

SELECTIONS

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ANNUAL

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

OF THE

MUNNIPOOR AGENCY,

For the year ending 30th June

1874-75.

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A GENERAL description of the Native State of Munnipoor, which is applicable almost in its entirety to the year under consideration, will be found in the following publications:—

“Annual Report of the Munnipoor Political Agency for 1868-69, No. 78 of Selections Records, Government of India, Foreign Department” and “Statistical Account of the Native State of Munnipoor, 1873.” Where changes of any kind have taken place these will be noted under the various heads.

Frontier affairs, &c.—The State of Munnipoor is bounded on the west by the British province of Cachar, the boundary line being the Jhiri river running from north to south; on the east by the Kubbo valley, a portion of Upper Burmah; south by the hill country inhabited by the Lusai and Suti tribes of Kukis; north by the Angami and Katcha Naga country, now forming the Naga Hills division.

Cachar affairs.—With reference to the neighbouring district of Cachar there is little of importance to report. A question arose in September last regarding a suspicion of India-rubber being smuggled from the Cachar district, where at present its collection is forbidden, into Munnipoor, and from thence reintroduced as if from that State originally.

In order to check any such attempts as much as possible, I undertook to inform the Deputy Commissioner monthly in advance by certificate what quantity of rubber the Munnipoori authorities proposed exporting at each monthly period. This has been done, and although there is of course still room for fraud, it would appear to have given satisfaction as no further complaints have been preferred on the subject.

Extradition case.—There has been only one case of extradition during the year. One Munnipoori by name Karuna Sing, convicted of

dacoity and sentenced to imprisonment in the Cachar Jail, had made his escape, and was supposed to have found his way to Munnipoor. A careful search was said to have been made for him by the Munnipoori authorities, but without effect.

Cattle disease.—The cattle disease which has lately proved so fatal in Cachar has not succeeded in invading the Munnipoor valley, which is a matter for congratulation, as this country is only now recovering from the disastrous epidemic which ravaged it some four or five years ago. On hearing of the outbreak in Cachar I informed the authorities, and urged upon them the desirability of strictly excluding cattle importation of any kind from Cachar until the epidemic ceased; this, I believe, they carefully attended to.

Burmese affairs.—It is now necessary to notice briefly the events of the past year as bearing upon the relations of this State with Upper Burmah.

Trade matters.—Although the consideration of the subject of the stoppage of trade in cattle and ponies has been ended by the receipt of copy of letter No. 1697P. of date Simla, 10th June 1875, to the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah, in which the Political Agent at Mandalay is instructed "to take no further steps in the matter," it may be well to recapitulate a little, more especially with a view of showing how false and contradictory are the reasons given by the Burmese authorities at Mandalay regarding trade stoppage.

Stoppage of trade in cattle but slightly affects Munnipoor.—It is essential to point out that the matter of trade in ponies and cattle has been urged upon the attention of Government much more in the interests of British territory than of Munnipoor, in fact that State rather gains than loses by the prohibition, the trade having been *through* and not *to* Munnipoor, as prices of ponies in this country have risen at least 75 per cent. since 1871, and a ready market for all the good ponies in the country can always be found at these rates in the neighbouring province of Cachar. That district is particularly unfortunate at this time as having lost such a proportion of their ploughing cattle that the cultivation has been seriously diminished, they are as anxious to purchase buffaloes, &c., as the Burmese are to sell, but for this mischievous prohibition. Munnipoor, as it happens, cannot assist them, as only sufficient cattle for the wants of the country are available at present. The people then who suffer are the Burmese themselves, and the ryots of the Cachar and Sylhet districts.

Reasons for trade prohibition, and facts regarding it.—Referring to the recent correspondence with the Court of Mandalay on this subject, it will be seen from the letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mandalay (accompanying the before mentioned letter), that the fact of a strict prohibition being in existence is now acknowledged, a fact which was formerly, on a reference being made to the Political Agent at Mandalay, utterly scouted and denied (see letter No. 884P., dated 13th May 1871), the reason given being that the "prohibition has been a standing national rule from the very first, and it is owing to the observance of this rule that the export of ponies, buffaloes, and bullocks is prohibited to Munnipoor."

Date of actual restriction on trade.—Nothing whatever was known in Munnipoor of this so-called national rule prohibiting exportation of buffaloes, &c., previous to the cold weather of 1871. During that year traders from Munnipoor, Cachar and Sylhet, who had gone as usual for trade purposes, were, on endeavouring as usual to purchase animals, curtly informed that all trade was forbidden by orders from the King at Mandalay. No other intimation of any kind was ever given, and no formal notice of trade stoppage intimated to Munnipoor.

As regards the freedom of trade which actually existed formerly, I can personally testify, having had a three and a half years' experience in the country previous to the above period, and amply satisfied myself as to how open the trade then was.

To conclude this subject it should be added that there is no demand here for Burmese saddlery, and that therefore any prohibition on export would be unnecessary (letter No. 27 of date Mandalay, 27th April 1875, from Political Agent to Secretary to Chief Commissioner, British Burmah), on the contrary Munnipoor saddles are much sought for in Burmah.

Frontier line between Munnipoor and Burmah.—The question of the proper boundary line between the State of Munnipoor and Burmah which cropped up some years ago, after a raid made by the Burmese on a village named Ngatsangah and situated west of what had hitherto been considered the boundary line between the two States, has since last report advanced a stage, and will probably give no further trouble. The Munnipooris only wish the old boundary line as laid down by Captain Pemberton some 40 years ago to be recognized and retained.

