Khojawal or Kachak tribe, living two days' march south-east of Chutterchoora. It was supposed to be established by cross-examination that this was only another branch of the Lushais, who were, it was said, ruled over by three Rajahs, Lalingbhoom, Khojawal, and Sookpial. The scouts offered to conduct an expedition to the villages of the tribe, and were forwarded to Colonel Lister to be made use of as occasion served. The information thus given, as to the mutual relations of the tribes, we know to have been incorrect; and it is only mentioned to show how impossible it is to place full reliance on any statements made on such subjects on this frontier.

On the 13th January 1850, while the expedition was actually preparing to start from Cachar, a further raid was committed in Sylhet, in Thannah Latoo, at one of the points in the boundary disputed by the Rajah of Tipperah. It was at first set down to the same tribe who committed the former massacre. But later reports implicated subjects of Hill Tipperah. The enquiry was not, however, followed up.

Colonel Lister's force marched from Silchar on the 4th January 1850, and on the 14th arrived at a village belonging to a chief called Mullah, consisting of from 800 to 1,000 houses full of grain, cotton, and other stores. This they carried by surprise. On the 16th they burnt the village and retired for reasons shewn in the following extract from Colonel Lister's Report, which also sets forth his recommendations for future action:—

The Lushais are a very powerful tribe under the Government of six sirdars, of whom one is the acknowledged chief. They all have their separate cantönments with a

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 5th December 1849, Nos. 108 to 117.  
Judicial Proceedings, 2nd January 1850, Nos. 84 to 86.  
Judicial Proceedings, 13th February 1850, Nos. 137 to 140.  
Judicial Proceedings, 27th February 1850, Nos. 33 & 44.  
Judicial Proceedings, 6th November 1850, Nos. 91 to 93.  
Judicial Proceedings, 27th November 1850, Nos. 90 to 93.  
Judicial Proceedings, 17th April 1850, Nos. 96 to 98.  
Judicial Proceedings, 29th May 1850, Nos. 74 & 75.  
Judicial Proceedings, 26th June 1850, Nos. 163 & 164.  
Judicial Proceedings, 14th August 1850, Nos. 20 to 23.





number of dependent villages attached. In these cantonments the fighting men reside ; in the dependent villages are located their ryots, who are merely used as coolies, and for tilling the soil. They consist, in many instances, of the captives they have brought away in their different expeditions, a great part of them probably taken as mere children and gradually reconciled to their captivity.

The fighting part of the Lushai population are composed, first, of Lushais, who appear to be a cross between the Kookies and Burmese; secondly, of a certain number of true Burmese, entertained for the purposes of warfare; and, thirdly, of refugees and outlaws from Manipore and our own frontier.

The chief who is now at the head of these tribes, by name Barmooeelin, is said to have 300 Burmese in his service. His head-quarters, which lay to the south-west of Mullah's village, I could see plainly with a telescope. It appeared to be a cantonment laid out with the utmost regularity, and containing, I should say, not less than three thousand houses. The whole of the sirdars are said to be able to raise from five to seven thousand fighting men, and from what I saw, and the information I have received, I do not consider this beyond the mark. The Burmese portion of the force are armed with muskets and *dows*, the remainder with spears and *dows*.

I have before remarked that the Lushai are a cross between the Kookies and Burmese, and this opinion is strengthened by the belief universally prevalent, that a part of the Burmese army which occupied Telyne and its neighbourhood in 1824 never returned to Ava, but settled in the jungles to the south of Cachar. Almost all the other Kookie tribes are migratory in their habits, changing their residence every two or three years; but from the substantial way in which the Lushai villages are built, I am convinced that they are a stationary tribe, and this stamps them as different from the other Kookies, who one and all entertain a great dread of them.

His Honor will probably remark on the facility with which I gained possession of a large village in the face of this powerful people. But to explain this I have only to state that with very few exceptions the whole fighting population of this village were absent on one of their marauding excursions, added to which they were taken completely by surprise, as the path by which I approached the cantonments they believed to be known only to themselves; and as all their look-outs were posted on the main road, they were in utter ignorance of my movements.

On reaching the village, however, and discovering the description of country I had got into, the distance from any supports, and the difficulties of the road, I considered that I should be compromising the safety of my detachment by remaining a longer time than would suffice to give the men necessary rest.

The nature of the country is such, that a few stockades thrown up at certain points would serve to cut off all communication, and these, expert as the Kookies are with the use of the *dow*, would have been the work of a very few hours. I heard from my spies that Barmooeelin's village was full of men, and they could have intercepted me at any point along the road. Indeed, although I was only one night in Mullah's village, yet in that interval they had commenced stockading the direct road, with a view to cutting me off, though, probably not anticipating my so speedy return, the works were not complete, and no attempt was made to defend them. No doubt a short delay on my part would have enabled them to raise the whole country to intercept my line of march. Even as it is, I have some reason for thinking that they expected me to return by the path I had taken in going, and had I chosen that route, I should probably have met with some opposition. It is not their muskets or other offensive weapons that are to be dreaded, but their expertness in the use of the *dow*, and the facilities which their jungles afford, both in materials and position, for throwing obstacles in the way of an advance or retreat.

There can be no doubt that Mullah was the chief whose people committed the outrage on the Roopa Cherri in November last, and to confirm this, an abkaree perwannah was found in his house, bearing the name of a man belonging to the Tripoorah village, which was plundered on that occasion, and dated 1849. Lalpoo, the chief who conducted the expedition into Cachar, had died a few days before I reached the Lushai country.

One gratifying circumstance attending the expedition I have now to record, which is, that during the confusion caused by the destruction of his cantonment, 429 captives made their escape from the villages dependent on Mullah and succeeded in finding their way into Cachar. This, and the loss consequent on the destruction of all his property, will probably cripple him for some time, but he is only one of the petty





chiefs, and I cannot but feel assured that my expedition will have had little real effect on the tribe at large, further than shewing them that it is possible for us to penetrate their jungles.

I am of opinion that to put down these people effectually would employ a well appointed force of not less than three thousand men. From 500 to 1,000 of these would be required for keeping open the road from Cachar and protecting the various depôts (since there are several bye-paths leading on to the main road easily passable for the Kookies), and the remainder for carrying on operations in the country. A portion of this force ought to consist of Europeans, as a great deal of stockade work might be expected from the great abundance of materials, and the ease and rapidity with which these people run up stockades, to which may be added the well known character of the Burmese for this kind of warfare.

From the nature of the country (all the ranges of hills running north and south), I feel convinced that an attack from any other quarter, except Cachar, would be attended with the greatest difficulty, and, indeed, is in my opinion impracticable. Towards the Chittagong side the ranges rise higher and higher, and both from that direction and from Sylhet or Comillah numerous ranges of hills, as well as difficult swamps and unfordable rivers, would have to be crossed; whereas from Cachar a chain of hills runs down unbroken into the enemy's country, and along this a good practicable road might be constructed by a couple of companies of Pioneers aided by bidars and Kookies to cut the jungle. The road might be commenced on the 1st November, and it could be completed in a month. Depôts for provisions would have to be formed along the road. All supplies must come from Cachar, and very extensive Commissariat arrangements would of course be necessary.

It will be for his Honor to decide whether such considerable operations should be entered upon. I can only state my views that, unless something decisive is done, the whole of Cachar south of the Barak, and probably a great extent of country south of Sylhet, will become a desert. The Lushais have been getting bolder, and extending their ravages further every year, and I feel convinced that they are the authors of all the massacres committed on the frontier from year to year.

