VALLEY OF MANIPUR

GIAN PUBLICATIONS
DELHI-110007

Distributed by

Mittal Publishers' Distributors
1857, Trinagar,
DELHI-110035

Reprinted in 1980

Published by

Mrs. J. D. Garg
Gian Publications
11435, Shakti Nagar,
DELHI-110007

Printed at

Gian Offset Printers
Shahzada Bagh
DELHI-110035

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ACCOUNT

OF THE

VALLEY OF MUNNIPORE.

BETWEEN the British Provinces of Assam and Cachar, and the North-Western portion of the territory of Burma, lies an immense extent of mountainous country, inhabited by numerous mountain tribes. In this great mountain tract one or two valleys occur. The largest—that of Munnipore—is, from its connection with the British Government, and from the tribes around it all admitting its supremacy, the most important. Of this valley and mountain territory, I purpose to give some account.

Lying between latitude 23° 50′ and 25° 30′ North, and longitude 93° 10′ and 94° 30′ East, the country in question is bounded on the North and West by the British Provinces of Assam and Cachar, and on the East by the Kubbo valley now subject to Burma. To the North-East and South, the boundary is not well defined, and would much depend upon the extent to which the Munnipore Government might spread its influence amongst the hill tribes in those directions, but in the North-East it may be denoted by a line drawn North from the North-Western corner of the Kubbo valley, until it strikes the Assam boundary, and in the South by one drawn West from the source of the Numsailung River, the fixed South-East boundary, till its junction with the Tooyai River.

Of the space comprised in these bounds, the valley of Munnipore occupies nearly the centre. It is called by the Munniporees, "Meithei-leipāk" The Burmese call it Kathé, the Bengalees Moglai, and Assamese Meklé. The area of the whole territory is about 7,000 square miles, and that of the central valley about 650.

The principal rivers flowing through the valley, are the Kongba, Eeril, and Thobal, which all take their rise in the hills to the North and North-East. In the rains their volume of water is considerable, but in the dry weather, they contain scarcely sufficient to float the small canoes in use in the country. The Eeril and Thobal Rivers fall into the Kongba, which forms the drain for all the waters flowing into the valley, carrying them off by Shoogoonoo through the Southern hills into the Ningthee.

Much of the valley is at all seasons covered with water. It seems to me indeed at one time to have formed a large lake, and the piece of water in the South called the Logtak, appears to be an unfilled but rapidly filling remnant of it.

Climate

The climate of the Munnipore valley is good, but the temperature is higher than from the elevation, 2,500 feet, would have been expected. This excess in temperature may probably be owing to the reflection of heat from the sides of the lofty mountains surrounding The months of November, December, January, and February may be reckoned on as dry months. In November, dense fogs settle over the valley during the night, not clearing until the middle of next day. In December, January, and beginning of February, hoar frosts are prevalent. Whilst these prevail, the atmosphere is delightfully clear, but vegetation, excepting on the skirts of the hills, is burnt up. Young plants, if not protected, die. The leaves of the plantain wither and become brown as if scorched by fire.. The remaining eight months are more or less rainy. But though the number of rainy days is greater, the quantity of rain that falls is less than in the plains of Bengal. At all seasons, when it does not rain, or is not very cloudy, dew falls heavily, and before the sun has set, the grass is usually saturated. January is the coldest, and May and June are the hottest months in the year. In May, the hill streams begin to rise, and they usually remain full until October. During this time, communication with Bengal or Burma is difficult, tedious, and often very dangerous.

The wind blows chiefly from the South-West, and whilst it does so, the country retains its usual healthiness. An Easterly wind, continued for any time, brings with it sickness. Storms are very rare, and those terrific peals of thunder, and brilliant flashes of lightning for which mountain countries are celebrated seldom occur. Sheet lightning is

most frequent, and luminates the horizon in the cloudless evenings of the mildest weather. In these fine nights, more especially in September and October, igneous meteors, such as falling stars, are very observable. And at times a sudden splendour, as if rising from the earth, accompanied by a loud report, occurs. This Munniporee superstition has rendered into a warning of their Raja's death. Earthquakes are not frequent, but their shocks are sometimes severe, causing a feeling as of giddiness, and a slight nausea. On the occurrence of an earthquake, an universal shout of "ngā chāk," "ngā chāk," "fish and rice," "fish and rice," is raised, from a notion that it has an effect on their food, and as a prayer apparently that the supply of fish and rice be not diminished.

Disease increases as Munnipore becomes more connected with the West. Until lately, venereal disease was nearly unknown, or if it occurred, was mild and easy of cure. It is now virulent. Small-pox during the last two years has been constantly present. Formerly, its visits never exceeded two or three months, and the disease was mild. The general mild character still remains. Fever is a general disease, worse in some localities than others. Cholera, not long ago unknown, has, in occasional visits, committed great ravages. Generally, however, the country is extremely healthy, and many of the inhabitants attain an advanced age.

If forest trees ever covered the valley of Munnipore as they now do those of the Jeeree and of Kubbo they have now, except in one spot, entirely disappeared. Where not cultivated it is covered with dense grass and reed jungle. The soil, a rich alluvial of great depth, and the climate, are such that almost every crop might be cultivated successfully, but for reasons which will be hereafter shown, the cultivation is very limited. The chief crop is a species of rice which ripens in six months. It is long grained, and of very superior quality, and is reaped in the end of November and beginning of December. The inferior sorts of rice which ripen in three or four months are cultivated, but to a very small extent. Pulses of different kinds, pepper, onions, &c., are raised, but in no great quantities. Tobacco and sugar-cane grow luxuriantly. Produce of the kitchen garden of Europe was introduced by British Officers, but soon deteriorated, and is now nearly extinct. Potatoes are generally very inferior, and though cultivated, are eaten by very few. The fruits of the country, with the exception of the pine-apple

some mangoes, and perhaps the guava, are of the most inferior description. They are all sour. The Natives, however, prefer them to the sweet varieties, and eat them with great relish with salt and red pepper.

The origin of the Munniporees is obscure, and the written records having mostly been composed since they became Hindoos, are not worthy of much credit. From the most credible traditions, the valley appears originally to have been occupied by several tribes, the principal of which were named Koomul, Looang, Moirang and Meithei, all of whom came from different directions. For a time, the Koomul appears to have been the most powerful, and after its declension, the Moirang tribe. But by degrees the Meithei subdued the whole, and the name Meithei has become applicable to all. Since their conversion to Hindooism the Meitheis have claimed for themselves a Hindoo descent This claim, in his report on the Eastern Frontier, Captain Pemberton rejects, and says, "we may safely conclude them to be descendants from a Tartar Colony from China." For this conclusion, I can see no reason, and think there is far more ground to conclude them to be descendants of the surrounding hill tribes. The languages spoken by these tribes are in their pristine state; I conceive, then, that in their spoken language, an indication of the descent of the Munniporees might be found. Tradition brings the Moirang tribe from the South, the direction of the Kookies, the Koomul from the East, the direction of the Murrings, and the Meithei and Looang from the North-West, the direction of the Koupooees. The languages of the Murrings, Kookies and Koupooees, are all very similar, and as the Koomul, &c., the off shoots of these tribes were, as before said, at different periods the dominant tribes in the valley, it might be expected that the present language of the people, united under the name of Meithei, would have a very apparent likeness to these languages, and such is the case. All these tribes also have traditions amongst themselves, that the Munniporees are off-shoots from them. These traditions then, and the composite nature of the language, appear to me to afford more reason for supposing the Munniporees to be descended from the surrounding hill tribes than from a Tartar Colony from China. Besides this, the stories of their ancestors, which at times the Munniporees relate amongst themselves, show, that up to a very recent period, they retained all the customs of hill people of the present day. Their superstition too has preserved relics, which alone would have led

to the suspicion of an originally close connection between them and Nagas. The ceremony denominated "Phumban kaba" or "ascending the throne" is performed in Naga dress, both by the Rajah and Ranee, and the "Yim chau" or "great house," the original residence of the Meithei Chief is, though he does not now reside in it, still kept up, and is made in the Naga fashion.

The records of Munnipore contain a long list of Chiefs, unaccompanied, however, by any notice of their actions, further than the occasional killing of distinguished members of adverse tribes, through whose fall the Meithei influence was increased. But by a Shan account of the Shan Kingdom of Pong, considered authentic, and quoted by Captain Pemberton, it appears that Samlong, a brother of the Pong King, in returning to his own country from Tipperah in 777 A. D., descended into the Munnipore valley at Moirang, the chief village of the tribe of that name. Moirang appears to have been then independent, but certainly not prosperous, for so trifling was the tribute Samlong obtained, that he ordered it to be offered to the deities of the place, and to the present day Moirang makes a yearly offering as then directed. From Moirang, Samlong proceeded to Meithei. He found the Meitheis in the same miserable condition as the people of Moirang, and excused their paying tribute, demanding from them only that they should dress more decently than they did, and eat pawn instead of masticating bits of dried fish, a habit which appears to have been universal amongst them.

At the period before mentioned, the Shan Kingdom of Pong was one of considerable importance. Its capital was Mogaung, and it embraced in its limits the whole country between Ava and Assam, Kubbo and Yunan. It exacted obedience from Assam, Cachar and Tipperah, and the Shan Chiefs in the Kubbo valley were its tributaries.