On the Burmese side there seems a desire to drop the matter, there indeed appears every reason to suppose that the subject would never have attracted any attention had the Burmese authorities not been anxious to evade blame in carrying off the inhabitants of the above village (in which they were most culpable) by escaping so to speak under the shadow of the cloud raised by the alleged wrong boundary, which was intended to show that the village belonged to them and not to Munnipoor. The question then at present stands thus. The Burmese authorities have expressed themselves as satisfied with the boundary line as laid down in 1833 and have no wish for change; they also consider it unnecessary to depute an officer or officers to go over the boundary line (see letter No. 2053P., from Under-Secretary, Government of India, dated Fort William, 1st October 1874, and enclosures). On the other hand the Maharaja of Munnipoor is quite satisfied with the old and well understood boundary line as laid down by Captain Pemberton in the above year, provided it is adhered to in its entirety.

The following extract from my letter No. 103, dated 30th October 1874, to the Under-Secretary, Government of India, Foreign Department, will show what my ideas are on the subject :—

"I have consulted with the Munnipoori officials on the subject, and they are willing to accept what has long been recognized on either side as Pemberton's line as the boundary, this line has only within the last few years been called in question, the Burmese having overstepped it

and established a thannah, and also laid claim to two villages immediately on the Munnipoor side. The thannah has long been removed, and the claims to any villages situated west of the old line abandoned.

"The boundary line was visited by the former Political Agents, General Nuthall and Colonel Thomson (see letters Nos. 71, dated Munnipoor, 29th April 1872, and 159, 12th December 1872). General Nuthall seemed to have satisfied himself that the old boundary (marked in red in the map sent, which is an enlarged copy of a portion of Pemberton's map) was the correct one. Colonel Thomson on his visit satisfied himself that all the villages claimed by Munnipoor really belonged to them.

"Colonel Thomson modified the line, however, and cut out an old established Munnipoor thannah named Moreh without however explaining why; his line, which seemed intended to run straight nearly from village to village, is strongly objected to by Munnipoor, as it would deprive these villages of almost all the land they cultivate. I think this objection holds good; there is another, that bringing the Burmese line close up to these villages would be a strong temptation to interference.

"I have with the consent of the Munnipooris altered a portion of the line between the marks O on the map making it agree with that of Colonel Thomson which cuts off an angle of country, giving it to Burmah. The rest of the old line should, I think, be adhered to as marked.

"Should the Burmese Government agree to the old line as marked in the map sent, all that would be necessary for an immediate settlement would be to point out what villages are on one side and what on the other, the map shows this."

Nothing further has been heard on the matter since the above letter was submitted.

Raids in connexion with Burmah.—With reference to the cases as mentioned in last year's report, *viz.*, the one of alleged manslaughter of a Munnipoori subject on the frontier by Burmese, and alleged sale to Burmese of kidnapped Munnipoor hillmen, no reply has been received regarding the last case; and as to the first, it has apparently by both parties been allowed to die out. As nothing has been recently heard from the Munnipoori authorities for a considerable time regarding either of the above cases, I have done nothing more, and probably further attempts at enquiry would prove abortive.

Lusai Kuki affairs.—There is but little to report regarding this tribe, and from the fact of there having been no communication whatever during the past year between the Eastern Lusais and Munnipoor, there is an absolute dearth of direct news of any kind from their country. They still retain the exclusive and sulky demeanour of former recent years.

Last cold weather some anxiety was felt both in Munnipoor and Cachar regarding the movements of a large well armed party of Lusais who suddenly appeared amongst the tea gardens situated furthest south-east in the Cachar district.

Ostensibly their object was to collect India-rubber, but the fact of their having arms and being observed closely examining the various tea gardens around was rather suspicious.

Their movements were rather more pronounced in Munnipoor territory, for in the Jheerie forest they helped themselves freely to India-rubber, destroying many valuable trees; they were, it appears, mildly remonstrated with by the Munnipooris, but excused their proceedings by saying that their own stock of rubber trees having given out they were perforce obliged to help themselves from Munnipoor.

The circumstance of their having poached on Munnipoori ground was made the subject of a complaint by the authorities here, but I had to inform them that the British Government having no direct control over these wild tribes, they must protect their own interests where these tribes were concerned the best way they could.

The alarm caused by the near presence of these Lusais led to numerous Nagas near the line of road deserting their villages and flying into British territory. These villagers, I understand, all returned after the alarm had subsided.

Although no actual attack was made on any part of Munnipoor territory by this body of Lusais, there was a strong suspicion that such was at one time intended, as a village south of the Kala Naga stockade reported that they found the path leading from their village to where the Lusais were encamped, panjied; on taking up these panjies they were again replaced, and fearing an attack the villagers thereupon decamped.

Although the fact of these Lusais (about, it is calculated, 500 at least in number, all young men) committing no hostilities and showing themselves openly looks as if their errand was entirely peaceful, it is just as likely that their main object was to fix the position and strength of the various gardens, outposts, &c., in south-east Cachar with a view to future raiding; keeping this in view I have warned the authorities to be on the alert to check any hostile movements on their part from such time as the country is open enough to admit of them. The Deputy Commissioner of Cachar is also fully alive, I understand, to the possible significance of the late movement.