Even allowing that small detachments could penetrate into their country from time to time, and destroy one or two of their villages, this would be at very considerable risk, and would only have the effect of inciting them to fresh outrages from a spirit of revenge. Unless their independence as a powerful tribe is quite broken, the frontier will never be free from their attacks.

That they acknowledge no allegiance to the Tipperah Rajah is certain; but whether as is reported, he or his ministers have any means of communicating with them, I cannot say. Certainly he must be powerless to *prevent* their ravages. Should he, however, have any means at his disposal, I think that he as well as the Rajah of Manipore should be invited to co-operate in whatever measures may be taken for effectual putting down of these miscreants.

As a temporary measure, I venture to suggest the arming with muskets of a few hundred Kookies (could they be got to serve) under a young, active, and enterprising European officer. These I would have taught to fire with accuracy; nothing more: and I would post them in stockades along the frontier, at the most frequented passes into Sylhet and Cachar. Many of the Kookies who accompanied me expressed their willingness to take service, and said that armed with muskets they would have no dread of the Lushais.

I would further suggest that all condemned muskets belonging to the Sylhet Light Infantry should be handed over to the Superintendent of Cachar for distribution among the frontier villages, and I would recommend that that officer be authorized to indent for ammunition, to be served out at his discretion.

The Government<sup>(1)</sup> upon this, while admitting the force of Colonel Lister's suggestions, deprecated any extended military measures unless further outrage rendered this necessary. It suggested an

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 1850, 13th November, No. 105.  
Judicial Proceedings, 1850, 20th November, Nos. 54-5.  
Judicial Proceedings, 1850, 27th November, Nos. 103-4.





attempt to open up negotiations with Barmooceelin, who must, it was thought, be impressed with the fact that his country was no longer inaccessible, and would, it was hoped, be ready to enter into friendly relations. The affairs of the Cachar and Sylhet frontier were placed under Colonel Lister, and his plan of raising a Kookie levy was favourably received. The opening of a road from Silehar was also considered advisable. At the very outset, however, the Superintendent of Cachar recorded his opinion that the Lushais would only be emboldened by the partial result of the expedition. He tried to get Kookies of other tribes to settle in the south of the district, promising to arm and support them to be a shield to the cultivated part of the country from the Lushais. The Western Kookies, however, were far too careful of themselves to consent to this. The captives released from the Lushais were all of them Tadoe Kookies, and their stories did not give confidence to their clansmen settled under our protection. They had, it appeared, been forced by Lalingboong, now dead, to settle among the Lushais, and never had an opportunity of breaking their involuntary connection till Colonel Lister came. The jungles south of Cachar had formerly been joomed by Tadoes, most of whom had been driven into our territory by dread of the Lushais, and others carried south and compelled to cultivate for that tribe. After Colonel Lister left Mullah, the Lushais butchered twenty of the chief men among the Tadoes then living with them, in revenge for the loss caused by the exodus of the captives already described. Some, however, escaped, and among them a chief named Manji-how. Meantime steps were being taken for raising a levy of 200 men, but it was determined that only half that number should be Kookies, the rest being Cacharies and other more trustworthy races.

In October 1850 the Lushais<sup>(1)</sup> made overtures of peace, and a muntri or agent of Sookpilal's and messengers from four other chiefs, Barmooceelin, Boottai, Langroo, and Lalpoo, came into Silehar. After some talk with the Superintendent they agreed to fetch their chiefs. They said they

Negotiations in 1850-51. wished to become our ryots and pay tribute to get protection from the

Pois, a tribe to the south, whose advance they dreaded, to whom they paid tribute, and through whom they got arms, and who were supposed to live in the provinee shown in old maps as Yo Pye, east of Arracan. Colonel Lister, in anticipation of the arrival of the chiefs, proposed to ask for hostages, young Chiefs who might be sent to school; to lay down a boundary which the Lushais should respect; to bind them over to give up offenders, but to reject all overtures to become our subjects. The Government did not approve of anything of the nature of a treaty or of asking for hostages. The Lushais were to be told

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 1851, 2nd January, No. 98.

Judicial Proceedings, 1851, 15th January, Nos. 121-2.

Judicial Proceedings, 1851, 5th February, Nos. 86-7.





they would be unmolested, but they must respect our border, and would be invited to friendly relations with us. In December the Superintendent reported the arrival of Sookpial with a few followers. The other Chiefs had not come in. They admitted the enmity subsisting between them and our Kookies, but said they wished to be friends with us. The following account was given by Colonel Lister of Sookpial's statements and of the negotiations with him :

He states that the Lushye territory extends seven days' march to the south of his village, and that there are in all ten rajas, of whom he is the acknowledged chief. If this be true, the chieftainship must be an hereditary dignity, and not depending simply on the power of the individual exercising it, as he acknowledges that both Boottai (the chief of the most southern village) and Barmoeelin can bring more fighting men into the field than himself.

All the rivers running into the Barak from the south take their rise far in the Lushai country, and are, with exceptions, navigable for small boats to a considerable distance. The Dullasree, for instance, to within one march of Sookpial's village. Strange to say, they know nothing of any rivers running towards the south.

Their fighting population is almost entirely composed of men whom they call Chillings, belonging to the country to the south end of their position, distant about seven days' march from their most southern village, and extending, as they report, to the frontier of Burmah. The people of this country, which they call Pooe, are described as a powerful tribe, to whom they pay a yearly tribute and acknowledge a sort of allegiance. Two of these Chillings accompanied the raja; they were stout, well-made men, strongly resembling the Burmese and very unlike the Kookies. They were armed with good serviceable flint muskets, apparently of American manufacture, with the name of G. Alton on the locks. The Bengallee interpreter, Gobind Ram, states that there was one of these muskets in each house in the raja's village. They procure them from the Pooe people, giving them in exchange slaves, at the rate (as the Lushais themselves stated) of two muskets for a slave 4½ feet high. All their dealings in trade appear to be carried on with this people, with whom, however, they are not always on friendly terms.

Paragraph 7 of your letter No. 244 of the 21st of February last was fully explained to the raja, and he promised on the part of himself and the other rajas that no overt acts of any description against the Company's subjects should for the future be attempted; but said that previous to our attack of last year they were in ignorance that any Kookies were under the protection of our Government. The raja, in token of submission, presented an elephant's tusk, in return for which some coarse woollen cloths were given him. He states that the other rajas were afraid to come in, being apprehensive of meeting the fate of Lal Chokla, who, having given himself up in 1844, was subsequently transported.

The raja promises that on his return to his village he will cause search to be made for any of our subjects who may still be in captivity in his country, and that if any such are found, they shall be sent back into the British territory.

The raja took his departure on the morning of the 18th, apparently well satisfied with the reception he had met with, and earnest in his promises of future good behaviour, in which he is, no doubt for the present at least, sincere.

In 1855 the question of disbanding the Kookie levy was raised, but the local authorities strongly urged its retention, as it was of real service in checking and procuring information in regard to both the Lushais and Nagas.