After Samlong's visit for nearly seven hundred years, the annals of Munnipore record nothing worthy of notice. During this period the Meithei supremacy had been established, and the Meithei Chief, was in 1474, a person of importance, sufficient to permit a Pong King to demand his daughter in marriage. The demand was acceded to. Previous to this, the Pong King had promised one of his own daughters to the Chief of Khumbat. She was on her way to Khumbat, when she changed her mind, and with her father's consent, married another. Considering himself

disgraced, the Khumbat Chief vowed revenge, and found in 1475 an opportunity of gratifying it by carrying off the Munniporee bride of the Pong King, whilst she was being escorted to Mogaung by the Pong Ambassadors. This act brought upon him the united forces of Pong and Munnipore, by whom he was immediately attacked, his fortress reduced, and himself obliged to fly. The territory he had governed was transferred to Munnipore. After the reduction of Khumbat, Keengkomba, the Pong King, accompanied Keeyamba the Meithei Chief, to Munnipore, and as his ancestor Samlong, had caused alterations in the manner of dressing, he caused a change in the style of building houses. The Munniporee Chief's Naga house appears to have been then abandoned as a residence, and his present one, the "Sungkaie poon see ba," or "long-lived house" to have been made. This Pong King presented to the Raja a golden paundān, a silver-mounted dāo, and a "doolai" or litter. These, and a sacred spear, descended for a time from Raja to Raja, and were the insignia of royalty, but since the expulsion of the Raja Marjeet Sing by the Burmese, they have never all of them been in the possession of any Raja.

During the two and quarter centuries succeeding this period, the Pong Kingdom was almost entirely absorbed in that of Ava, whilst in Munnipore nothing worthy of notice occurred. In fact, until about 1714, the annals of his country possess but little interest even to a Munniporee. In that year, Pamheiba, who appears to have been a Naga boy, brought up and adopted by the Raja Churai Romba, shot his adopted father, it is said accidentally, whilst hunting, and succeeded him. He resisted successfully, and made captive several parties sent from the West to exact from him tribute. He several times invaded the Burmese dominions, and even reached the Capital. But he made no permanent conquest, and his last expedition, in the year 1749, resulted in a retreat, his safety in which was only secured by his giving up his daughter to the Burmese King. Pamheiba, or Gureeb Nawaz, had three sons, named Sham Shaee, Oogut Shaee and Burut Shaee. The eldest Sham Shaee, accompanied his father in his last unsuccessful expedition. In their absence, Oogut Shaee usurped the guddee, and prohibited their return to Munnipore. Gureeb Nawaz in consequence returned to Burma, and sought the aid of the Burmese King against his rebel son. None was afforded, and shortly afterwards in again attempting to reach

Munnipore he and Sham Shaee were murdered by order of this unnatural son and brother. Ambition and lust, it appears, urged Oogut-Shaee to this crime, the object of his desire being one of his father's wives. The position acquired with so much guilt, Oogut Shaee was not long permitted to retain. He was expelled, and succeeded by his brother Burut Shaee, who two years after died. On the death of Burrut Shaee, the succession devolved on Gouroo Sham, the eldest son of the murdered Sham Shaee. This Gouroo Sham was a cripple, and it is related that, considering himself from his infirmity unfit to be sole ruler, he associated with himself his brother Jace Sing, or Chingtung Komba, and that they ruled alternately. This arrangement lasted until Gouroo Sham's death, about 1764, when the sole authority fell to Chingtung Komba, who held it up to 1798.

After the death of Gureeb Nawaz, the Burmese turned their arms against Munnipore. Unable to cope with them, the Munniporees sought for a protector, and during the alternate rule of Gouroo Sham and Jaee Sing, they applied to the British Government for aid, offering to pay what appears to me almost a fabulous annual tribute. It was determined to assist them, and an Officer with a Detachment reached Casspoor, the then Capital of Cachar, with the purpose of advancing to their aid, but was re-called. Jaee Sing's long reign was a series of flights from Burmese invaders, who committed the most frightful cruelties on the inhabitants. In their different invasions, they set up different Rajas, who all succumbed to Jaee Sing on the retirement of the predatory band that had raised and supported them.

A short time before the reign of Gureeb Nawaz, Hindooism began to be introduced, but it made very little progress, and the frequent inroads of the Burmese after that Raja's death could not have tended to its improvement. The mass of the people in fact had no care for it, but Jaee Sing in 1798 having abdicated in favour of his eldest son, set out to Nuddea on a pilgrimage, and there died in the following year.

Jace Sing, better known as Chingtung Komba, left many sons, and the history of Munnipore for twenty-three years after his death is a mere account of their struggles for the guddee, the details of which possess no interest. No trait of heroism occurs to relieve the dark scene of murder and treachery. Rabiu Chunder, the eldest son, was murdered and succeeded by his brother Modoo Chunder, who again was murdered and succeeded

by another brother, Chourjeet Sing. And Chourjeet had no sooner succeeded, than his brother Marjeet Sing conspired against him. Having failed, Marjeet fled to Burma, where he obtained the aid of an army; returned with it in 1812, and expelled Chourjeet Sing. Up to 1819, Marjeet kept his engagements with the Burmese, and was unmolested by them, but in that year having refused to pay fealty to the Burmese monarch, he was attacked by a Burmese army, and was the first to leave the country in ignominious flight. In this invasion the Burmese nearly depopulated the country; Marjeet fled to Cachar where his brother Chourjeet had taken refuge from him. Gumbheer Sing, and another younger brother, was also there. Certain pergunnahs, were by the Cachar Raja, assigned to the three brothers for their support; but not satisfied with these, they usurped the greater portion of the dominions of their benefactor. They carried on at the same time their own quarrels with one another, and thus rendered Cachar nearly as miserable as they had Munnipore. This state of things continued up to 1823, when the first war between the British and Burmese commenced. The Burmese Troops advanced into Assam and Cachar, causing much alarm in our then frontier district of Sylhet. Chourjeet Sing, Marjeet Sing, and Gumbheer Sing appear then to have forgotten their animosities, and to have begged the protection of the British Government. Negotiations were in consequence opened with Gumbheer Sing in 1823, and a party of 500 Munniporees under his command taken into the pay of the British Government. With this party he co-operated with the British Troops in expelling the Burmese from Cachar, and proceeding on, obliged them to evacuate Munnipore. This force subsequently increased to 2,000 men, and denominated the Munnipore Lévy, was placed under the Command of Captain Grant, who with it effected the expulsion of the Burmese from the Kubbo Valley as far South as Kallé, making the Ningthee River the Eastern boundary of the Munnipore territory. With a view, however, of pleasing the Burmese, this boundary was afterwards at the desire of the British Government given up, and the Eastern base of the Yomadoung hills adopted in its stead. Than the base of the hills the river was a far better boundary, and the adoption of the former has brought upon the British Government an expense of Rupees 500 a month as compensation to Munnipore for alienated territory, and made it necessary, from the predatory habits of the tribes inhabiting the Yoma-

doung hills constantly endangering it, to secure the peace of the frontier by retaining at Munnipore a Political Agent. Gumbheer Sing having, through the assistance afforded by the British Government, obtained possession of Munnipore, was by the treaty of Yandabo declared independent. Up to his death in 1834, he was employed in coercing the hill tribes and in bringing down from them the fugitives who had taken refuge amongst them from Burmese oppression.

On the death of Gumbheer Sing, Nur Sing, who had been Senaputtee, found himself to be the most powerful man in Munnipore. He might easily have put aside the infant son of Gumbheer Sing, and have assumed the guddee himself, but with a moderation not shown by any of his predecessors, he raised the infant to the guddee, declaring himself regent during the minority. Nur Sing conducted the duties voluntarily imposed on himself with ability and firmness, and preserved the guddee for the infant Raja, against the attempts of various Princes to wrest it from him. But the more the regent evinced his fitness to rule, the more was he hated by the young Raja's mother, who looked on him as an obstacle to her ambition which ought to be removed. Accordingly, in concert with her paramour, she planned a conspiracy to murder the regent, which in January 1844 she attempted to carry into effect. The regent was set upon at the evening worship, and narrowly escaped with his life, after having been severely wounded. Some of the conspirators were apprehended, and the Ranee, fearing the consequences of the miscarriage of her plot, fled from the country, taking her young son, the Raja, with her. This flight was considered an abdication, and the guddee was taken possession of by Nur Sing, who governed the country until his death in 1850. In 1835, at the commencement of the regency of Nur Sing, the British Government resolved to discontinue altogether connexion with the Troops of Munnipore, and to leave it optional to the authorities to maintain the Levy or not. By a mistaken policy, as will be shown hereafter, the Troops were not only retained but increased. Nur Sing was succeeded by his brother Debindro Sing, a man with a prepossessing exterior but no intellect. Whilst Debindro Sing was making preparations for the "Phumben Kābā" or "ascending the throne," Gumbheer Sing's son, Chunder Kirtee Sing, who had now attained man's estate, and who by no fault of his own had lost the guddee, was busy in conjunction with some of

Nur Sing's sons concerting an attack upon him. Having finished their arrangements, they left Cachar with a few followers, and had Debindro Sing had any energy they might have been annihilated in the mountains or prevented from entering the valley of Munnipore. But by some fatality he would not understand his danger, and offering only slight opposition to their crossing the hills, allowed them to establish themselves at Lumlangtong, a former residence of the Raja Gumbheer Sing. Here they were joined by most of the adherents of the two Rajas, Gumbheer Sing and Nur Sing, and speedily effected Debindro Sing's expulsion. From his brother's death up to his flight, Debindro Sing's tenure of the Rajaship was only three months. He fled to Cachar, and had not recovered from the fatigue of his flight, when he was joined by his nephews, Nur Sing's sons, who had accompanied Chunder Kirtee Sing and been so instrumental in expelling him. These young men dissatisfied with Chunder Kirtee Sing, had, with the purpose of overthrowing him, suddenly attacked him. They were unsuccessful, and hence their flight. Persuaded by them, Debindro Sing set out from Cachar on an attempt to reach Munnipore, but was driven back before he got half way across the hills. Again he took refuge in Cachar, but to prevent a repetition of such attempt, he was removed to a distance from the Munnipore frontier. Subsequent to this, two more attacks by Princes from Cachar were made upon Chunder Kirtee Sing. These frequent attempts of Princes from Cachar to upset the Government of Munnipore were peculiarly distressing to the country, and most prejudicial to British influence. The Princes in Cachar were frequently warned that if found preparing for such attempts, they would be removed to a distance from the frontier. Warnings were ineffectual to deter them, and the example set by the Princes in Cachar was, it was reported about, to be followed by those in Burma. The accession of a Prince from Burma would at once destroy British influence. Such a contingency it was necessary to prevent. With this view, and for the benefit of the country of Munnipore, Chunder Kirtee Sing was declared under the special protection of the British Government, and that Government undertook to oppose and punish any one attempting to upset him. As warnings had been disregarded by the Princes in Cachar so was this declaration, and the threat contained in it had to be put in force against a party of Princes who were pursued by British Troops from Cachar into

Munnipore. Since this occurrence no other attempts have been made, and Chunder Kirtee Sing being only twenty-seven years of age, there is every prospect of his long holding the guddee. His eldest son has been made Joobraj.