Kamhow or Sootie Kuki affairs.—To understand what has hitherto been known regarding the Sootie tribe of Kukis, I give first an extract from an official communication on the subject of raids committed by them on Munnipoor hill territory by General Nuthall, late Officiating Political Agent, which communication is a translation of information furnished by the Munnipoori authorities :—

Report upon the past relations of the Maharaja of Munnipoor with Kamhow, Chief of the Sootie tribe.

“ In Regent Nursing’s time Kamhow made several raids upon the Maharaja’s villages and took possession of Molbee (the present residence of Kokatung) and Heeroway, then within Munnipoor territory.

“ In 1855 Kamhow attacked and burnt Numfow.

“ Next year, 1856, the Maharaja, in consultation with the then Political Agent, Colonel McCulloch, made preparations and proceeded

with a force against Kamhow, but owing to failure of supplies and want of communication he was obliged to retire.

"On return from this expedition the Maharaja established a thannah on the hills near Numfow, and placed 200 sepoy (including Khongjai Kukis) there.

"In 1857 Kamhow raided on Chasat and carried off the Chasat Raja's wife, named Toonghoolmah, with her two boys (Toonghool and Yakapow) and one girl, killing eight men.

"In 1858, on the 6th Pous, Kamhow raided on Sitol, but was unable to destroy any property or to carry off any men as at that time there was a Munnipoori guard then under Moyna Subadar. They drove the raiders off without loss on either side.

"In the same year, on the 3rd Cheyt, a fight took place between Kamhow's men and a Munnipoori force at Kublook villages, in which one Noongum, a Chief of Kamhow, and twelve men were killed; two sepoy of the Munnipoori force under command of Sewai Jamba Major were also killed.

"In 1862, 15th Cheyt, the present messenger 'Kykole' with some men came to take tribute from our village Khenglum. He with one of his followers was arrested by Ooyna and Athokpa, Subadars, who were at that time in the Numfow and Shoogoonoo Thannahs, and brought them to Munnipoor as prisoners. They were put in prison here. Hence Kykole understanding the Munnipoori language. He is a Muntri of Yatol.

"In 1865, 8th Pous, Kamhow destroyed Chengbolekhool, twenty-nine men were killed, only three of the villagers escaped.

"In the same year, 1865, Kamhow sent two of his Muntris named Khygumba and Looplakpa with seven men to ask for the Maharaja's pardon and future friendship, as well as for the release of Kykole and his men. They also wanted to open trade with us.

"Kykole was released, and Athokpa Subadar was sent along with the Muntris to hold a conference with Kamhow. He saw that Chief and his son Yatol, also the Rajas of Molbee and Lyang. After that up to the death of Kamhow no raids were committed upon our villages.

"Kamhow died about three years ago, a year after, *i.e.*, in 1869, a raid was made on Bombang, eleven men killed, and eleven carried off as captives.

"About two years ago another raid was made on Monkow, Khoolakpa and the villagers ran away towards Kamhow.

"Two villages of Fukloway (Numfow district) were attacked in 1871, 15th Pous, one man killed and seven carried off as captives. Athokpa Subadar was deputed to enquire as to the tribes by whom this raid was committed, whether by the Pois or Kamhows.

"It was ascertained from Yatol that the sons of the Molbee Raja committed this, but as they were Yatol's uncle's sons, he, Yatol, asked for pardon and promised to restore the captives and to pay a fine for those killed.

"On the return of Athokpa Subadar in November 1871 there came with him two men from Molbee Raja, two Muntris from Yatol, and one from Kokatung named Sowome. They saw the Maharaja and the Political Agent. Some presents were given to them, and they were ordered to join the force at Tseklapi in the middle of December.

"During our stay at Cheebo, they committed raids upon Teebeekung, Tooyel, and Ngajan, and carried off 67 persons, and killed 11 persons, and never joined as allies."

From the isolated position of the Sootie tribe of Kukis it is a difficult matter to ascertain anything trustworthy about them: the general opinion here, however, amongst the best informed of the authorities is, that as regards strength at least, 2,000 men, two-thirds of them armed with muskets, would be available in the event of an attack being made on the villages in the interior.

In general appearance and language they resemble the Lusais, but they are usually taller and stronger, and have the reputation of being much more formidable as foes. The Lusais and they are unfriendly and not unfrequently come into hostile contact, when according to all accounts the Sooties almost invariably get the best of it.

It is impossible to say how far this tribe extends in a southerly direction, but their villages commence about five days march south of the Munnipoor valley, in what is called the Mombee group of villages, this group being all situated in Munnipoor territory (as laid down by Pemberton). It is this Mombee branch of the tribe which has lately and is now giving trouble, they are undoubtedly backed up however by the more powerful of the tribes south of them.

Of the many raids made by these Mombee men, the most important of recent years is the one which occurred in the cold weather of 1874, when two villages inhabited by Kukis of the Anal Numfow tribe, named Mukpong and Kumsol, were attacked and destroyed. The importance of this raid chiefly consists in the fact that these villages were so close to the valley that several large Munnipoori villages were with a two or three hours' journey of them and quite open to attack. This is the only instance of an attack being made by hillmen on villages so close to the inhabited part of the valley, and shows how these savages have become emboldened by the ease with which these raids can be made, and the immunity from punishment following their occurrence.