In 1855 Sookpial sent in to claim assistance from the Superintendent against some neighbouring Kookie embassies between 1855 and 1861. Chiefs who had attacked him.<sup>(1)</sup> He grounded his claim on his being a tributary to Government by having

(1) Judicial Proceedings, 12th April 1855, Nos. 95 to 101.  
Judicial Proceedings, 5th July 1855, Nos. 244 to 247.  
Judicial Proceedings, February 1861, Nos. 189 to 229.





sent elephant's teeth as presents to Cachar. His muntri or representative urged indeed that Sookpilal had twice visited the Superintendent and had on two other occasions sent embassies with presents. He was told Government could not interfere in the internal quarrels of tribes living "beyond British territory." The Chief of Mullah also about this time sent in a deputation, and, at the request of the Superintendent, and to prove his sincerity, released the son of a Tadoë Kookie Chief he had taken prisoner in 1849. He begged the Superintendent to procure the release of an uncle of Barmooeelin who was a prisoner in Manipur. The Lushais had, it appeared, been making constant inroads on the Manipuri Nagus, and negotiations were on foot for an exchange of prisoners. These the local officers expressed themselves willing to advance. Again in 1861 Vompilal, Chief of Mullah, sent an embassy to Cachar asking help against Lalpitary, a Chief to the West, and against the Pois who were pressing on him from the South. Assistance was of course declined.

Sylhet and Cachar seem to have been tolerably free from disturbance up to the beginning of 1862. In

Raids of 1862.

January of that year a series of

three outrages by Kookies was reported from Sylhet.<sup>(1)</sup> The first reports received were by no means very precise, and as usual some said the Tipperah Rajah's people were concerned, while the Rajah alleged that they were his villages that had suffered. The facts, as ascertained by careful local enquiry, appeared to be these. Three villages (1) Ramdulal's Bari, (2) Rammohun's Bari, and (3) Chundraipara in the jurisdiction of Thannah Rajnugger, Sylhet, were, on the 22nd January, plundered and burnt, and a large number of the inhabitants massacred or carried off. These villages lie close together, about eight miles from Adumpore: and this has come to be known as the Adumpore massacre. About the same time a village called Lungaibaree had been destroyed, and an attack made on a party of men about half a mile east of Kolingat. The Chundraipara group was shown to be in British territory, the other two localities in Hill Tipperah. A suspicious circumstance in connection with the affair was, that the people of Chundraipara were emigrants from Hill Tipperah who had settled on the estate of a zemindar with whom the Tipperah Rajah had a standing feud. On the other hand, the Rajah's own villages had suffered, but he had made no enquiry in the case. The evidence taken on the spot went to show that the Kookies who committed the raids were dependents of Murchilo (or Murchoi Looee), a son of that Lal Chokla whom we made prisoner in 1844. It was stated that Murchilo was an actual subject of the Rajah of Tipperah and on good terms with him. Government ordered (in November 1862) a strong post of armed Police to be established

(1) Judicial Proceedings, April 1862, Nos. 432 to 435.

Judicial Proceedings, June 1862, Nos. 5 to 7.

Judicial Proceedings, November 1862, Nos. 202 to 206.

Judicial Proceedings, January 1863, Nos 172 & 173.





somewhere on the Sylhet Frontier,\* and at the same time warned the Tipperah Rajah that these outrages on villages situated in the neighbourhood of his territory could not be any longer tolerated; that Government looked to him at once to organise such a Police in those places as would prevent the occurrence in future of similar aggressions, and that, in the event of his not reporting without delay the completion of satisfactory arrangements for that purpose, he would be himself held personally responsible for the acts of the people of his estates, who appeared to take advantage of the consideration with which he was treated by Government to commit outrages such as those complained of.

The Commissioner of Dacca was, however, strongly of opinion that the real raiders were Lushais, not subject to the Rajah at all, and for some time nothing more was done.

In April 1863 four women who had been carried away from Chundrapara made their escape to Cachar and were forwarded to Sylhet. From their statements<sup>(1)</sup> it appeared that the raid had been led by four Chiefs, (1) Mischoei Lall (= Murchillo), (2) Lookpilal (= Sookpilal), (3) Rungbhoom, and (4) Lal Hoolien. The first was, as before shown, the son of Lal Chokla, and undoubtedly to some extent under the Tipperah Rajah; the second was said to live on the banks of the Dullessury among the Seedashun Hills, some days' journey south of Cachar, and to be virtually independent; the other two were related in some way to Murchillo.

A new Rajah had at this time been installed in Tipperah, and he was called upon to give all the information and assistance he could with a view to recovering the captives, of whom there were said to be many in the villages of the abovenamed Chiefs.<sup>(2)</sup> The Sylhet Authorities urged the sending of an expedition against them in the cold weather of 1863, but Government did not at once consent to this for the following reasons: It was incidentally mentioned, in a survey report of Cachar, that Sookpilal had ever since 1849 maintained friendly communications with the Cachar Authorities, sending in frequent deputations with presents, &c. This being the case, the Lieutenant-Governor, before attempting force, directed the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar to endeavour to induce Sookpilal to give up the captives in his possession, and to undertake the protection of the Frontier by restraining his own people from committing raids, and by refusing countenance and encouragement to other chiefs in any like attempt. An annual money payment for this service was to be offered to him and the other Chiefs on the Sonai and Tipai, and return annual

\* Fifty men of the Kamroop Regiment were actually sent to Adampur.

(1) Judicial Proceedings, April 1863, Nos. 374 to 379.

(2) Judicial Proceedings, November 1864, Nos. 4 to 8.

Judicial Proceedings, December 1864, Nos. 98 & 99.

Judicial Proceedings, November 1864, Nos. 167 to 169.





presents were to be taken from them as acknowledgment of allegiance. It was feared that a hostile expedition might bring down the Kookies on the tea gardens which were now spreading fast into the Hills.

Captain Stewart, the Deputy Commissioner, upon this opened communication with Sookpial taking advantage of the scarcity then prevailing in the Hills to conciliate him by a present of rice. In October 1864 Sookpial sent a Muntri and his half brother to meet Captain Stewart. After some fencing the Muntri admitted the facts of the Adumpore massacre, but said some of the captives had been sold to the Pois in the south. Captain Stewart said, if Sookpial would come and meet him and bring the captives, and swear friendship, he should receive Rs 50 a month, subject only to an annual nuzzur to Government. The Muntri promised that Sookpial would send his heir, Lalongoor, to Cachar, as he was too ill to move himself, and agreed to all the other conditions. He did not recognise the other Rajah concerned in the raid as Murchillo but called him Gnoor-shai-lon (clearly the same name). Gnoor-shai-lon had married Sookpial's sister, and on the occasion of the marriage the Adumpore raid was made. "They did not know the village belonged to the Sirkar, and wanted to make up the price of the bride." Sookpial and Gnoor-shai-lon had since quarrelled.

At this time the Rajah of Tipperah, whose succession was threatened in the Courts, in order to create a favourable impression, volunteered to try and arrest Gnoor-shai-lon, and also said he would make an effort to seize Sookpial who was, however, not so easily to be got at.<sup>(1)</sup> These offers were rejected, as the negotiations with Sookpial promised fairly, and any attack upon Gnoor-shai-lon apart from him would excite his suspicions.