The foregoing sketch of the history of Munnipore might have been lengthened by details of warfare carried on by certain Munnipoorees against their conquerors, but as this warfare was not organized, but consisted of acts of vengeance of isolated bodies or individuals, whilst the country was without a recognized head, and from which nothing resulted, I have not thought them worth recording. Nor have I thought it worth while to mention, after the expulsion of Marjeet Sing, and, whilst the Burmese were still in possession of the country, the simultaneous assumption of Rajaship by several minor Princes, and the consequent quarrels and fights between their respective followers; for although the details would illustrate the anarchy prevailing in the country, the acts of the Princes did not affect except to strengthen the supremacy of the Burmese.

In their various invasions of the country, the Burmese carried into captivity the larger portion of the inhabitants. Of those not made captives some escaped to the British provinces, some managed to subsist themselves amongst the hill people, and some amongst the marshes in the Southern part of the valley. From the latter, and from a few who returned from the British provinces and from the hills, has sprung the present population, which may be estimated at 50,000

This population is composed of different classes. The principal is the Meithei, next the Phoongnai, after which the Teng kul, the Ayokpa, the Kei, the Loee and Mussulman. The Meithei population is divided into four parts called "Punnahs," which are designated in the order of their seniority "Kaphum," "Lai phum," "Ahalloop" and "Niharoop." The Punnahs perform "laloop" or service for ten days in rotation, thus bringing every male in the country above sixteen years of age on duty, ten days in forty. This service is a due to the State, none are remunerated for it. The head of each family or tribe furnishes the proper persons for the different services required of that tribe. The immediate family of the "Peepa" or head of the tribe, is not called upon to perform any heavy duty. Its post is near the Raja, acting as "Ningthau selba" or personal attendants. The family next in seniority has a heavy duty to

perform in the "Lai kai." The third has the "Lal mee" and the fourth the "Sungsa roi." The laloop of the second and fourth families works generally in unison. Their chief duty is to make houses and bridges for which they cut and bring the materials. The Lalmee was in former days the Soldier of Munnipore, but since the raising of the Troops before mentioned in the time of the Raja Gumbeer Sing, the Lalmee's duties have become civil. Of the families after the fourth, the places are not fixed, some are "Khoot naiba" or artificers, as gold-smiths, black-smiths, carpenters, workers in brass and bell metal, &c. &c., who all have their laloop in which they perform any work in their respective lines they may be called upon to do; some again attend to the Raja's elephants, some to his ponies, &c. The Brahmins even have their laloop, during which they cook for the Raja and their idol Govindjee. In fact, excepting the lowest description of service, there is scarcely any which is not performed by some part of the Meithei population. The heads of the Punnahs and all the Officers required in connection with them, are appointed by the Raja from amongst his favourites, and generally without reference to their origin. The appointment to office exempts the holder's immediate family from the performance of any heavy duty, and if above a certain rank, entitles his heirs to the distinction of bearing silver spears and being horsemen in attendance on the Raja, distinctions, however, not now-a-days, much coveted. A fixed allowance is not attached to any office. Some Officers are entitled to "Loee-il," that is, to a follower or followers, who perform any work they may be set to. The Loee-ils dislike this, and usually compound with those they should attend for a sum of money, which having paid, they remain at their homes. Individuals belonging to any laloop who are anxious to remain at home, can do so by paying their chief Officers. Sick people even have to pay if they miss their laloop. These monies are the perquisites of the Officers, and form the chief emoluments of office. A few high Officers have Naga villages given to them. Until lately, the privilege of "Yim tinaba" was given to Officers of high rank, that is, the family or tribe from which he sprang or any other made over to him by the Raja had to serve him—thus if he was building a house all the tribe assisted, and if his wife went abroad, the wives of the tribe attended her. This was a most distasteful custom, and was done away with by Debindro Sing.

The Phoongnai, is divided into Hitakphalba and Potsungba. The Hitakphalba is called so from his having to attend to the Raja's hooka. The Potsungba spreads the cloth for sitting on. The duties engrafted on these are too many to enumerate.

Of the Tengkul, the chief duty is gardening. They sometimes also stones and make vessels of that material. Both the Phoongnai and gkul were originally slaves of the Raja.

On a change taking place in the rulers of the country, it was formerly the custom to seize the slaves of those who had held office and to divide them amongst the adherents of the new ruler. This practice, when the changes of rulers became so very frequent, as it latterly did, was found to entail upon individuals more hardship than the worth of the slave. Slaves therefore when seized were not distributed amongst adherents, but made to work for the Raja under the name of Ayokpa. Their principal work is gardening. They used to be recruited by children of free men by slaves, but this is now discontinued.

The particular duty of the Kei (originally slaves of the Raja) was to provide and pound the rice for the Raja's household. Formerly they were sufficient for this purpose, but they are not so now, and in consequence, what is called a Kei-roi-thau has been fixed upon the residents, with certain exceptions of all places but the Capital. This Kei-roi-thau "or work of Keis" is not confined only to the supply of rice, but may be said to embrace any work or the supply of any article the Raja chooses, and is from this arbitrariness most oppressive.

The Loee population consists of people who pay tribute, and is considered so inferior that the name Meithei is not given to it. Indeed, so much have the Loees been looked down upon, and kept apart, that many of the Loee villages have preserved languages of their own; the Loee population is exceedingly useful. Amongt them are the silk manufacturers, the smelters of iron, the distillers of spirits, the makers of earthen vessels for containing water or for cooking in, the cutters of posts and beams and canoes, manufacturers of salt, fishers, cutters of grass for the Raja's ponies, the payers of tribute in "Sêl," the coin of the country, &c. Of the Loees in the valley, the "Sel Loee" is considered the lowest. As a punishment a Munniporee is sometimes degraded to a Loee. After a short time it is usually remitted; but if not, no punishment could be more severe, for it affects not only the

individual himself, but his family and descendants, who all become Loees. The village of Shoogoonoo is peopled by the descendants of Munniporees made Loees by way of punishment. The villages of the Loees have their Khoollakpa or village chief, their Hunjabas, and Heedungs, who are all appointed by the Raja. The village of Kukching, the seat of the iron manufacturer is under a hereditary chief called Boodheeraj, at the same time that it retains its Khoollakpa. And the Meeyang or people from the West, the grass-cutters, are under one who is styled Kalaraj. The Meeyangs are descendants of people from the Western Plains who were captured in arms against Munnipore, and of some who immigrated of their own accord. At one time they are said to have been very numerous, and their former chief place of residence Meeyang-yim-phan, which is well situated on an elevation raised by manual labour, could not have been thus raised unless they had been numerous. They amongst themselves always speak their own language which is a dialect of Hindee, but they all understand and most of them can speak Munnipuree.

The Munnipuree Mussulman population arose from Munnipuree men having taken as wives Mussulman women before the doing so was much cared about, or before the regular introduction of Hindooism. On the introduction of that religion, they, with their descendants, were obliged to become Mussulmans. This original population was increased by Mussulmans from the West, who came and settled in Munnipore. The Mussulman population appears before the devastation of the country by the Burmese to have attained a very considerable amount, but as was the case with all the other sections of the Munnipore community, the greater portion of it was carried into captivity by these ruthless invaders, and the present Mussulmans are the descendants of the few that then escaped being captured. The Mussulmans are divided into four principal divisions, sepoys, gardeners, turners, and potters. They are under a Kazee, and have a number of other Officers quite disproportioned to their numerical amount. The Kazee is not appointed on account of his knowledge of the laws which ought to govern Mussulmans, but on account of the service he may have done the Raja as a partizan or a menial servant. This arrangement, the whole Mussulman population being very ignorant of the creed they profess, is not attended with the inconvenience which it would be amongst

a better informed people. The Munniporee Mussulmans are very industrious, indeed, I think them the most industrious portion of the population of Munnipore. They hold the same character in Cachar, where a good many are now settled. They, the Phoongnai, Tengkul, &c., serve laloop with the Punnahs.

Before concluding this sketch of the people composing the population it may be as well here to notice the sepoys of Munnipore, for although properly belonging to the Punnahs, they have become under, in my opinion, a very mistaken policy, distinct from them in every thing except the universal institution of laloop. When first raised, they were entirely supported by the British Government. Whilst thus supported, their children, when fit for the different duties required of them by their Punnahs, were available for them. And on a casualty occurring, the desire to receive pay lessened the difficulty of filling it up. But when the support of the British Government was withdrawn, and a piece of land was given to each man in lieu of pay, the recruiting of the force was no longer an easy matter. Individuals were forced to become sepoys, and sepoys' sons had to be prohibited from performing other duties in order that they might succeed their fathers. But these sons again begat sons who were again kept from other duties, on the pretext, that they also were to succeed their fathers, and when it was attempted to cause the supernumeraries to take the proper duties of their Punnahs, so much dissatisfaction was created amongst the force, that the authorities were glad to leave them to themselves. In this manner has arisen a population, which being called sepoy, is exempt from almost every duty performed by the rest of the people, and from every tax which increases every year, and which as it increases must weaken the Government of Munnipore. The sepoys are settled at convenient distances in villages around the capital. Should their presence be urgently required, a signal of three guns collects the whole in the course of a day. Each man is entitled to one "purree" and one "sungum" of land, which in English measure amounts to about three acres. This he cultivates and subsists himself on. Duty, as with the Punnahs, is for ten days in forty. But should it be necessary to detain the men beyond this period, they are entitled to rations of rice and salt. The men first raised, having been trained by British Officers, and having seen some service in the field, formed a body of troops which might have opposed successfully an equal

number of Burmese. But of these men only a few ineffectives remain, and the present force, though composed of young men, is not to be compared with the first. Had the Munnipore Government followed after the British superintendence, and support of its troops was withdrawn, the system of training the men, and giving them some ball practice, the deterioration of the force would not have been so great. But not having even attempted this, and having looked only to its numerical increase, it has, whilst increasing in numbers, decreased in efficiency. None of the men, I may say, know how to handle their muskets, and most of them have never fired a shot out of them. Against disciplined troops, such a force would be perfectly useless, and I fear it could not oppose successfully a force of Burmese of numbers much inferior to it. Inefficient, however, as it is, the musket makes it an object of terror to the surrounding hill tribes.