The following account is from the official report, No. 113, of date 26th November 1874, written after I had personally visited and inspected the villages raided on:—

"On the 7th of this month (November 1874) I left by boat for the scene of the raid, and visited the villages which had been attacked on the 11th. I first went to Kumsol, which is but a short distance from the village of Chairel on the left bank of the Munnipoori river where I was encamped. The village of Kumsol was reached in about an hour, and was found abandoned and partly burned; it is badly situated for defence, being easily entered from the slope above the village.

"After leaving the villages of Kumsol and satisfying myself of the general correctness of the account of the attack as given in letter

No. 101, of date 17th October last, I proceeded to a high point in the first range of hills, from which a good view was obtained of the country looking south. This was found quite uninhabited, rough, and jungly, with high ranges intervening between the point of observation and the Kamhow country some four or five marches off. The Toombee river was also observed just under and south of the first range, flowing east through a valley covered with long grass jungle.

"On returning the village of Mukoong was passed through, the other which had been attacked, its position and open condition was very similar to that of Kumsol, and could have presented no difficulties in the way of entry to an attacking party; this village was also partly burned and abandoned; the survivors of both villages have taken refuge on the other bank of the Munnipoori river in the villages of Chairel and Wangoo inhabited by Loe Munnipooris.

"The statement of the sepoy Erabunto, as detailed in paragraph 2 of my letter No. 101, would not bear investigation: it appears that no such fight as he describes took place, and the Kamhows were merely seen in the jungle on the opposite bank of the Toombee river, and a few shots exchanged without any apparent effect. The Kamhows had made a bridge across the river on their advance, which they destroyed on retreating.

"There appears little doubt from my investigations that this raid was committed by the section of the Kamhow tribe residing at Mombee, about four marches from the point I reached. This Mombee, according to Pemberton and Colonel Thomson, is within Munnipoor territory, and the said territory has been encroached upon, and the former inhabitants driven out by the Kamhows.

"As intimated in the last paragraph of my letter No. 101, I asked the Munnipoori authorities to furnish me with a plan of what they proposed doing in the way of reprisals for these raids; the reply was rather disappointing, for the main point in it was a request that Government should be solicited to give them a grant of 2,000 light muskets with ammunition for the expedition. I informed them that I should certainly not make any such recommendation, and would report against it, and also suggested their withdrawing the letter, which they did, and substituting what I really required, *viz.*, a plan of their proposed operations; this has not yet been done, hence the delay in submitting this report. Should they submit the letter required, it will be forwarded.

"As regards the undertaking of a small expedition to punish these raiders, I am still of opinion that should the Munnipooris desire it permission should be granted. I would recommend, however, that Government should not identify itself with the expedition further than limiting the Munnipoori advance to Mombee. From all the information I can glean, and that is meagre, the tribe of Kokatung, who inhabit Mombee, and whose villages contain some five hundred houses, will fight, and will most likely be backed up by the tribes further south.

"Further raids are, it is said, contemplated, and the Munnipoori villages in the valley nearest the hills have been threatened, and are in great danger; several outposts have been recently formed as protectives, but I have little faith in their utility."

As time went on it became clearer day by day that the Kukis of Mombee had the whole hand in the raiding, and preparations were continued for an attack on their villages.

The following programme (which was approved of by Government) was framed by me and submitted to the Maharaja, who apparently thought well of it, and promised to have it carried out :—

“1st.—Any force sent to confine its operations to the group of villages named Mombee, which group it appears pretty clearly furnished the raiders.

“2nd.—Mombee, if resistance is offered, to be destroyed. If opportunity offers, prisoners to be taken, who can] be afterwards exchanged for captives now in the hands of the Sootie clan. Should any negotiation take place after attacking Mombee, the chief object should be to arrange for the return of captives.

“3rd.—Should the Mombee villagers make no resistance, the Munnipooris should insist upon hostages from the villages being given up, to be held until the captives are returned.

“4th.—Munnipoori authorities to report carefully on the progress of the expedition.”

In my letter No. 125 of date 21st December 1874, I made the following suggestion, on ascertaining that, so far as could be made out, the Sooties intended resistance, and the Munnipooris were also apparently in earnest :—

“As the Munnipooris are evidently in earnest in their desire to punish these wanton raids, and as the Kamhows promise to show fight, I now think that it would be well for me to accompany the expedition. Should sanction be given kindly telegraph, as a start is contemplated not later than the 15th of January.”

The proposition was however negatived by Government in letter No. 91, dated 6th January 1875, as it would be “contrary to precedent for the Government of India so far to identify itself with the warlike expeditions which a Native Prince may undertake, as to depute its Agent with the Prince to join them.”

In sanctioning an expedition to punish the raiders, Government laid down the following propositions to be observed :—

1st.—The group of villages named Mombee only to be attacked.

2nd.—The Munnipooris to send a sufficient force to obviate all chances of defeat.

3rd.—Reprisals on women and children to be strictly avoided.

The expedition having been determined on, and the Maharaja having been informed of the wishes of Government on the above points, arrangements were at once commenced, and provision depôts established, the chief one being at Shoogoonoo.

The Maharaja writes on 4th January that he proposes to despatch a force of 2,000 men all told about the 22nd, and closes his letter by making the stereotyped (on all possible occasions) request for a grant of

ammunition, &c., which I at once refused to recommend, which refusal led to the withdrawal of that part of his communication.