Soon after his communications with Sookpial, Captain Stewart received a deputation from Vonpial, Chief of Mullah, and made similar arrangements with him.<sup>(2)</sup> Vonpial's messengers expressed great dread of the advance of tea gardens up the Sonai, which Captain Stewart endeavoured to allay by showing how advantageous to the Hill Tribes the vicinity of a garden would prove. On this being reported to Government, Captain Stewart was asked to explain how the country of the Lushais could be considered open to British enterprise in the way indicated. He replied—"The Lushais have always been looked upon as an independent people, but it is not certain that they occupy independent territory. The southern boundary of Cachar is indefinite, and may be pushed as far as it is thought proper. The natural boundary is the water-pent of the hills between this and the sea, and this the Chutta Choor, a peak which is sometimes talked of as the

(1) Judicial Proceedings, December 1864, Nos. 98 & 99.

(2) Judicial Proceedings, March 1865, Nos. 79 to 81.

Judicial Proceedings, September 1865, Nos. 4 to 6.





boundary, is supposed to be. If this be the case, all the Lushais, that we have any communication with, are within the district, as they all drink from waters that flow into the Barak." This theory amounted practically to claiming as district territory the whole of the Lushai country up to the Chittagong water-pent, and has never received any recognition from Government.

In December 1865, the Deputy Commissioner reported<sup>(1)</sup> that Sook-

Proposed Expedition, 1865-66.

pilal had not sent in the captives, and had, in reply to messengers sent by Captain Stewart, alleged as his reason, that three of his tribe had been murdered a year before by a Kookie Settlement in Cachar. It was doubtful whether this was a fact or a mere subterfuge on the part of Sookpilal. It was determined to send an expedition to compel him to give up the captives, and Police were got together in Cachar for that purpose, but before they set out the rains began and operations were postponed. While they were waiting orders a deputation from Vagnonien, a Lushai Chief to the south of Manipur, came in and had a friendly interview.

During the rains of 1866, Captain Stewart was occupied in finding out as much as was known about Sookpilal's position and its accessibility. It was supposed that no communication could be opened with him from Chittagong, and that the smallest force that it was advisable to send from Cachar would be 400 fighting men. In view of these facts, the idea of an expedition was given up and negotiations re-commenced.

Before, however, any messengers had left Cachar an embassy arrived from Sookpilal himself bringing the annual presents originally settled, but no captives.<sup>(2)</sup> Captain Stewart insisted on these being brought in, and sent a messenger back with the Lushai party. After much trouble four boys were given up, and it was said that Gnoor-shai-lon had prevented Sookpilal from sending the others. He and Sookpilal were now friends, and Gnoor-shai-lon kept his brother-in-law supplied with muskets through Hill Tipperah. Many of the captives, it was also stated, were married to Lushais, and unwilling to leave them. The identity of Gnoor-shai-lon and Mischoey Looee appears now to have been lost sight of, for the Rajah of Tipperah was applied to for information in regard to him, and his denial of all knowledge of him was tacitly accepted.

Here matters rested in 1867, and it was hoped that Sookpilal would at any rate remain friendly for the future.

(1) Judicial Proceedings, January 1866, Nos. 34 to 36.  
Judicial Proceedings, March 1866, Nos. 25 to 29.  
Judicial Proceedings, April 1866, Nos. 103 to 106.  
Judicial Proceedings, June 1866, Nos. 79 to 82.  
Judicial Proceedings, November 1866, Nos. 125 & 126.  
Judicial Proceedings, January 1867, Nos. 79 to 83.  
Judicial Proceedings, March 1867, Nos. 17 & 18.

(2) Judicial Proceedings, April 1867, Nos. 130 to 134.





In November 1868, the Governor General's Agent at Manipur

Raids in 1868-69.

reported that the Lushais had attacked certain Naga villages be-

longing to that State. This did not appear intimately to affect us, but it was really the first symptom of a general outbreak all along the frontier. Towards the close of December the Magistrate of Sylhet reported that a village near Adampore had been attacked by Kookies, and the Commissioner thought this movement might be connected with that on the side of Manipur. A few days later further reports came to hand, from which it appeared that Sookpial had attacked villages in the Hill Tipperah State, and that a Chief called Rungbhoom fleeing from Sookpial had taken refuge in Sylhet. Almost simultaneously it appeared that a large party of Manipuris under Kanhai Sing, a refugee prince of Manipur, had assembled near the east frontier of Cachar to make a raid into Manipur, while the Lushais were threatening the tea gardens in the south. Kanhai Sing was reported to have considerable influence over the Kookies on the Tipperah side, as was indeed not unlikely, for many villages near Adampore were colonised by Manipuris, and in them Kanhai Sing had raised the force with which he made a former raid in 1865. On the 15th January the Lushais burnt the tea garden of Loharbund in Cachar, and next attacked Monierkhall. After which they were said to be in full march for Manipur. Kanhai Sing was seen with them, and the local officers were strongly of opinion that the attacks upon Sylhet and Cachar were intended to draw off our attention, while a vigorous attempt was made to enter Manipur. Sookpial and Vompilal were supposed to be the Chiefs implicated in the Cachar raids.

The Deputy Commissioner of Cachar lost no time in taking mea-

Punitory measures.

sures for the protection of other outlying gardens.\* An expedition

was organized for the purpose of following up the marauders to their villages. Instructions were given to inflict all possible punishment upon them in the event of their refusal to submit and surrender all captives and refugees. The policy enjoined by Government was that none but the actual offenders should be attacked; that the operations should be completely finished before the early rains; and that on no account should anything be done which would involve operations again in the next year. It was decided by the Commissioner, Mr. Simson,

Expedition of 1869.

in concert with Brigadier-General Nuthall, that two columns of troops,

consisting of the 44th and 7th Native Infantry, and a portion of the Eurasian battery of Artillery, should advance—one along the course of the Dullessury to Sookpial's villages, and the other along the Sonai to

\* The Proceeding volumes of the Bengal Government in the Judicial Department from January 1869 up to June 1873, and in the Political Department from July 1873 up to the separation of Assam, teem monthly with correspondence regarding the "Kookies" and "Lushais". As the narrative in the text is a very condensed one, taken from those prepared by myself and others for the Administration Reports, detailed references to the Proceedings are only given for the more important letters.





Vonpila's villages, while a detachment of the 7th Native Infantry and police should make a feint by marching from Sylhet towards Rungbhoom's friendly villages, and endeavour to effect a junction with the Dullessury column. It was also arranged that a body of the Manipur Rajah's forces should act in co-operation, and that the Tipperah Rajah should afford aid to the party from Sylhet. Tidings, however, received on the 10th February that another raid had been committed by Lushais on the Manipur territory at Kala Naga, prevented the despatch of the Manipur Contingent.

The central column, commanded by General Nuthall, advanced along the Dullessury as far as Pukwa Mookh and the Boolungang River, Failure of central and western columns. when it was detained by heavy and incessant rain for seven days, which rendered the route impracticable, and compelled its return on the 7th March. The Sylhet Detachment under Mr. Baker, accompanied by the Magistrate, Mr. Kemble, reached with some difficulty the River Gootur on the 16th March within sight of the villages of Sookpila and his sister Bamwitangiri, situated on opposite heights. An advance was made towards them, and was opposed by the Lushais, who were, however, easily beaten off; but in consequence of want of supplies, and finding no signs of General Nuthall's column, the party was forced to retire.