The Munnipore State was re-established by the British Government professedly in order that between their frontier and that of Burma, they

territory. In case of war it is

all could preserve neutrality. By

to become independent, it would naturally be expected at any time lean to the British side, and a British Resident having been placed in the country, it appears to me that he should have encouraged the partiality to the British, and in case of a necessity for the State's taking the British side arising, that he should have endeavoured that it should do so in an efficient state. It is, therefore, I think to be regretted that, when the British superintendence was withdrawn from the troops, they were maintained at a strength they had attained under extraneous support, and I consider it would have been much more for the interest of the State itself, and for that of the British Government, had the troops been reduced to a thousand men, instead of having been retained at the strength they had attained, and afterwards encouraged to increase to the amount they have. To keep up a thousand men in a tolerably efficient state would tax to the utmost the means of this country. It cannot maintain the present amount (including Officers) 3,600 in an efficient state, and as I have before said it is not attempted. The services of the troops of Munnipore, therefore, on an emergency would be of no use. The inefficiency of the force has not escaped the attention of the British Government. Schemes for its im-

provement have been entertained, but as the pressure of circumstances causing their entertainment have ceased, so the schemes have been discarded.

A short time before the accession of Cureeb Nawez, some few Munniporees began to profess Hindooism, and since then their Rajas having successively adopted that faith, the profession of it has extended to nearly all. But although they thus profess Hindooism, they have not given up their ancient worship, and above three hundred deities are still propitiated by appropriate sacrifices of things abhorrent to real Hindoos. Their maibees, that is priestesses, for before the introduction of Hindooism there were no priests, are still in great request, more especially in cases of sickness or adversity, and what they give out as the oracle of the particular deity addressed is reverently listened to and acted on. The Raja's peculiar god is a species of snake called Pakung-ba, from which the Royal family claims descent. When it appears, it is coaxed on to a cushion by the priestess in attendance, who then performs certain ceremonies to please it. This snake appears, they say, sometimes of great size, and when he does so it is indicative of his being displeased with something. But as long as he remains of diminutive form, it is a sign he is in good humour. Particular families too have particular gods, and these at stated periods they worship, or literally "make happy." This worship consists in a number of married women and unmarried girls led by priestesses, accompanied by a party of men and boys all in dresses of a former time, dancing and singing, and performing various evolutions in the holy presence. The women carry in their hands fruits, &c., part of which is presented to the deity, and part scrambled for by the girls. In some instances, the god is represented by an image, but often there is no such representation, and a place is merely prepared in which he is supposed to be during the worship. The presence of the god, however, in either way, impresses the worshippers with no awe; on the contrary, it appears to be a cause of fun and jollity. A people who act thus cannot be very strict Hindoos. In fact, their observances are only for appearance sake, not the promptings of the heart. Children up to ten or twelve years of age eat every sort of food without regard to the Hindoo notions of purity or impurity. And it is a common practice for old people to abandon altogether Hindoo observances. The Brahmins too, being the

descendants of those who first came into the country by wives of the Kei caste given them by the Raja, and their sons again having taken in marriage Munniporee wives, and many families of Brahmins having continued to do so till now, have become in reality Munniporees. And although they are treated with much outward show of respect, still inwardly they are not felt to be of the superior caste claimed by them, and at times have been taunted with being the sons of Keis. Thus Hindooism with Munniporees is but a fashion. The very early marriages of Hindostan are not approved of, and I may say never take place. Polygamy is common. Suttee is unknown; widows are not treated as in Hindostan: they may marry again, eat such food, and dress in such style, as they please. Apostates cannot at once return to their old standing, but Nagas or Loees may at once profess Hindooism, and receive the thread of the Khetree. The Raja, Brahmins, and male members of the Royal family, give the thread indiscriminately, but to receive it from the Raja and become his disciple, seems to be the preferred method.

A religion professed, not from conviction, but because it is a fashion; and a form of Government, such that it is quite against the interest of the people to exhibit their real state, have made the Munniporees habitual deceivers. Truth abstractedly they admire, but falsehood is not detested; and when it suits their views or supposed interests, is never hesitated at. Habitual deceivers themselves, they always suspect deceit in others. Altogether, their morality is low, but still crime is not excessive.

The women in Munnipore are not confined as in Hindostan. They manage all the domestic concerns; nay more than that, they are more supporters of their families than their husbands are, and in many cases they support them entirely. The sepoys having lands given them which they cultivate, or if unable to do so, which they rent to others for a certain allowance of rice or money which would buy as much, their families may be said to be supplied with rice by the men, but for every thing else almost, they are dependent on the women. Besides the sepoys, others of course cultivate land, but the fear of the "Kei-roi-thau" before spoken of, and other annoyances, deter a very large number from doing so. Rather than endure these they reside in the capital, eschewing cultivation, and in such cases they and their families are supported by the exertions of their wives. There is a market daily

attended only by women. Every woman carries a basket containing something not immediately required for the consumption of her household; this she barters for something immediately wanted, or she sells it and purchases what she wants with the proceeds. After market she returns and prepares the dinner for the family. This done she will prepare her cotton for spinning the thread, with which she will afterwards make cloth for her husband, herself and family. Though thus useful and laborious, women are but indifferently treated. Considering this, the many temptations they are exposed to, and the unbounded opportunities they have for any bad end, I must say they appear to me to be more virtuous than under the circumstances would have been expected. These remarks I am sorry to say do not apply to the females of the ruling family, or to their descendants in the first generation at least. They are notorious for laxity, to check which I have never heard of an attempt. Although to become man and wife, it is not necessary that the marriage ceremony should be performed, still it is usually performed, but as often after, as before co-habitation. A man can put away his wife without any fault on her part, and if a person of influence he may do so without its being noticed. The rule, however, is, that if a man puts away his wife without any fault on her part, she takes possession of all his property except a drinking vessel and the cloth round his loins. A man and wife may separate by mutual consent, and a wife may quit her husband on giving the value of a slave. Women are really the slaves of their husbands; they are sold in satisfaction of their debts, and I have heard of men pawning their wives for money to purchase some office or even a pony. There is a separate Court for the judgment of matters between man and wife. It is called the Paja, and consists of a President "Paja Hulba," and twelve members, with various Officers attached. The members were formerly hereditary, but in these days hereditary "Fumtaus" do not suit the money-loving views of the authorities, and they are made arbitrarily for a consideration, and as arbitrarily dismissed when another candidate offers a larger sum. The presidency of the Court appears to be the right of the family called Paja Hulbum, which is descended from the Royal family; that family however now only holds it when it suits the Raja's convenience. This Court is most corrupt, but that a Court seated by corruption should not be so, cannot be expected.

In Munnipore there is no law. The will of the reigning Prince is paramount to everything. Treason is the highest degree of crime. Murder is next, and is reckoned a capital offence, though not always, if money be judiciously applied, treated as such. If committed by a Brahmin or by a woman, neither would be punished capitally. The utmost punishment of the Brahmin would be his expulsion from the country; of the woman, her exposure with shaved head in the Bazaar. The Chirap, the only Court, besides the Paja, judges every matter brought before it, not in the jurisdiction of the latter. Formerly, it had 60 or 80 hereditary members, but as with the Paja, the members do not now inherit their seats, but obtain them by means of money. As might be expected, they are corrupt in the extreme, and implicitly subservient to the Raja, unless in most glaring cases, justice without a bribe is not looked for; and even in glaring cases it would be considered dangerous not to bribe some of the leading members. But glaring or not glaring, bribed or not bribed, were it intimated to them that the Raja's views inclined in a certain direction, in compliance with such views would the case be decided. And if it were even thought that the Raja interested himself in any case, though he had expressed no opinion on it, it would remain undecided, from a fear of offending him by giving a decision which might be against his wishes. There is no law as to the descent of property. It is willed away according to the pleasure of the testator, but is generally given to those individuals of the family who are most in need of it without reference to seniority.