On the 20th of January I reported to the Chief Commissioner that I had requested the Maharaja to postpone the departure of the Kamhow (Sootie) Expeditionary Force on account of the somewhat suspicious movements of the Lusais on the Cachar frontier as alluded to in this report. This was done, and the force was not despatched finally until the 26th February, when 500 men, the number intended to march into the enemy's country, left Shooگونoo. The two Majors in command, Tangal Hazaree and Sewai Jamba, had previously left the Capital in advance on the 19th of the same month.

Before the force started two women, who had been carried off in the raid, managed to make their escape and were able to give information as to the attitude of the Mombee people, which ought to have been useful to the two officers in command.

The following is the account of the above two women :—

Statement of LENGPHA, aged 45 years, and LENGLEI, aged about 15, formerly inhabitants of the village of Kumsol in Munnipoor territory.

"About six months ago our village was suddenly attacked by a force of about 300 of Kamhows tribe, many of whom were armed with muskets; they came in great force, and completely invested the village, so that we could not escape. In the attack they killed 11 persons (all men) and made 34 captives (women and children, including the Khoolakpa, headman). We were amongst these 34 captives, and were kept in Lumyang (one of the Mombee group of villages), the village in which Kokatung's son, Song-gam, is the Chief. The captives carried off from Mukoong were also kept in this village. All the captives, with the exception of the Khoolakpa and eleven men, have been sold to the Kamhows of the interior and Pois (Shendoos). The value taken for each man and woman adult being two muskets or two methnas (hill cows), for each boy and girl one musket, or else ear ornaments and pebble necklaces. One Kykole of Yatol's village came several times to buy slaves, but returned without any. This Kykole it appears came three times to Munnipoor as an emissary of Yatol, the Chief of the Kamhow tribe, and arranged with Colonel Thomson for the exchange of captives. We lived in the house of Song-gam's sister; we were told that we would be sold in a few days. Hearing this we resolved to escape. Seven days ago we got away from the village in the forenoon; we were sent to collect firewood, whether we were pursued or not we cannot say. On the fifth day we reached Shooگونoo (in the Munnipoor valley).

"During our stay in the village the Kamhows, about 300 or 400 in number, twice started to attack the villages of Sugang and Sytol (I cannot identify the position of these villages at present, but think they must be east of the ones formerly destroyed), but they returned twice without success. We have heard them conferring about attacking and destroying the stockade built at Namphow Khoomul (occupied by Munnipooris). They sent some of their spies to see the place. Their rice is already collected, and they are looking for a good omen to start.

They have also stockaded their villages and have placed 'panjics' all over the walls and roads. The Chief's house has been strongly fortified by wooden palisades. Our Khoolakpa and eleven men are still in the villages."

Progress and results of the Expedition.—But little was heard of the progress of the expedition until its final return on the 14th April 1875, when the following account was given of its progress and results. I copy from my official account, under date 25th April 1875 :—

Narrative of the Munnipoori Officers, TANGAL MAJOR and SEWAI JAMBA, in charge of the Kamhow Expeditionary Force.

"On the 19th February (Friday) the force consisting of 2,000 Munnipooris and 400 Khongjais, in all 2,400, under the command of Majors Sewai Jamba and Tangal, left the Capital and marched to Shoo-goonoo, the base of operations, on the 21st. Having made the necessary arrangements for the despatch of supplies, the force started for Mombee on the 26th. As it was known that the Kamhows were watching our movements we set fire to the roadside jungle as we proceeded on. The force reached Nowantah and encamped there in a stockade. Some of the Lumyang Nagas were seen by our spies at this place, but they ran away. On the 1st March the force reached Toomul and encamped there; Kamhow spies, about 10 or 12 in number, armed with muskets, were observed by our men here.

"7th March.—Force reached Toel Eemkha. A Kuki was seen on the top of a Oochal tree, probably observing our movements.

"9th March.—The force reached Yangnoong. Our Naga Dobhasis (interpreters) informed us that the Kamhow Chief, Yatol, with his men were at Noongeah, Thangapow, and the villagers of Lumyang were encamped on the other side of the river. Hearing this the Majors proceeded to the spot, but found no one.

"On the 20th March our advance guard, about 300 men (with some Nagas employed in roadmaking) reached Diloom. Two hours before sunset the Lumyang Nagas, said to be headed by Yatol's brother and son, made an attack and fired at one of our parties who were encamped near the Diloom river. Our men made a good stand, and continued firing. After an interval of one and a half hours' fighting the Kukis gave in and fled. Our men on examining the spot found some blood marks, and thought some men must have been wounded or killed.

"Early next morning the Majors and the main body of the force arrived and preparations were being made for attacking the Sootie villages. At 8 or 9 p.m. a deputation from Noongeah, consisting of Kumteh and Thangjeeloom, came into the camp, and said we are afraid and don't want to fight any more, two of our men have been killed and five wounded in last evening's skirmish. We request you not to advance any further; we acknowledge to be the Maharaja's ryots, and will pay tribute; we are also ready to abide by the terms you wish to propose. Saying this they placed before the Majors the Chief Yatol's sword. They also added that their women and children with the live-stock and paddy have been removed to the distant villages in the interior a long time ago, and they are in great distress for want of food.