The east column, under Major Stephenson, accompanied by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, also experienced heavy rain, Proceedings of the eastern column. but surmounting all obstacles reached Bazar Ghât, on the Sonai River, on the 12th March. Here they were met by messengers with presents from the Lushai villages of Vonpila and his mother Impanoo. The death of Vonpila a few days before was announced, and assurances were given that his tribe had not been engaged in any of the late raids. The attacks on the Sylhet border were ascribed to Sookpila, and those at Nowarbund and Monierkhal to the people of another Chief, called the Deota Rajah. It was decided, therefore, that no hostile measures could be taken against Vonpila's villages, and that it was too late in the season to advance against the more distant tribes; but, in order to make a more effectual demonstration, it was resolved that the Deputy Commissioner, with part of the force, and the battery under Lieutenant Brough, should go on to the villages, a day's march distant, and there conclude negotiations. The nearest village of Moizul was reached in spite of certain angry manifestations, and the chief muntries having presented themselves and tendered their submission on behalf of Impanoo and the infant son of Vonpila, promising to use all endeavours to procure the restoration of the captives and refugees, the whole party returned.

The expedition having failed in its principal objects, the punishment of the tribes concerned in the outrages of 1868-89, and the rescue of the captives taken, it was suggested by the Lieutenant-Governor





to the Government of India that a fresh expedition should be carefully organized and sent into the Lushai country early in the cold weather of 1869-70. Sir W. Grey was of opinion<sup>(1)</sup> that the Lushais would never appreciate our friendship until they had been made to feel our power. He did not wish to raid upon their villages, but to send into their country a force strong enough to overcome all opposition, which should remain there long enough to show that it could go where it pleased, and until the Chiefs were brought to see that their interests lay in keeping the peace. While the country was thus occupied temporarily in force, the question of permanently locating an officer to have charge of the tract as in the Naga and Garo Hills should, he urged, be taken up and considered. This was, in Sir W. Grey's opinion, the only course likely to prove permanently successful.

The Government of India, however,<sup>(2)</sup> objected to any renewal of active military operations against the Lushais. The jungly and wild nature of the country; the unfavourable climate, which renders active operations impossible, except for a short period of the year; the difficulty of inflicting a retribution sufficient to produce a lasting effect on savages possessed of little or no property; and the time that had elapsed since their outrages, were considered in themselves reasons why a military expedition should not be resorted to. The Government of India, moreover, declared itself averse on principle to move bodies of troops and armed police in order to effect reprisals for outrages on any part of our extended frontier, or to admit that when such aggressions or outrages take place, it is imperative to chastise the offenders by following them up for days, and even weeks, within their own fastnesses and hills. The plan which the Government of India wished to see carried into effect towards wild tribes like the Lushais was that which the Lieutenant-Governor touched upon at the close of his proposals, viz., to place a carefully selected and well qualified officer in charge of any difficult tract of country which the ordinary authorities were unable to superintend, who should have the entire control of our relations with the tribes in subordination to the Commissioner. This officer should have means at his disposal to resist sudden attacks, and should encourage the villagers to resist aggressions. He should confer with and take engagements from the Chiefs of wild tribes, demand a nominal tribute, require them to refer quarrels to him, and so place our intercourse with them on an improved footing. Meantime our frontier posts should be strengthened and patrols established. In a demi-official correspondence which passed between the Viceroy, Lord Mayo, and Sir W. Grey in October 1869, and which was afterwards brought on official record, Lord Mayo expressed the strongest objection to any more military expeditions against the Lushais; and suggested settling down protected communities of that tribe outside our Cachar border, arming them and utilising them to repel incursions from beyond. Lord Mayo also advocated placing a Political Agent in Hill Tipperah.

(1) Judicial Proceedings, August 1869, Nos. 222-23.

(2) Judicial Proceedings, November 1869, Nos. 289-308.





While the details of the measures necessary for giving effect to this policy were under consideration, messengers from some of the leading Lushai Chiefs arrived in Cachar to confer with Mr. Edgar, the Deputy Commissioner of that district, with the object of bringing about a better understanding. Mr. Edgar proposed to return to the Lushai country with these messengers, and endeavour with their help to procure a personal interview with some of the principal Chiefs. This proposal was approved, and it was arranged that Mr. Edgar should be attended by a small guard for strictly defensive purposes, and accompanied by Major Macdonald, Officiating Superintendent of Revenue Surveys, Lower Circle, for the special duty of defining the southern boundary of the Cachar District, and obtaining some topographical knowledge of the country beyond.

Mr. Edgar started on this expedition on the 20th December 1869,

and returned after an absence of nearly three months. The most southern point reached by him was Bepari Bazar, a place not far from the village of Sookpilal. At this place he was met by Sookpilal, accompanied by his son. The instructions to Mr. Edgar strictly enjoined him to do nothing likely to entail risk of a collision with any of the tribes. No demand, therefore, was made for reparation or satisfaction for past offences, but Sookpilal was induced to listen to reasonable proposals in respect of our future relations, and he seemed satisfied with the interview and really anxious to cultivate a better understanding. Interviews were in like manner held by Mr. Edgar with several other Chiefs.

A great deal of useful information was acquired regarding the Chiefs and the country generally. Parts of the country, which were hitherto supposed to be almost impassable, were found to contain wide, well-beaten tracks, for the most part traversable on horseback, and extending almost to what was then is shown in the maps as the boundary of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Mr. Edgar's account of his tour and 'Notes on the Tribes' will be found in the Appendix.

In concurrence with Mr. Edgar's recommendations, the following measures were sanctioned for the improvement of our relations with the Lushais. (1)

Mr. Edgar being of opinion that the proposed location of a British officer among the Lushais Policy proposed by him would be most distasteful to the tribes, excite their jealousy, and destroy their confidence in our good intentions, the project was superseded by a proposal that the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, or one of his subordinates, should annually visit the Lushai country, see as many of the Chiefs separately as

(1) Judicial Proceedings, March 1870, Nos. 83 & 84.

Judicial Proceedings, April 1870, Nos. 83, 66 to 68.

Judicial Proceedings, May 1870, Nos. 216 to 219, 246 & 247, 279 to 282.

Judicial Proceedings, July 1870, Nos. 117 & 118.





possible, hear grievances, use his influence for the adjustment of quarrels, and give small presents to the Chiefs, specially rewarding any Chief who has behaved particularly well. To give effect to this policy it was decided that Mr. Edgar himself should re-visit the Lushais during the cold weather of 1870-71. One of the principal objects of his visit was to settle with Sookpilal, or some of his people, a boundary from the borders of Manipur to Hill Tipperah, where ordinary British civil jurisdiction should cease; the tribes making themselves responsible for the peace of the country beyond it.

Other measures which were approved were :—

1. The grant of sunnuds to the Chiefs, specifying the conditions on which they would be left in the undisturbed possession of their lands.

2. The levy of tolls by the Chiefs on people going up to trade with the Lushais. Eventually it was hoped that the tribes would be induced to frequent periodical fairs within the British boundary.

3. The settlement, if possible, of villages along the frontier between our outposts and the present sites of the Lushai villages.

4. The appointment of a Political Agent in Hill Tipperah. One of the reasons for this measure was the general belief that disturbances on our own frontier had frequently arisen from attempts on the part of the hill Chiefs to retaliate for wrongs done to them by the people subordinate to Hill Tipperah.

5. The opening out of two paths, one from Monierkhal to Bongkong, and the other from the Dwarbund road as far as the Rengto range. It was believed that if the tribes were properly managed there would be no difficulty before long in opening a safe bridle-path from Cachar to Chittagong.