The dwelling houses of the Munniporees are all of the same form, but those of the rich are larger, and constructed of better materials than those of the poor, that is, the posts and beams of the houses of the former are of wood, whilst those of the latter are of bamboo. The walls of both are of reeds plastered with a mixture of earth and cow dung, and the roofs of all are thatched with grass. All the dwelling houses face to the eastward, in which direction they have a large open Verandah. In this Verandah the family sits during the day, and in it all the work of the household is carried on, except cooking, which is performed inside; in the South side of the Verandah is the seat of honor. Here a mat or cloth is laid for the head of the family, upon which no one intrudes. Inside, the house is without partitions. The bed of the head of the family, is placed in what is called the Luplengka, close to the

wall on the South side about the middle. It is usually screened by mats. The daughters usually sleep on the North side. There are no windows in the houses, the only light admitted being by two doors, one opening into the open Verandah, the other to the North, near the north-western corner of the house. The fire-place is on the floor towards the north-west corner. There is no chimney. The fuel used is generally dried reed jungle. This answers every purpose in the warm weather, but is a sorry substitute for wood in the colder months. Connected with the making of their houses are many superstitious practices. First, the house must be commenced on a lucky day, and that day having been fixed by the astrologer; on it, (it makes no difference whether the other materials are ready or not) the first post is erected. The post is bound towards the top with a band of cloth over which is tied a wreath of leaves and flowers. Milk, juice of the sugar-cane and ghee are poured upon the lower extremity, and into the hole in the ground in which it is to be fixed are put a little gold and silver. The number of bamboos forming the body of the frame for the thatch must not be equal on the North and South sides. If they were so, misfortune, they consider, would overtake the family. The other superstitions of the same kind are too numerous to mention. And it is not merely in reference to their houses that they are superstitious; they are so in every matter. Superstition constantly sends them to consult their maibees and pundits, who earn an easy livelihood by prescribing remedies to allay their fears. I may here shortly notice the Maibees. They are said to owe their institution to a princess who flourished hundreds of years ago, but whether they have preserved all their original characteristics I cannot certainly affirm. At present, any woman who pretends to have had a "call" from the deity or demon, may become a priestess. That she has had such call is evinced by incoherent language and tremblings, as if possessed by the demon. After passing her noviciate she becomes one of the body, and practices with the rest on the credulity of the people. They put some rice, or some of the coin of the country into a basket, and turning it about with incantations they pretend to divine from it. I have listened to their divinations, and wondered that any one would consult them twice. They dress in white. Some of them are in good circumstances, having land and slaves attached to the peculiar deity to which they officiate. They also have laloop.

In their intercourse amongst themselves, the Munniporees are ceremonious. They address one another by the name of the office they may hold, or may have held, or as younger or elder brothers. To call a man "Angāng," literally child, is most respecful, and when called by a superior to answer "Aigya" is the most respectful response. The Raja and members of the Royal family call all male Munniporees "eepoo," grandfather; and females, "eebel," grandmother. The male members of the Royal family are all called "sunna," or golden; the females, "seesa." Their actions are described in a different style of language from that of the rest of the people; thus, they do not walk but move; they do not sleep but recline. A common Munniporee, if riding, would be spoken of as "sagontongle," a Prince as Sagonnetie." The eating of the Commoner would be designated "ciāk chābā." of the Prince, "look nābā" and so on. Individuals are spoken of and known by their surnames; the laiming, or if I may use the expression, the Christian name, being seldom known to or used by any but the nearest relatives. All but the Royal family have surnames. The Christian name is written last. The introduction of surnames took place in the reign of Chalamba, about two hundred years ago, and of the laiming since the profession of Hindooism. The surnames are evidently derived from some peculiarity in the individuals who first bore them. The oldest family of Brahmins in the country is called Hungoibum. Hungoi means a frog, and that such a name should be given to a person who bathed so much more frequently than Munniporees had hitherto been accustomed to see, seems very natural. The same is the case with almost every family; all the surnames indicating either the profession, or some peculiarity of its original holder.

The men dress in the same way as they do in Hindostan; but as a people, the Munniporees far surpass the people to the West in the cleanliness of their garments. The dress of the women is quite different from that worn by the women to the West. It consists of a striped cotton or silk cloth passed round the body under the armpits and over the breast, a jacket, and a sheet. Unless permitted by the Raja, various articles of dress and ornament cannot be worn, and permission to wear any of these articles is much coveted. Persons of a high rank are permitted to have carried before them a red woollen cloth; of a less rank, a green woollen cloth; and of a less still, a cloth of

cotton manufacture. These they use as rugs to sit upon, and it is only for such use they are prized; as articles of dress they may be used by any who can afford to buy them. Amongst the men the forepart of the head is shaved. In the remaining part the hair is preserved in its natural state. It is combed backwards, and is sometimes coiled up in the folds of their head dresses, but generally tied up in a knot behind. Married women, and some who are not married, comb their hair back and tie it up behind. Young women do not tie it up behind. In front they comb it straight, cutting it in a circle from ear to ear across the forehead and a little above the eyebrows. Over the ears it is allowed to grow so as to cover them. Here it is again cut the breadth of the ear, and thence in the hinder part is allowed to grow naturally. Perfectly straight hair is considered beautiful; curly locks are laughed at. The water in which rice has been steeped before cooking is used as a wash for the hair. It gives a glossy appearance, but a most disagreeable smell to the hair.

The Dussera, or as it is called in Munnipore "Kwaktalba," is the principal festival introduced with Hindooism. At it the tributaries lay presents before the Raja and renew their engagements of submission. Honorary dresses, plumes of feathers, and other baubles which are highly prized, are distributed to persons who, during the past year, may have distinguished themselves, or to others who at some former period had done so, but whose merit had passed unrewarded.

The principal Munniporee festivals are the Heeyang, Lumchail, and the Hauchong. The Heeyang continues for three days. The first day is devoted to a boat race between the Kaphum and Laiphum Punnahs, followed by a match at hocky on horse-back, wrestling, putting, and jumping. The second day is devoted to the same description of matches between the Ahulloop and Niharoop. And the third to a repetition between the Hitākphalbā and Potsungba. In these matches great emulation is exhibited between the Punnahs. The boat race is not a fair race, but a struggle between the rowers on either side, in which those who can deal the hardest blows are usually the victors. The boats are about 90 feet long, cut out of one tree, and broad enough for two men to stand abreast, using their oars or paddles. The other games are all fair enough and have their admirers, but the game of Munnipore is hocky on horseback, a thoroughly manly

and most exciting exercise. The Lumchail is merely a foot race. It is between the Punnahs, and excites much rivalry. The best runner is exempted from all duty for life. At the Hauchong the different tribes of hill people subject to Munnipore compete with one another in feats of agility and strength. The sports of the day conclude with a feast, at which they are regaled with the flesh of cows, buffaloes, dogs, cats, &c., which have died in the valley. The flesh is dried and preserved on purpose for this feast, and being supplied with plenty of spirits, the participators in the Hauchong, are usually before the evening, "o'er a' the ills of life victorious."

Doubtless the encouragement given to the games before mentioned has had a great effect in producing the general good muscular development of the Munniporees, who, though short in stature, are usually well made, strong and active. In youth they are usually good looking, but their good looks, more especially the women, they very soon lose. From the heavy labour the women are subject to such a result might have been expected; but as the men do almost nothing, their early coarseness must have some other cause. A Munniporee with a beard is never met with, and a good moustache is so rare that people are at times indicated by this feature. The upper lip is usually bare, but the hair of the head is plentiful and coarse, and baldness appears very rare.

Having in the foregoing narrative made frequent mention of slaves, that slavery exists will have been inferred. But if the word "slaves" has conveyed to the mind the idea of people in the condition of the slaves of America, it is a wrong one. Many become slaves voluntarily; some of them with the view of discharging a money debt which they cannot otherwise do, and some from sheer laziness. They live in the same house as their master, eat with him, and are altogether like members of the family. To abuse and ill-use slaves is the exception.

These remarks refer more especially to Munniporees in a state of slavery. The hill people occasionally sell themselves; but more frequently they are sold by their relatives. There are two descriptions of slaves;—one, the absolute property of the buyer, called "meenaichannaba," the other, "asālbā" or a slave for such time as the money paid to him or advanced on him may not be paid back. The latter is like giving work in lieu of the interest of the money paid, and

should the person who becomes "asūlbā" get sick, he is obliged to give a substitute, or make good in coin the labour lost in the interval of sickness. Of course to the asūlbā no considerable sum would be advanced unless he promised to work for at least one cultivating season. The hill people who are slaves are not perhaps so well treated as the Munniporees in a state of slavery, but there are many checks upon ill-use. If not satisfied with their condition they run to some other house where slaves are better treated. The master makes a point, if possible, of paying their price, usually, however, not in full, for the circumstance of a slave running to another's protection is considered a sign of his having been ill-treated, and as justifying an abatement. Slaves too, often abscond to the hills, where they conceal themselves in the hill villages; but as they are apt there to be apprehended, they usually prefer passing into the British territory where they are at once free. Thus, those who have slaves are under the necessity of treating them well, and slavery is much modified.

Whether civilization in its advance proportionately increases the happiness of individuals may be questioned. It certainly tends to their isolation. A person in London might die all alone of sickness without its being known to, or even much cared for, by his next door neighbour. This could not well happen in Munnipore. Each district divides itself into neighbourhoods, who again divide into "singloops" or "wood clubs." The elders of the neighbourhood settle all minor disputes occurring in it, and in case of the illness of a member they tell off individuals to attend on the sick person, whilst should he die, the wood club to which he belongs brings the wood for his funeral pyre. The sympathy of his neighbours and their attentions must have a soothing and beneficial effect upon the sick person, and the depression of spirits which, more especially in epidemics, weighs down a people, must be considerably alleviated.

Beyond the virtues of some few plants, the Munniporees have little idea of medicine. A few daring practitioners administer remedies internally; but the general practice is to apply them externally. Their chief reliance, however, in the treatment of diseases, is on manipulation of the belly. In cases of flatulence I can testify to the virtue of this manipulation, and it appears of use in the fevers of the country. It is usual in sickness to present offerings in propitiation of the deities, whether of the

water or of the dry land, who are supposed to have caused the patient's illness. These offerings are placed in the water for the deities of that element, and for those of the land in the *path* last passed over by the patient. Much confidence is placed in the beneficial effect of these offerings, and I have no doubt that this confidence tends to the patient's recovery.