"The Majors replied, 'if you are afraid bring in the men you took as captives from Kumsol.' They said they would give up what captives they had. The Majors wanted to go up to their villages, but Kumteh and Thangjeeloom said, 'if you with such a large force go there our villages will be ruined: you can send one or two of your Subadars with a few men.' Upon this Athokpa and Mungsoong Subadars with twenty-two sepoys were sent along with them.

"On the 31st March the two Subadars above alluded to returned to the camp bringing with them the Kumsol Chief's wife and child.

"On the 4th April Kikoul, emissary of Kamhow Chief Yatol, Kumteh of Lumyang, Thangjeeloom, Semhool, and the Chief of Noongeah came to the camp bringing with them the Chief of Kumsol and six other captives, also a Methna.

"On the 9th April the Majors with the force and the Naga Chiefs abovenamed returned and arrived at Shoogoonoo on the 11th and the Capital on the 14th."

My concluding remarks on the above narrative may be here given:—

"To conclude, although I am disappointed at no hostages having been brought in, I think the expedition has been fairly successful. Whether or not the prisoners will now be given up is uncertain, and as to the continuance of peace, time only can show. The Munnipooris, I may add, effected the whole operation without losing any of their number. One Khongjai Kuki died from wounds received in a skirmish at one of the outposts established before the expedition proper started as formerly reported. No deaths from sickness have been reported."

Results of the Expedition.—The further results of the expedition may be thus briefly summarized:—

On May 5th it was reported (letter No. 58 of 5th May 1875 to Secretary to Chief Commissioner of Assam) that four more captives had been restored by the Mombee Sooties, and that the headman of Kumsol, one of the villages in Munnipoor territory destroyed by the Mombee men, stated that all the captives taken from his village had now been accounted for.

In consequence of this further surrender of captives, I directed the immediate liberation according to promise of the five Mombee men who had been so long in the hands of the Munnipooris; they were in excellent health and condition, and did not seem particularly anxious about returning to their own country.

A messenger from the Chief Yatol accompanied the party of returned captives; he expressed himself as confident that more would be given up; he was dismissed with sundry small presents.

Munnipoori account of their operations exaggerated.—Having had considerable experience of Munnipoori accounts of their valiant doings when engaged in operations like the above, which accounts were almost always found on further independent investigation to be untrue, I naturally made some enquiry as to the correctness of the Major's accounts, and found that, so far as my informants knew (and some of

them were with the force), not a shot was fired on Mombee, and each party seemed to be afraid of the other.

What the result of the expedition will be it is impossible to say, but I should conclude that matters are much as they were, and should the Sooties feel inclined to commit further raids on Munnipoor territory, they are not likely to be deterred by any fear of the Munnipoor troops. The authorities themselves seem quite apathetic in the matter.

The Angami Nagas and other northern tribes.—My last annual report gave a somewhat unfavourable account of the condition of affairs on the northern boundary of the Munnipoor State. Matters instead of mending have, I regret to say, gone on from bad to worse, and chronic raiding had been the order of the day, to the loss of many lives and much valuable property.

A glance at the following list of raids as communicated by letter will do more to show the utterly lawless condition of affairs obtaining on this frontier than any amount of description :—

List of raids committed by British subjects on Munnipoor Hill territory.

No.	Date.	To whom.	SUBJECT.
99	9th October 1874.	Political Agent, Naga Hills.	Brings to his notice that the destruction of the village of Phweelong has again been threatened by the Nagas of Papalongmai or Konomah.
126	22nd December 1874.	Ditto ...	Brings to his notice the murder of one Assasso Naga of Maow Kholel by a villager of Tangal.
1	6th January 1875.	Ditto ...	Forwards a complaint made by the Nagas of Oklong to the effect that their village had been attacked and destroyed by the Nagas of Sammoomai, and that two men killed and three men wounded.
11	23rd ditto.	Ditto ...	Forwards a complaint preferred by the Nagas of Lulong against the Nagas of Konomah regarding extortion of money from them as tribute.
41	20th April 1875.	Ditto ...	Forwards a complaint made by the Nagas of Togwemah against the Nagas of Rakoomai to the effect that their village had been attacked and two men killed and one man wounded.
45	25th ditto.	Ditto ...	Forwards a complaint made by the headmen of the Naga villages of Theelol, Seramba, and Panbrem against the Nagas of Konomah to the effect that their villages have been threatened to be destroyed, and that their pigs and fowls have been killed and eaten.
77	5th June 1875.	Ditto ...	Forwards a complaint by the Nagas of Lulong to the effect that their village had been attacked and plundered by the Nagas of Mozemah.

With reference to the above formidable list of outrages, it is necessary to state that there has not been a single complaint of counter-raiding on British Hill territory by Nagas of Munnipoor brought before me; neither, I am assured by the Political Agent of the Naga Hills, have any occurred.

Repressive measures to be shortly adopted.—It is, I understand, contemplated to put an end to this state of affairs by strictly repressive measures directed to the villages implicated which are few in number and well known; the sooner this is done the better I consider for all parties, as emboldened by the impunity with which they have been permitted to raid, the Angamis concerned are likely, as time goes on, to give more and more trouble, and this especially as they are tolerably well supplied with fire-arms and ammunition and increasing their store of them at every available opportunity.