The Government of India in its orders upon Mr. Edgar's proposals now disapproved altogether on general grounds of the location of an officer among the Lushais; and suggested that a policy of a defined boundary between the tribes and our territory, not to be crossed by our officers save for occasional friendly visits, should be tried on the Chittagong side as well as on that of Cachar.

Before any of the arrangements suggested by Mr. Edgar could be

Raids of 1871.

carried out, and while he was actually at Sookpilal's village discussing matters with him in January 1871, a series of raids were committed by the Lushais, in concert with the Howlongs and Syloos, Kookie tribes well known to us on the Chittagong frontier, on a more extensively organized scale, and of a far more determined character, than any previous incursions of the kind.

On the morning of the 23rd January, the Cacharee punjee of

Raids on Cachar.

Ainerkhal in the Hylakandy Sub-division of Cachar was burnt, and about 25 persons were killed and 37 taken prisoners. On the same day the Alexandrapore tea-garden was destroyed; Mr. Winchester, a planter





living there, being killed, and his child, a little girl, captured. A few hours later, Cutlicherra, the adjoining garden, was attacked. Messrs. Bagshawe and Cooke, who were in charge of the garden, opposed the raiders most gallantly and drove them away. Another party commenced to attack the lines, but was dispersed by Mr. Cooke with the aid of some coolies; they had, however, killed five and wounded others. Mr. Cooke then, with two Cabul fruit-sellers who happened to be there, and some others, went over to Alexandrapore, recovered Mr. Winchester's body, and brought back some wounded coolies.

On the 24th a second attack was made on Cutlicherra by some 30 Lushais, 15 of whom were armed with guns. Messrs. Bagshawe and Cooke, assisted by some policemen who had arrived the previous night, and some armed servants, fired at and disabled two of the raiders, on which the whole body rapidly retreated.

On the 27th January, a body of Lushais having surprised some sepoy and police of the Monierkhal garden, shot one sepoy and wounded another with a dáo. The head constable in command of the stockade fired upon them and was wounded. They then commenced an attack on the stockade, while a party plundered the coolie lines. The fight lasted all day. Next day the District Superintendent of Police, Mr. Daly, arrived with some sepoy and police. Two sorties from the stockade were unsuccessful; but the Lushais left on the night of the 28th, and their loss was afterwards reported to be 57. Mr. Eglinton, a planter, displayed great gallantry on this occasion, for which he received the thanks of Government, and ultimately the reward of a grant of land.

While the attack was being made on Monierkhal, a party of Lushais went on to the adjoining garden of Darmiakhal, which they plundered but did not burn. All the coolies escaped.

An attack on another garden, Nugdigram, was also made on the 27th, when about 11 persons were killed and 3 carried off. Here, on the following morning, the rear guard of the party of troops and police that had been sent to the relief of Monierkhal was attacked by the raiders. The guard consisted of 8 sepoy, and a constable in charge of coolies carrying provisions. The sepoy made a stand and gave time for the constable and coolies to escape. Eye-witnesses reported that their conduct was most admirable. Eventually they were overpowered, and six of them were killed and one wounded.

On the same day some wood-cutters, on the bank of the Rukni, were surprised by 10 or 12 Lushais. They swam across the river and gained the opposite bank, one of their number being wounded by a spear.

There was then an intermission of raids on this side of the district for more than three weeks, but on the morning of the 23rd February an attack was made on the coolie lines at Julnacherra by a party of Lushais, said to be about 120 in number, who crossed the





river from the west. A patrol of one head constable and four constables was in the lines at the time; they at once fired on the raiders and repulsed them, but not till the latter had killed four persons and wounded three.

In Sylhet some villages near the Chargolla frontier post were attacked. On the 23rd January a village named Cacharipara was almost entirely burnt, more than 20 persons being killed, and some young women carried off. On the 24th a large body attacked a village exactly opposite to the outpost, not further from it than forty or fifty yards, and killed two men. The guard immediately turned out and commenced firing. The raiders returned the fire, but after an hour they were defeated and retired in confusion into the hills.

On the 27th February a village near the Allynuggur outpost was attacked. A party of sepoys and constables was sent out just in time to prevent the raiders escaping into the hills. In the skirmish which ensued several of the Lushais were wounded, but, as usual, were immediately carried off by their brethren. One man, however, was killed, and the police succeeded in bringing in the dead body, to assist in identifying the tribe to which the raider belonged, together with two dâos and ten or twelve guns. Two other corpses were afterwards found in the jungle.

In the latter part of January a party of Lushais made their appearance in Hill Tipperah, burning villages and killing and wounding the villagers. On the 21st the khedda people, who were engaged in elephant-catching some distance south of the Sylhet outposts, were fired on and dispersed; and a village named Pooyasbari was plundered and destroyed. On the 22nd another village, named Boongbari, was burnt. The khedda people said that the assailants were from 200 to 300 strong.

On the 2nd March a hundred men armed with guns and dâos made their appearance on the Goomtee, about 40 miles east of Comillah. They fired on a party of wood-cutters, of whom three were afterwards missing.

About the same time 500 Kookies were reported east of the Chagulniah Thannah in the Tipperah District, but they never came into our territory, and appear to have done but little damage to life, and only to have burnt and plundered the deserted homesteads of the Tipperahs.

The Political Agent at Manipur reported on the 25th February that an attack had been made on a village in the hills, south-east of the valley, on the night of the 15th. The village had been destroyed, 40 persons decapitated, and about 20 carried off. Although the raid was made further to the east than any former attack by the Lushais, the Manipuris felt almost certain that the raiders were of that tribe. The Political Agent thought that the raid was on account of Vonolel's death.





From the time when reports of these events first reached the Government, continual instructions were issued to the local officers, impressing on them the necessity for exerting themselves to obtain information of the movements and doings of the hill tribes, and especially to collect evidence as to those implicated in the raids committed. The reports received of the identity of the tribes concerned in these several outrages were however for a long time various and conflicting.

Mr. Edgar, Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, who, whilst these disturbances were going on was in the heart of Sookpila's country on the Dullessury, and was to all outward appearance treated with great friendliness by Sookpila himself, received warning that a party of Syloos from Savoonga's villages, with Lenkam, son of Vonolel, had gone to raid in the direction of Adumpore. His return to Cachar was fortunately effected without encountering any of the armed parties.

On the 5th February Major Graham, Deputy Commissioner of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, reported that a messenger of his had come back from the Kookie country, bringing information that a large body of Howlongs, under the Chiefs Lal Savoola and Seipaya, had been concerned in the Cachar raids; whereas on the 9th March the Commissioner of Dacca reported that Mr. Edgar's information with regard to the same raids implicated Vonolel's sons Lalboora and Jongdong, in eastern Cachar, and Savoonga and Lungboong, Syloos, on the west. This latter intelligence was in a measure confirmed by a portion of the plunder from the Alexandrapore factory having been brought for sale in the Kassalong bazaar on the Chittagong side by some of Savoonga's men, although it was given out by them, most probably falsely and designedly, that they had bought the articles from Sookpila, with whom they were on known terms of enmity. Subsequently, information was received that Mary Winchester had been seen by Rutton Poea, a friendly Chittagong Chief, in a village belonging to Savoonga, and a negociation for her ransom was set on foot, but failed.