The in-door amusements of the Munnipores are various. The amusement in its season most enjoyed is "Kangsānaba," a game as peculiar to Munnipore as that of hocky on horseback. It is played only in the spring, the players being generally young women and girls, with usually a sprinkling of men on each side. The game seems to cause great excitement, and there is great emulation between the sides. The Kang is the seed of a creeper; it is nearly circular, about an inch and a half in diameter and about three quarters of an inch thick. This is placed on the ground upright, at one time with its broadside towards the party by whom it is to be struck, at another edge-wise. When the Kang is placed with its broadside to the party, it is to be pitched at with an ivory disk, when it is placed edge-wise, it is to be struck by the disk propelled on its flat side along the surface of the ground by the force of the middle finger of the right hand acting off the fore-finger of the left. A good player can propel the disk in this way with great force and precision. The side having most hits wins. The whole is closed by a feast at the expense of the losers. Conundrums are a fertile source of amusement. They appear usually far-fetched, and sometimes not over-delicate. The tale of Khamba and Thoibee, sung by their eesiesukpa or bards, never fails, with a popular singer, to rivet attention. The scene of this tale and the place where it was originally sung is Moirang. The hero and heroine are persons said to have flourished hundreds of years ago. Thoibee is the daughter of the Moirang Chief's brother. She loves Khamba, a lad poor in worldly riches, but rich in personal beauty, of good descent, great modesty, courage, strength and agility. Thoibee herself is a young lady of unsurpassed beauty, and Khamba having seen her by chance whilst boating on the Logtak, loves her at first sight. But the course of true love never yet ran smooth, and it was no exception with these lovers. A person named Kong Yangba saw Thoibee's love for Khamba, and wishing to gain her for himself, he used all the means that a powerful connection gave him to crush Khamba. The various

perils through which Khamba has to pass, and the constancy of Thoibee, form the subject of the song. After having won his foot race speared his tiger, caught a wild bull, and been tied to the foot of an elephant, Khamba gains Thoibee, who also passed through various troubles. The end is tragical. Khamba doubts his wife, and wishing to try her fidelity, she, not knowing who he was, spears him. Having discovered what she had done, she spears herself. Some of the characters introduced in the story are very good. The constant repetition of this tale only seems to increase the desire to hear it. Thoibee is regarded as a goddess, and that Khamba was a man of giant proportion, is held to be incontestible. This idea of the great size of Khamba is not, however, derived merely from his celebrity in song; that their ancestors were giants is believed by all. Some of the language used in their songs is quite different from that commonly spoken. The same is the case in their writings; but the meaning of the songs is known to most, whereas the writings are intelligible only to the initiated. Amongst the hill tribes there is the same difference between the common language and that in their songs. The singers of the adventures of Khamba and Thoibee accompany their song with the notes of the "pêna," the solitary musical instrument of Munnipore, a sort of fiddle, with one string of horse hair, the body of which is formed of the shell of a cocoanut. On the bow of the fiddle is a row of little bells which jingle in harmony with the air.

A branch of a tree crooked in this form  the end of which is faced with iron, forms the Munniporee plough. To this a buffaloe is attached between a couple of shafts thus  With this instrument the ground when dry is little more than scratched. The plough is held in one hand, and the buffaloe, by means of a string passed through his nose, and a vocabulary he seems to understand, is guided by the other. Instead of the buffaloe, two bullocks are sometimes attached to the plough, one on each side of a centre pole. The operation of scratching up the soil and preparing the field for the reception of the rice seed commences in February; and in May, they sow what is called "poong hool" or dry seed cast in dry ground. In June the rains having set in, the field is brought by successive ploughings and harrowings into a state of liquid mud, and in this the pang phel is cast. The seed for the pang phel is first quickened by being moistened with water and kept in a

covered basket until it shoots. As this seed floats on the surface of the mud, it has to be carefully watched until it takes root, and three or four leaves have sprung up, in order to protect it from wild ducks and other birds. After this comes the "lingba" or transplanting. The seed for the plants which are destined to be transplanted are usually sown very close in plots carefully prepared for the purpose. When the transplanting season arrives, the plants are pulled in handfuls out of the ground, the roots are by washing divested of all earth attaching to them, and having been taken to the field, they are one by one separately inserted in the mud. For a time after transplanting they look as if they were all withered up, but they soon spring up and afford an excellent crop. If the ground has been carefully deprived of weeds before sowing the crop, weeding afterwards is not required. The only cultivation of any importance is that of rice. Not a particle of manure is ever placed on the ground, and yet year after year good crops are raised on the same spot. The yield has of course lessened from what it was, but its being still so very considerable as it is, evinces a very rich soil. The main stay however of Munnipore is the crop raised at Thobal and its vicinity. There the river once at least in the year innundates the rice-fields, giving them amazing fertility. About Thobal they weed with a harrow, which drawn by a buffaloe over the rice-field, uproots indiscriminately the weeds and the rice. The former die, but the rice plant takes root again and is not injured. When the rice begins to ripen, it has to be watched against the depredations of immense flights of birds. Deer and other wild animals also do a great deal of mischief, and against them precautions have to be taken. The rice having ripened is cut with a knife slightly curved at the top, and having a rough edge like a saw. As it is cut it is laid in handfuls on the ground, and when dry tied up in sheaves. These sheaves are carried to the part of the field most convenient for the purpose, and the rice beat from them on a large reed mat. After having been winnowed by means of fans, the rice is ready for the granary and removed to it. This sun-dried rice keeps very well in husk, but when cleared of the husk it can be kept for a very short time only. The straw is left lying in a pile around the place where the rice was beat out. Except as fuel no use is made of it.

The rent paid to the State upon the "purree," which is equivalent to about three of our acres, is nominally fixed at two baskets of rice in the

husk, but generally before the year is over, thirteen are exacted. Were this all, it would be borne without a murmur, but as during the time of cultivation, the cultivators must reside near their fields, and thus become liable to the "Kei-roi-thau" before noticed, people at the Capital, who otherwise would cultivate, shun doing so, and the supply of food is consequently much less than it would otherwise be. In a country like Munnipore so entirely isolated, and depending on itself, anything which tends to lessen the supply of food may, it is almost unnecessary for me to observe, produce disastrous results.

The domestic animals of the Valley of Munnipore are the buffaloe, cow, horse, dog and cat. Ducks, geese and pigeons are pretty generally bred. Fowls only by the Mussulman, Loee, and Naga portion of the population.

The southern part of the valley affords plentiful pasturage for buffaloes which attain a great size. They are much prized for agricultural purposes, and are used besides for dragging timber, bamboos, fire-wood, grain, &c., the two latter being placed on rude truck-like vehicles without wheels. The cow is a much superior animal to that of the adjacent Provinces of Bengal. It affords, however, but little milk, and except to milk, no use is made of it. Bullocks on good pasture, attain a great size. The Mussulmans use them for ploughing, preferring them to the buffaloe, as being more handy, more especially in their gardens, which are often of great extent, and in the cultivation of which they are most assiduous. The genuine Munnipore horse has nearly disappeared. It was much the same as that of Burma, small, but spirited and strong. The average height about twelve hands. The present breed is generally bad. Munniporees are all fond of their ponies, and children commence riding very soon, for the game of hocky on horseback, whilst it is most attractive in itself, being to the adept a sure road to Royal favor, requires early training. The population generally is thus accustomed to horses, and a stranger is struck by the general absence of fear or awkwardness in their management of them. Attempts have been made to improve the breed of horses by crossing them with under-sized mares from the Hon'ble Company's stud. But the produce turned out bad, and the climate proved so ill-suited to large horses, that all the mares died in a few years.

The principal wild animals found in the valley at all seasons, are the tiger, wild-hog, hog-deer, and a large species of deer peculiar to the country,

which frequents the swamps in the South. The tiger and wild-hog are at times very destructive to human life. I myself know one instance in which a tiger got into a house, killed seven individuals, and was not captured until he had eaten one of them. So destructive have tigers always been, that the whole country is from olden times divided into "kei roops" or "tiger parties," which when a tiger commits mischief in their particular district mark it down, and surround it. This done they cut down the jungle in a circle all round the tiger's lair, protecting themselves during the operation by a fence of nets, behind which again, when the jungle has been cleared, they erect a stockade of reeds and bamboos, when this is finished, they report the fact to the capital, and either the Raja himself, or some one deputed by him, goes and shoots the beast. In former days, before fire-arms were in general use, it was customary to enter the stockade and spear the tiger on foot. This method of dispatching him often cost lives, and they relate how at no further distance back than the reign of Chourjeet Sing, one tiger defied the whole chivalry of Munnipore for several days, and did not yield up his life until he had sacrificed an almost incredible number of souls.

Once a year it is usual to fire the jungle. Then the wild animals make a rush to save themselves. Some escape before the fiery circle has enclosed them. Others surrounded, perish in unavailing attempts to escape, or getting bewildered and maddened by the flames, they rush over the now bare plain. In this state of madness, a hog has often entered a village, run a muck against all he met, and killed and injured many before he himself was placed *hors de combât*.

The best time for shooting is when after the firing of the jungle, the young shoots begin again to sprout. Then early in the morning and towards the evening, the deer may be seen nipping the young shoots, and if the deer be in plenty, a tiger will most probably be awaiting them at no great distance.

The common wild duck found in the valley throughout the year. Partridges, quail and snipe are abundant; and immense flights of wild geese, and teal of many varieties, diversify for a time annually the Sportsman's amusements.

The Logtak the great resort of these aquatic birds is covered with floating islands. Under these, amongst the roots of the vegetation of which they are formed, fish, in the cold weather, collect in great

numbers, and are caught in the following manner. An island having been cut into a manageable size is pushed to a part of the lake where the water is not very deep, and where the bottom has been paved with stones. There it is fixed by means of long bamboo stakes; and when the fish have collected in sufficient quantity, a long strip sufficient to surround it, is cut from some other of these floating masses of vegetation. With this the asylum of the fish is surrounded, and a row of stones being placed on the edge nearest the island, that edge sinks down to the prepared bottom, whilst the rest remains upright in the water, and thus forms a wall all round. The fish are now driven out of their sanctuary; if small, they are taken in nets, if large, they are speared by torch light. The Logtak is also rich in aquatic plants, two of which bear edible fruit. Of the Logtak, Captain Pemberton in his Report on the Eastern Frontier observes, that "the bed has begun very perceptibly to fill up "from the deposits of silt from the surrounding heights which are conti- "nually carried into it, and that if this process continues, of which there "can be little doubt, a few years will suffice to obliterate the lake altoge- "ther, and deprive the Munniporees of their only available supply of the "larger descriptions of fish, of which it furnishes no less than twenty-six "varieties, eighteen common to the rivers of Bengal, and eight not found "in any of them." Since 1835, the period when Captain Pemberton thus expressed himself, the lake has very visibly filled up, and its waters in the rains spread further over the contiguous low lands. There runs in the lake a range of low hills, the portions of which not covered with water, form islands. On the highest and largest named Tāngā stands the principal village of the fishermen of the lake. The people of Tāngā are Loees, and pay revenue in fish and money. On another of these islands, a few oranges are produced, which Captain Pemberton characterizes as "some of the finest oranges of the country." But in fact no oranges fit to be eaten are to be found in any other part of the valley.