The Munnipooris with considerable reason complain very bitterly about the present state of affairs, and it is really a matter of some awkwardness to bring forward any reasonable excuse for these constant unchecked outbreaks, the carrying out of strictly punitive measures with the offending clans will bring matters however speedily to rights.

Survey operations.—No survey operations whatever have been carried on during the past year in Munnipoor territory. I understand that during the cold weather of 1876-77 the survey will be re-opened, there being plenty of fresh ground to cover.

Legal matters.—Under the new Extradition Act of 1872 no cases have occurred, although an attempt was made by the Munnipoori authorities to bring a case under its operation in which a number of Munnipooris, sepoys chiefly, took the opportunity of remaining behind in Cachar after the Durbar of August 1874, at which the Munnipoor Maharaja was present.

Case of deserting Munnipooris.—As an example of the untruthful character of the Munnipooris this case is worth alluding to.

In first making the complaint no reference whatever was made as to any fault having been committed by the runaways (15 in number) other than desertion, but on its being pointed out to the authorities that action could not be taken unless a case could be brought against them under the Extradition Act, a complaint absurd in every way was at once brought forward. As is not uncommon, any entertainment of the charge was rendered impossible by the manifest absurdity of the charges laid, their nature and my reply to the complaint is conveyed in the letter sent in reply, which I now quote in full:—

“I am in receipt of your letter of the 11th September 1874, enclosing a list of names of 15 sepoys, &c., who deserted from your escort during your recent visit to Cachar. I now return the list for correction, and may add that I am convinced you could not have been made aware of its contents before causing it to be sent.

“In the report given me in Luckipoor of the occurrence, it was stated that one sepoy had carried off his musket, bayonet, &c., but no mention whatever was made of any rupees having been stolen. In the list enclosed, however, every man in it is credited with having carried off

from different individuals large sums of money amounting in one instance to the sum of Rupees 200, besides this large quantities of valuable property are said to have been stolen, the money alone amounting in the aggregate to the utterly ridiculous and incredible sum of upwards of Rupees 1,500. How men in the position of sepoy, havildars, and other inferior officers of your State become possessed of such enormous sums of money, and why, if possessed of such, they took their wealth with them to Cachar, is not explained.

"I have, therefore, on account of the exaggerated statements contained in the list (which no sane individuals could for a moment believe in), no alternative but to return it, with a remark that such untrue statements should not be submitted, as harm rather than good ensues from their presentation."

The authorities who steadily adhered to their story were finally advised to bring their complaint to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner of Cachar (who was advised of the matter), but this they did not do.

Durbar held in Cachar.—The unique circumstance of a visit by the Viceroy and Governor-General of India to farther Eastern Bengal and Assam led to arrangements being made in August 1874 for the Maharaja of Munnipoor to meet His Excellency in Cachar.

These arrangements were duly made, and the Maharaja with two of his sons and several of his principal officers, with the Political Agent (who followed two days afterwards), left for Cachar on the 30th July 1874, marching to Cachar by easy stages. A suitable camp had been provided in the station of Silchar for the Maharaja and his attendants by the Deputy Commissioner, and gave every satisfaction. The Durbar was duly held on board of the Viceroy's yacht, and was, I believe, of a satisfactory nature; presents were as usual exchanged, and the Maharaja with his sons were also entertained at an evening reception. The Chief Commissioner of Assam was with the Viceroy, and had an opportunity of seeing and conversing with the Maharaja.

After the departure of His Excellency and the Chief Commissioner, which took place on the day after the Durbar, the Maharaja rested for a few days, and had an opportunity of being introduced to many of the leading tea planters of the district, &c., taking his departure on the 14th August.

The time selected for this visit was not a good one, being during the height of the rainy season in the Munnipoor hills. Amongst the followers a good deal of fever took place, and some mortality on the return journey. The Maharaja himself, who was suffering from slight indisposition before leaving for Cachar, improved greatly in health before his return. He seemed, I may add, glad of the opportunity of having an interview with His Excellency the Viceroy and the Chief Commissioner of Assam, and I experienced no difficulty whatever in making the necessary arrangements for a meeting.

As might be expected in an isolated country like this, and with a profoundly ignorant population, a good deal of speculation and suspicion attended the above movement: bazaar rumour had it that the whole thing

was a plan to entrap the Maharaja and keep him in confinement, &c., &c.; and I had the pleasure of hearing afterwards that some of his younger sons had sworn, in such an event, to have my life. As it was I was forgiven on the safe return of the Maharaja, whom I did not, and do not, credit with any suspicious feeling on the matter.

Temperature, rainfall, &c.—The following table gives the temperature and rainfall for the year:—

Temperature and rainfall for the year in the Munnipoor Valley.

Month.		Maximum.	Medium.	Minimum.	Rainfall.
July 1874	...	85	80	74	4.28
August "	...	83	80	74	4.14
September "	...	84	72	79	2.14
October "	...	83	79	69	2.84
November "	...	78	74	59	0.30
December "	...	66	64	41	...
January 1875	...	63	61	45	1.54
February "	...	72	74	49	0.30
March "	...	78	75	59	5.42
April "	...	81	79	66	2.10
May "	...	83	80	66	4.38
June "	...	82	79	73	8.82
Total ...					36.26

Observations made once daily at 6 A.M.

No earthquakes were noted as having occurred during the year.