On the 20th February the Agent at Manipur reported that a numerous body of Lushais had been met about the middle of January by a khedda force of Manipur sepoys, that they had apparently intended raiding in Manipur, but meeting an armed force had turned westward. They said they belonged to the villages of Vompila and his mother Impanu.

Subsequently, a woman who was carried away in the raid on Manipur, escaped and gave information implicating Vonolel and his sons, Vompila and Poiboi, also Lenkam and Impanu; and a Lushai woman belonging to the village of Vonolel's brother Thoilal, who was ransomed from another tribe, gave very similar information, adding that the others named were under the guidance of both Sookpila's and Vompila's people.





These and other particulars, so far as they could be reconciled with the known relations of the clans among themselves, led to the conclusion that the sons of Vonolel, certain of the Howlong Chiefs, and certain of the Syloo Chiefs, acting in concert, committed the raids in Cachar.

The information as to the raids in Sylhet was more doubtful. The Magistrate of Sylhet was of opinion, from the evidence of a Kookie captive, and from private information, that the raid on the 27th February at Alynugger was committed by people of Sookpila, as two of his sons, and also some followers of his sister Vanaitang, were said to have been recognised.

This was also to some extent confirmed by a Tipperah woman, who was taken captive and contrived to make her escape; but Mr. Edgar and the Commissioner considered the connection of Sookpila with these raids to be improbable, for many specious reasons. Although, therefore, Sookpila's complicity was quite possible, and in fact reconcilable with his friendly behaviour to Mr. Edgar, on the supposition that the District of Sylhet was regarded by the Lushais as a distinct territory, such as Manipur or Hill Tipperah, yet, in consideration of the disposition evinced by Sookpila in his conduct towards Mr. Edgar, and other circumstances in his favor, it was considered undesirable, and politically inexpedient, to treat him as an enemy on mere suspicion.

The question of the measures which should be adopted to punish the tribes concerned in these atrocious raids, to recover the numerous British subjects who were captives in their hands, and to prevent, in the most effectual manner, a repetition of their incursions for the future, engaged the most earnest attention of Government.

The occurrence of the raids, which took place in spite of the efforts of friendship by the frontier officers, seemed to prove incontestibly that the policy of conciliation alone was utterly powerless and insufficient to protect our frontier from outrage by the remoter tribes. The policy unanimously recommended by the local officers was that raids like those of 1871 should be met by condign punishment, in the shape of a military occupation of the offending villages during as long a period as possible, the seizure of their crops and stored grain, and the forced submission of their Chiefs; after that, by the steady endeavour of the frontier officers, to influence them and promote trade; and, finally, by a system of frontier posts, combined with a line of road running north and south from the Cachar frontier to that of Chittagong.

In a Minute dated the 18th May 1871, the Lieutenant-Governor explained his own views on the subject, which were in favour of a military exploration of the country rather than of measures of pure retaliation. Certain points should, Sir G. Campbell thought, be secured as a convenient location for troops to be posted in the centre of the Lushai country, and to establish the means of maintaining communication with them. If the people submitted, we should treat with them and demand surrender of our captive subjects; and if a fair amount of





success were attained in that way, we should enter into friendly relations with them: but if they resisted, we should use force and compel respect.

After a full discussion the Government of India decided that an armed expedition should be made into the Lushai country during the ensuing cold weather.

The following were the orders of the Governor General in Council, dated the 11th July 1871:—

RESOLUTION.—The Viceroy and Governor General in Council considers that these papers show that, in the opinion of all the authorities who have been consulted, an armed expedition into the Lushai country during the ensuing cold season will probably have the effect of preventing the recurrence of the outrages committed in British territory last spring, and would be one effectual means for permanently establishing the security of our frontier.

2. While His Excellency in Council fully agrees in this opinion, so clearly expressed and sustained by such convincing arguments, he has arrived at the conclusion, that armed intervention in these districts is necessary, with great regret. The general policy of Government towards the tribes who inhabit the country lying between the Cachar and Chittagong Districts and to the east of Hill Tipperah, as described in the papers noted below,<sup>(1)</sup> is unchanged. But the cruel raids that have been perpetrated for some years on various parts of the frontier, more specially on the tea gardens in the Cachar District, show that the friendly intentions of Government have not as yet been understood or fully appreciated by many of the tribes; and there is some reason to suppose that the leaders of the raids and their followers may have imbibed the idea that we are either unable or unwilling to take active measures for the punishment and repression of such outrages.

3. The information as to the actual perpetrators of the raids is as yet extremely incomplete. The tribal divisions do not appear to be very decidedly marked, and it is difficult to trace particular outrages or raids to particular tribes or villages. There is, indeed, little or no room to doubt that the most prominent offenders came from the country of the Howlongs and Syloos; but these names are used with much indefiniteness, and it appears that although the names of some of the leaders are known with tolerable certainty, their followers most probably did not belong exclusively to any one particular section or tribe, but were attracted by a love of plunder from various parts of the country to the Chief whom they may have followed. Under these circumstances, His Excellency in Council is of opinion that the object of the expedition, which it is necessary to send into the country, cannot be one of pure retaliation, and that much discrimination will be needed in dealing with the different Chiefs.

4. If, during the progress of the expedition, guilt can with certainty be brought home to any particular villages, punishment must follow. The surrender of Chiefs who, like the Howlong Sungbongah, are known to hold or to have lately held British subjects in captivity, should be demanded, and, in the event of non-compliance, their houses and property should be destroyed. The restoration of the captives should be insisted on, and every effort made for their deliverance. When it is ascertained that particular inhabitants of a village have taken part in a raid, without complicity on the part of the village as a whole, the infliction of a fine on the village, and the surrender or punishment of the guilty individuals, would probably be sufficient. In some cases it may appear desirable to take and detain either the leading Chiefs or others as hostages for future good behaviour. His Excellency in Council does not anticipate any formidable armed resistance to the advance of the troops; but if hostility is met with, resisting villages should be attacked and burnt, and the surrounding crops destroyed.

(<sup>1</sup>) To Government of Bengal, No. 1338, dated 18th September 1869.

To Government of Bengal, No. 6A, dated 29th October 1869.

To Government of Bengal, No. 1126P., dated 30th June 1870.





5. It must, however, always be borne in mind that retaliation is not the only object of the expedition. The main end in view is to show these savages that they are completely in our power; to establish friendly relations of a permanent character with them; to make them promise to receive in their villages, from time to time, Native agents of our own; to make travelling in their districts safe to all; to show them the advantages of trade and of commerce; and to demonstrate to them effectually that they have nothing to gain and everything to lose by placing themselves in a hostile position towards the British Government.

6. With this view it will be necessary that the expedition should be attended, as far as practicable, by Chiefs belonging to friendly tribes; and that such use should be made of their people and followers as the circumstances of the case will admit. Rutton Pea and Sookpila may be instanced as Chiefs whom it may be found expedient to influence and employ in this manner.

7. The details of the expedition, the strength and composition of the force to be employed, and the special equipment in arms and clothing, if such be deemed necessary, will be carefully considered and determined in the Military Department, in direct communication with the Bengal Government; but the papers appear to the Viceroy and Governor General in Council to call for the following general observations:—

I.—His Excellency in Council is of opinion not only that a large force is not required, but that its employment would be objectionable both in a political and military point of view; he would therefore deprecate the moving of troops from a distance. But while he wishes the utmost possible economy to be practised, he desires that nothing should be omitted in the organization of the force which the Military Department may consider necessary to make complete success a certainty.