The marshes of the South in the vicinity of the Logtak afford a retreat to serpents of a formidable size, and the whole Valley of Munnipore is much infested by the serpent tribe. Some of them are exceedingly active and bold as the Tānglei. He is fond of ascending bamboos, along the branches of which he moves with great velocity, and if enraged, throws himself from an extraordinary height upon the object of his anger. His bite is said to be mortal. This, added to his great activity and fierceness, makes

the Tänglei an object of much terror. I have seen a pair of them in possession of a bamboo clump in the rear of a house, keep the whole family in a state of great alarm for days. Unable to move about their house, but with the greatest precaution, they applied to me for relief, which I afforded by shooting the pair. The Tänglei is quite as active in the water as he is on dry land. Whilst pursuing in a canoe over inundated ground, a large deer I happened to pass, one of these snakes which had apparently been caught in the flood and become tired of his bath. When first noticed he must have been at least thirty yards off, but raising his head, he made for the canoe with such velocity that though it was paddled by four strong men, he overtook us and would inevitably have been aboard, if I had not prevented him by a shot. The Munniporees give frightful accounts of the effects of some snake bites. The drowsy death, the starting of the blood from every pore, the insatiable and burning thirst, the melting down of the solid mass of the whole form into one heap of putrefaction, these are horrors with which they may be said to be acquainted. They speak too of a "snake god," which when met, utters a loud sound and spits its venom to a great distance. A Kookie left me apparently in perfect health. In passing through a rice field, he saw a black snake as large as his thigh, which uttered a sound, he said like an ox bellowing! and raised its head above the tall rice, threatening him and his companions. They fled in fear. On reaching his home, the Kookie became ill, his belly swelled, and he has not recovered his health. This is attributed to the snake met in the rice field or to the "snake god."

The insect tribe is numerous and varied. The flea and the bug are pests in most houses, and though Munniporees are personally very cleanly the louse is a companion of all. A caterpillar covered with a coat of brown hair is very numerous; should it touch one's skin, the spot touched becomes inflamed and itchy. It creeps up the walls of houses, trees, &c., changes its skin, and leaves it sticking there. If incautiously disturbed, the minute hairs are carried about in the air, and produce great irritation and itchness on whom soever they may alight. Musquitoes are exceedingly numerous. To sleep without musquitoe curtains is rare even for the poorest.

The bee, not of the large wax-producing species, but of a smaller kind called "hei-ying-koee" or "fly-bee," is found in the Valley of Munnipore.

The honey is excellent. Another species, very large, forms its nest in the ground, and is dangerous to the unwary traveller. Instances have occurred of individuals having fallen into these nests, and having been stung to death. The Munniporees when they come upon a bee of this species catch him, and having attached a thread to his body let him loose. By means of the thread his flight is observed, and he can be followed to his nest. The spot is marked, and fire having been procured, the bees, otherwise so formidable, are easily destroyed. The spoil, consisting of comb filled with the young, is considered a *bonne bouche*. I may add another large bee which forms its nest dependent from the branch of a tree, or under the shelter of a wall, the nest being of a most beautiful substance resembling marbled paper. The white ant is very plentiful and proportionately destructive. In its winged state it is eaten by the Munniporees. A species of grasshopper also forms an article of food. I am not aware of there being any new species of insect in Munnipore. The most important of the tribe—the silk-worm—appears to have been imported. The original rearers of the silk-worm came from Kubbo, from whence they appear to have brought the worm. Those that rear the worm also prepare the silk. The silk produced is very good, but the articles manufactured have not attained any great degree of excellence. The mulberry, on the leaves of which the worm is fed, grows luxuriantly in plantations close to the villages of the manufacturers.

In a country in which each family produces nearly all which it consumes, any advancement in the arts can scarcely be expected. But if without other impediments, improvement could take place, it would be repressed under a Government such as that of Munnipore. Under the operation of the laloop, a good artificer works along with a bad one, and receives no more thanks for his work than if it was as bad as that of his less skilful associate. He becomes disgusted, and his only aim is to amass quickly, by his superior intelligence, enough to purchase his release from work. This done, he thinks no more of his trade. Thus all are ever at the rudiments, and no progress is made. What cloths are made are distinguished for strength more than fineness, and the inventive faculties having no play, there is very little variety in pattern. Some little embroidering is practised, in which the same pau-

city of invention is more apparent. Their eating and drinking vessels, principally of bell metal, are substantial, but in shape vary little from those of the West. They have some dyes, and have some taste in the arrangement of colours, but of drawing or painting they have no idea.

Except the roads made by the Raja Chourjeet Sing, but which have been allowed to go to ruin, no public work for the benefit of the people seems to have ever been constructed. Until the present reign, a bridge of any material, but wood or bamboo, was unseen. When the bridge of bricks made by the present Raja (for he has only ventured on one) was finished, people passed over and under it with great apprehension of its falling, and it was a considerable time before they mustered up courage sufficient to ride across it on horse-back.

The Valley of Munnipore may have formed at some former period a large lake which has been gradually filled up by deposits from the surrounding heights. On what substratum these deposits rest, has not, on account of their immense depth, been ascertained, but it has been conjectured by Captain Pemberton, to be limestone rock, limestone having been found all round the valley. Gold in former times is said to have been found in the deposits brought down by the Khongba Rivers, but in these days, though sought for, it has never been found. In page 37 of his Report, Captain Pemberton says :—"Iron, the only metal yet ascertained to exist in Munnipore, is found in the form of titaniferous oxydulated ore, and is obtained principally from the beds of small streams South of Thobal, and the hills near Langatel; its presence in the latter is ascertained by the withered appearance of the grass growing above it, and in the former it is generally sought for after the rainy season, when the soil has been washed away: an iron headed spear is thrust into the ground, and the smaller particles adhering to it lead to the discovery of the bed in which they had been deposited; this employment of the spear furnishes an accidental but very striking illustration of the magnetic property being acquired by iron, which is preserved in the same position for any length of time; the spear of the Munniporee and Naga is almost invariably thrust vertically into the ground, when not in use, and the fact of its being so employed to ascertain the presence of the one, is a very strong proof of the high degree of magnetism

or polarity it must have attained. The loss produced by smelting the ore amounts to nearly 50 per cent., and the Munniporees are perfectly sensible of the difficulty of fusion increasing with the greater purity of "the metal." Confirming my previous remarks on the effect of such a Government as that of Munnipore on the arts, Captain Pemberton states, that—"The principal articles manufactured are such as would be thought "of in the earliest stages of civilization—axes, hoes, and ploughshares "for felling timber, and preparing the ground for Agricultural pur- "poses; spear and arrow heads for self-defence or aggression and the "destruction of game; and blades from one to two feet in length, "which firmly fixed in a wooden or metal handle, under the name of "dâo, forms the inseparable companion of the Munniporee, Burma, 'Than and Singpho. With it he clears a passage for himself through "the dense jungle that obstructs his path, notches the steep and slippery "face of the hill he wishes to climb, and frequently owes the preservation "of his life to the skill with which he wields it in the field."

The valley is rich in salt springs, "of which the principal are found" says Captain Pemberton, "on its eastern side, not far from the foot of "the Hills. The best are those of Waikhong, Ningyel, Seng-mai, and "Chundrokhong, where salt is manufactured in quantities not only "sufficient for the consumption of the inhabitants of the valley, but to "be made an article of traffic with the surrounding tribes, who barter "for it their ginger, cloths and cotton." From the articles of barter I purposely omit the tobacco, given by Captain Pemberton, for there is no tobacco amongst the Hill tribes such as a Munniporee would use. "The salt obtained from the springs of Waikhong is far superior to that of the other localities named, and the supply for the use of the royal family is always obtained from thence."

"The spots containing those springs are said to be discovered by a very subtle vapour, which is always found hovering over them at an early hour of the morning; as soon as the fact is clearly ascertained a shaft is sunk down to the spring, and cylinders formed of the hollowed trunks of large trees let perpendicularly into the opening, are preserved in an erect position by ramming earth between them and the sides of the well; the diameter of the cylinders is seldom more than six feet, and the depth varies from forty to sixty feet." All the

salt wells are the property of the Government. The inhabitants of the villages in their vicinity are chiefly Loces, and they are obliged to manufacture for the Raja monthly a certain quantity of salt regulated by the abundance of the spring. For their labour the best workmen receive two baskets, and inferior ones one basket of salt, which is deducted from the total amount they are required to manufacture for the Raja. The Loces, not usually being able of themselves to make the whole quantity of salt required of them, are assisted by Munniporees in needy circumstances, who work with them and receive in remuneration a quantity of salt proportionate to the work they have performed. Munniporees usually confine themselves to the drawing and carrying the brine from the wells to the place where it is evaporated; but some of them become adepts in forming the round flat cakes in which the salt is prepared, thereby gaining the highest rate of remuneration which such labour commands. The Munniporee's skill, which being profitable, ought to be to him a source of pleasure, becomes instead a source of anxiety; he fears he may be forced by his Government to remain in his for-a-time-adopted trade, and as soon as he sees his skill has attracted the attention of the Munniporee Superintendents, he deserts the salt manufacture at once.

The money revenue is exceedingly small, the principal item being the compensation, Rupees 6.370 per annum, paid by the British Government for having obliged the Munniporee Government to give up to the Burmese the territory between the Ningthee River and the base of the Yoma Hills. The remainder consists of tribute in "sale" from the "sale" Loces, of rent of fisheries, transit duties, and export and import duties. The total money revenue may be estimated at from twelve to fifteen thousand Rupees. Whilst the intercourse with Burma and the British Provinces was infrequent, the Raja being supplied by his people with every thing that a Munniporee could want, the being without a money revenue was not a cause of much anxiety, but with the increase of commerce and intercourse, wants have increased, and the want of a money revenue which before was uncared for has now become a matter of solicitude. To increase the money revenue a change must be effected in the institutions of the country. and as intercourse—social and commercial—increases, and the knowledge thereby gained spreads, the system of Go-

vernment must gradually assimilate itself to that of countries more advanced in civilization.

The principal import into Munnipore is sooparee or betel-nut, of which the Munniporees consume a great quantity. It is paid for chiefly in Rupees. Coarse cloths are exported, but their manufacture decreases with the gradual increase in the demand for cloths of English manufacture. A very profitable trade in buffaloes might be established, but the Munnipore Government by interfering, has driven traders in buffaloes to Kubbo, from which they have, during the last seven or eight years, drawn a very considerable supply. Even with the great disadvantage of an expensive land carriage, the Valley of Munnipore is very favourably situated for commercial purposes, but the system of Government is opposed to the development of commerce; and the insecurity of traders in the Burmese territory is so great, that I fear commerce must for long be confined to the present restricted scale. Private enterprise will effect much, but the obstacles opposed by half-civilized governments are not easily overcome. To assist traders and encourage trade has been my constant endeavour, and though my success has not been as much as I could have wished, still an improvement has taken place. A considerable traffic in slaves to Burma I have entirely suppressed, and in its place has arisen a small but more healthy trade.

Captain Pemberton in his Report on the Eastern Frontier, mentions a treaty by Gourosham, promising as one of the articles of tribute to the British Government, Munniporee gold Rupees to the amount of 500 per annum. In this item there must be some as great a mistake, as in the other items of the tribute there is evident exaggeration. Gold, I have before stated, is said to have been found in small quantities in the deposits brought down by the waters of the Khongba, but of gold Rupees or gold coin of any sort I have never heard mention. The only coin known in Munnipore as having been coined and current in the country is of the description at present current, and is of bell metal. The Chief who first coined this money was Kha-kem-ba. The coin issued by him was much larger than it is at present, being of the size and shape here shown :—

In the reign of Paikhomba, the second Chief after Kha-kem-ba, the coin issued was of the oblong form shown :—

In the fourth reign after this, or that of Chinghing-khomba, the oblong coin was divided into four round parts, and that coinage, with the issues of successive Rajahs, forms the present circulating medium. That Ching-tung-khomba and Gourosham ruled conjointly I have before stated ; it is extraordinary therefore if a gold coin did then exist in that there should be no where any trace of it, whilst there is ample record of the baser ones. The Company's Rupee circulates being received at the " sale" value it may bear in the market. The " sale" in circulation being but of small amount, any large quantity of Rupees suddenly brought into the market reduces the of the Rupee in " sale," and an article whose value in " sale" remains steady, requires in Rupees an extra amount for its purchase. With an increased amount of " sale" in circulation, the alterations in the value of the Rupee would not be so great, and having increased the amount it would be required to be kept up ; but where coinage only takes place by fits and starts, regularity in the value of the Rupee cannot be expected.

With the country briefly described in the foregoing pages, the British Government was brought into unwilling contact by the first Burmese war. At the conclusion of the war, though by the treaty of Yandabo, Munnipore was declared independent, yet being too weak by itself to remain so, and its position being, in a military point of view, of too much importance to permit the chance of the Burmese obtaining the command of it, the British Government has been compelled to guard against such chance, and to retain in the country a Political Agent ; all border disputes (and they have been numerous) having been settled by this Officer, the Burmese have been prevented from coming into collision with the Munniporees, and thus the latter have enjoyed an immunity from Burmese aggression for a period unprecedented in their annals, of more than quarter of a century.

During this interval of peace, Munnipore has increased in population and wealth; it possesses an immensely fertile soil, and is blessed with a good climate; but these advantages are, as I have shown, almost overbalanced by the system of Government, and by the religion professed by its rulers, and followed by the people.

Whilst the advantage of immunity from foreign aggression has been fully appreciated, the benefits derived from internal peace have not been so fully acknowledged. There being no upper class, or families possessing a preponderating influence, all Munniporees are upon a par, and every one thinks himself as fit as another for any office however high. The advantages accruing from the possession of office, I have before shown; and as office alone confers rank, its attainment is the chief ambition of the people. If not to be gained by fair means, the aspirant shrinks not from contemplating revolution for its attainment. In every male member of the Royal family, no matter how distant he may be from the reigning branch of it, they see a means of one day perhaps accomplishing their ends. Hence, numerous as they are, the great respect with which they treat their princes, and the frequent revolutions from which the country has suffered so much. With the view of putting a stop to these calamities, the resolution I have before mentioned to support the present Raja, was come to by the British Government. If the Raja enjoys a long reign, the advantage of a long period of internal peace may be noticed by the people, and the desire to secure this advantage may after his death deter them from hastily entering on projects of revolution, but without a change in the institutions of the country, revolutions—unless restrained by the British Government—will I fear be always imminent.

Had the connexion of the British Government with Munnipore been as willing as it was unwilling, and had it effected nothing more for the country than to give it immunity from the enormous cruelties of the Burmese, that alone would have been much, but by it the country has increased in numbers and in wealth, the oppression of its rulers, as a consequence of the support afforded them, has been checked, and the people obliged to think of other means than revolution for bettering themselves. Prominent amongst these means is commerce. "In the reign of Chourjeet Sing," observes Chaptain Pemberton, "some "traffic was carried on by the inhabitants of the Munnipore valley

"with those residing on the banks of the Ningthee River, and in "the Doab of the latter and Irawattee. The intercourse between Munni- "pore and the more flourishing countries to the westward, was at that "time confined to the occasional transit of a few passengers proceeding on "pilgrimages to Western India and Nuddea, and they were subjected to "such extortions by the Kupooee tribe of Nagas occupying the hills of the "intervening tract, and incurred such serious risk of life from the lawless "habits and fierce passions of these irresponsible savages, that the journey "from Munnipore into Cachar, which is now accomplished with perfect "security, was an undertaking of the most serious nature, which all were "anxious if possible to avoid. Since the restoration of the Munnipore "dynasty, and the subjugation of the Kupooees by the late Raja Gum- "bheer Sing, these obstacles have been permanently removed; parties of "from two to four Bengalees (probably the most constitutionally timid "race on the face of the earth) now cross from Cachar into Munnipore "throughout the year with the most perfect security; and some few "Shans from the banks of the Ningthee, have succeeded within the last "two years in disposing of small investments which they conveyed "through Munnipore to Sylhet." The construction by the British Government of a magnificent road through the mountains from Cachar to the valley has added to the advantages obtained from the subjugation of the Kupooees by the Raja Gumbheer Sing, and the facility of transit afforded by it has considerably increased the commerce with the West. In the commercial movement, the Shans, on the immediate frontier, have participated, and buffaloes alone to the value of from Rupees 30,000 to 50,000 have been for some years past annually exported by them, but beyond the immediate frontier, traders from the West feel too insecure to advance. Looking, however, at the obstacles that have been placed in the way of commerce by the most civilized people, it may be a subject for congratulation that the progress it has made amongst these semi-savages has been so great.

The present Raja was to have been educated under the auspices of the British Government; indeed, he had commenced taking lessons when his mother carried him out of the country and prevented the project being consummated. Great, however, as the influence of the reigning Prince, in a country in which his will is the law, is, I doubt whether it is a matter for regret that the education proposed was not

given. Superficial acquirements might have imparted a gloss, but with the stronghold of error, Hindooism untouched, little could have been effected for the benefit of the country. When that stronghold has been attacked, I shall agree with Captain Pemberton in these the concluding words of his Report. In Assam, Munnipore, and Arracan, a propitious commencement has been already made; and standing on the neutral ground which separates Hindooism on the one hand, from Boodhism on the other, the disseminators of sound knowledge, aided by all the influence and talent of the local authorities, are kindling an intellectual flame, which spreading East and West, will illumine the gloom of superstition and ignorance in which their benighted inhabitants now rest, and qualify them for higher destinies than they have ever yet fulfilled. If such be the result of the extension of British influence over the numerous tribes and nations which dwell on our Eastern Frontier, the recollection of the horrors of the Burmese war will fade before the glorious prospect of redeeming many millions of men from such mental debasement, and elevating them to that higher station in the intellectual and moral world, upon which the favoured inhabitants of Europe now stand. We rescued them from a yoke, which has bowed to the dust, the energies of every people, over whom it has been cast; and we may fearlessly refer those who doubt the ameliorating influence of our rule to Arracan, to Cachar, to Munnipore and Assam, and abide the result of a comparison between their past and present condition, between the sufferings they formerly endured and the peace they now enjoy.

OF THE HILL TRIBES.

HAVING given some account of the people of the Valley of Munnipore, I shall now proceed to a description of the inhabitants of the hills around it. These in the West are known under the general appellations of Naga and Kookie. In Munnipore they are all embraced in the term Hau. Koupooee, Quoireng, Khongjai, Kamsol, Anal-Namfau, Aimole, Kôm, Koireng, Cheeroo, Chôte, Pooroom, Muntuck, Kārum, Murring, Tangkool, Loohoopa, Mow, Murām, Miyang-khang, Guamei, are the names in use amongst Munniporees to distinguish the principal tribes, and though each of these tribes has a distinctive name of its own, often quite different from the Munniporee one, still as with the lat-