II.—It appears clear that whatever be the strength and organization of the force, the larger portion of it must advance from the south, and must start from Chittagong. The hills to be invaded are nearer and can be more easily reached than from Cachar. The sea forms the easiest mode of carriage for troops, munitions of war, and stores. The routes from the side of Chittagong are better known than those from the north. There is excellent water communication by the Karnafoli, and by it supplies can be forwarded to within a few days' march of the Sylow villages. The force from Chittagong should be accompanied by Majors Macdonald and Lewin. The capacity in which the first-named officer can most usefully be employed will be considered in the Military Department.

III.—It is, in the opinion of His Excellency in Council, most desirable that, unless objections exist of which His Excellency in Council in this department is not aware, a Madras regiment should form part of the expeditionary force. Cuttack, Vizagapatam, or the Presidency Town would easily supply an efficient battalion.

IV.—At the same time that the main force is despatched from Chittagong, a smaller body should start from the Cachar side, to be accompanied by Mr. Edgar, leaving in the post on the Cachar border a sufficient number of soldiers and police to provide for the security of the district during the absence of the expeditionary force.

V.—The two forces should endeavour to reach, on a particular day, positions from which they would be able to maintain uninterrupted and easy communication with each other. They should start, if possible, by the middle of November, but not later than the 1st December, and the country should be completely evacuated by 10th March.

8. His Excellency in Council leaves it to the Military Department, in direct communication with the local authorities, to decide to what extent police should be employed in all the duties connected with the expedition, and also to what extent, and in what manner, use should be made of co-operative action on the part of the Rajas of Manipur and Tipperah. He will merely at present remark that as much use should be made of the police as is possible, and that it is desirable that the Rajas whose frontier territories have been devastated by the raiders should co-operate. The Raja of Manipur is bound by his engagement to "assist the British Government with a portion of his troops in the event of anything happening on the eastern frontier of the British territories." His Excellency in Council considers it necessary that the Political Agent in Hill Tipperah, whose appointment was sanctioned in October 1870, should be nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor and required to take up his duties before the military operation commence.





9. For various reasons His Excellency in Council considers that it would be inexpedient to hamper the expedition with the task of laying out and clearing a road between Chittagong and Cachar.

10. One or two officers of the Survey Department should accompany the force, both from Chittagong and Cachar, and they should be instructed to make as careful and complete a survey of the country as circumstances will permit. His Excellency in Council also considers it a matter of much importance that advantage should be taken of the expedition to acquire all the information necessary to enable the Bengal Government to submit to the Foreign Department specific proposals (as called for in the letter to the Bengal Government, No. 17C.—P., dated 11th March 1871) regarding the best line of frontier posts to be established on the Chittagong border.

11. The Governor General in Council has lastly to observe that it is an object of primary importance that the preparations for the expedition should be conducted with as much secrecy and with as little bustle as possible. It cannot be looked upon as a campaign, but rather as a military occupation and visitation by detached bodies of troops of as large a portion of the Looshai country as possible, for the purpose above explained, and also to show the Looshais that there is no part of their hills to which our armed forces cannot penetrate.

In accordance with these views two columns were organized—the right or Chittagong column under the command of General Brownlow, C.B., with Captain Lewin as Civil Officer, and the left or Cachar column under the orders of General Bouchier, C.B., accompanied by Mr. Edgar in a civil capacity. By the orders of the Governor General in Council the entire political and military conduct of the expedition was placed in the hands of the military commanders; they were specially instructed that the object of the expedition was not one of pure retaliation, but that the surrender of the British subjects held in captivity should be insisted upon; that they were to establish permanent friendly relations with the savage tribes and convince them that they had nothing to gain and everything to lose by placing themselves in a hostile position towards the British Government.

From the very commencement of the preparations for the expedition it had been seen that success depended more upon the efficiency of arrangements for carriage, than any other contingency.

A committee appointed in Calcutta to consider the question proposed the formation of two corps of 600 men each to accompany each column, and to be under the charge of sirdars and mates appointed from their own body. Each coolie was to receive Rs. 8 a month and Rs. 2 batta while on actual service, and the mates and sirdars Rs. 10 and Rs. 12 each with Rs. 3 batta. They were also to get free rations from the Commissariat while on service. In spite of these liberal terms, the utmost difficulty was found in enlisting coolies in Western Bengal. The proposal to organize a separate corps of these Danghur coolies was therefore abandoned; and when the Government of India ordered that the strength of the two coolie corps should be raised to 4,000 men, including the Commissariat coolies, advantage was taken of the existing Commissariat agency in the Upper Provinces to recruit coolies for the expedition. The Darjeeling Hills were known to be a very favourable ground for obtaining Nepaulese coolies, and Captain Hedayut Ali was deputed there to recruit and organize a corps of hill





coolies, which he very successfully did, with Rs. 2 batta when on actual service. The Nepaulese corps enlisted by Captain Hedayut Ali was intended to accompany the Cachar column, and on or about the 14th November some 800 of them with their mates and sirdars were embarked on board the *Success* and her flats at Doobree. After leaving Goalundo cholera appeared among them, and medical advice was taken at Dacca as to whether they should under the circumstances proceed. The decision was favourable to their continuing their journey; but unfortunately between Dacca and Chuttuck the disease broke out with all its fury, and on reaching the latter place it was found that from deaths and desertion the corps had been reduced from upwards of 800 to 601 men with 6 sirdars and 24 mates. A body of 316 Nepaulese was also got together for service with the Chittagong column. Among these also cholera broke out when *en route* for Chittagong, and they lost 40 of their number. Of other coolies 4,618 were collected throughout the country—a number which from rejections and desertions was reduced before embarkation to 4,403 men. Of these, 1,924 were sent to Cachar and 2,479 to Chittagong; including therefore the Nepaulese coolies, the strength of the corps assigned to the left column was 2,764 men, and of that attached to the right column was 2,791 men. Taking into consideration certain conditions on which men supposed to be missing were really accounted for, the mortality on the Cachar side may be placed at 113, or 5·9 per cent., and among those who went to Chittagong at 109, or 4·3 per cent. The coolies locally available were reserved to meet the contingencies which constantly arise, and both on the Cachar and Chittagong side very much was done by the men thus supplied.

As regards the active part of the campaign, it will be convenient to follow the operations of each column separately, and a commencement will be made with the left or Cachar column.

This force consisted of half a battery of Artillery, a company of Sappers, and 500 men each of the

Operations of the Cachar column. 22nd Punjab Native Infantry, 42nd Assam Light Infantry, and 44th Assam Light Infantry; a coolie corps, together with 178 elephants, and 1,200 coolies for commissariat purposes, were also attached to the column. Tipai Mookh, the junction of the Tipai and Barak Rivers, had been fixed upon as the starting place and advanced base of operations, and by the 15th December the greater portion of the force was collected there.

They then marched through a very difficult country, constantly exposed to attacks from enemies who rarely showed themselves, until on the 2nd February they reached Sellam, the Chief Poiboi's stronghold. Before arriving at this village a somewhat spirited encounter took place between the troops and the enemy on the Moorthlang range. The route lay above and parallel to the bed of a nullah about a mile-and-a-half from the camp. The advanced guard was fired into, and presently on all sides a sharp fire was opened. The enemy were found in considerable force, but were attacked by the 44th Native Infantry