Crops.—The prospects of a good harvest are favourable, although some anxiety was felt early in the season of this year of a local kind, however, on account of floods, the rice crop having been swept away on three different occasions on certain lands lying in proximity to the largest of the rivers flowing through the valley. Rice is, I am informed at the present time of writing, cheap, and likely to remain so.

Health of the Valley.—There have been no epidemics of any kind during the year; cholera has not invaded the valley. Small-pox has occurred but only in a mild form, and in scattered cases two of the sepoy guard here were attacked, but both recovered.

As usual vaccination has languished, and the population generally, both of the valley and hills, have shown their usual apathy in the matter.

The following table gives the results, in which it will be noticed the proportion of failures is greater than that of successful cases of the number vaccinated:—

Vaccinated.	Succeeded.	Result failed.	Total.
57	24	33	57

Roads and Communications.—With reference to the Government road lying between the Munnipoor Valley and the British frontier on the Jheerie river, I have much pleasure in reporting favourably on the

repairs executed during last cold season, as will be seen from the following extract from letter No. 28, dated 15th March 1875, and written after the repairs had been executed:—

“My former annual reports on the state of the road have been unfavourable, the Maharaja having failed to keep it in that state of repair as required by Treaty. I am happy, however, to be able to report that this year the obligation has been faithfully carried out, and that the road is in a better condition than it has been for many years.

“I have visited and carefully gone over the road on two occasions during this cold weather, pointing out to the various road sirdars what was required. I found them attentive and willing to attend to my suggestions, and I may here remark that the Maharaja accorded me full powers to give what orders I thought necessary in regard to the road repairs.

“My weekly diary has informed you of the working of the road inspection, I need not therefore enter into particulars. The condition of the road on my last inspection is briefly as follows:—

“The part leading from the Capital to the foot of the hills has been raised and levelled, and is in capital order. The whole of the hill portion, with the exception of about two miles near the Jheerie river (the frontier line) which is in progress, has been levelled and widened. Several miles of entirely new road have been constructed through the Jheerie forest, and the khalls have been securely bridged with heavy timber.

“I have addressed a congratulatory letter to the Maharaja on the condition of the road, which step I trust will be approved of. I have at the same time urged him on to fresh exertions next cold weather, as there is still a good deal to be done in the way of rock blasting, which operation could not be carried on owing to a complete want of blasting tools.

“I am happy to report that Government have granted a supply of wire rope, &c., for bridging the hill rivers, and I trust that my duties will admit of my actively superintending their construction during next cold season.”

The efforts made by the Munnipooris during the season to repair the road were acknowledged by the Government of India in letter No. 803G. of date 1st May 1875, to the Chief Commissioner of Assam, and were duly communicated by me to the Maharaja by his, the Chief Commissioner's, orders.

Tools for road repairs.—A supply of tools necessary for road repairs having been asked for in June last by the Maharaja, I made an application on the subject to the Chief Commissioner of Assam in letter No. 84 of date 12th June 1875, which was favourably received; it is to be hoped that the tools granted will be sent in time to admit of their being of use during the ensuing cold season.

Wire rope for bridging.—The wire rope formerly applied for and sanctioned for the construction of bridges over the rivers in the Munnipoor hills, and which I expected to have received during the rainy season, has not yet arrived; although it has been asked for; unless it comes pretty

early in the cold season, it will be impossible to make any use of it for bridging before the next rains.

Bungalows on the hill road.—The want of proper accommodation on the road between the Munnipoor valley and the Cachar frontier has been much felt, but up to this year, although frequently brought to the notice of the authorities, no steps had been taken in the matter, I have much pleasure in reporting, however, that after the road repairs had been finished, arrangements were made for building substantial accommodation for travellers likely to last with occasional repairs for some years. I have seen and occupied the new bungalows, and although got up in a rough style, they are perfectly good for the purpose; they have been built in situations named by me, are high up, and in healthy positions.

Roads in the Valley.—No new roads have been constructed in the valley during the year, but the few in existence have been kept in a good state of repair.

Trade matters.—There is very little to note under this head. I have found the table of duties levied on imports and exports given in last year's report useful in one case of a complaint brought by a Bengalee trader of overcharge. I found upon comparing the goods shown with the list that he had not been unfairly charged, and informed him accordingly. I am told that no change has been made in the list formerly given for this year. A few observations regarding the palpable decline of trade within the last year will be found under the head of Concluding Remarks.

Proposal for new Agency buildings.—The present buildings occupied by the Political Agent, and which are rented from the Maharaja's eldest son, having long been found unsuitable and badly situated in every way, an application was made through the Chief Commissioner of Assam (letter No. 81, dated 10th June 1875) for a grant of money to enable the Political Agent to build a new residence and offices, &c. The application has been favourably received.

Present of rifles to the Maharaja and his Officers, &c.—Owing to the obstructive and almost actively hostile attitude assumed by the Munnipoor Durbar on the occasion of the survey operations towards the east and north of the valley in 1872-73, a number of breech-loading rifled carbines, which had been presented by the late Lord Mayo to the Maharaja and his chief officers on account of the assistance given by them during the Looshai Expedition of 1871-72, were detained in Dacca until satisfaction and apology was given for the offence. This being done and a rebuke administered, the detained rifles (eleven in number) were forwarded; and were distributed by me in accordance with the instructions formerly received.

Education, &c.—There is nothing fresh to report regarding educational matters. The remarks made in last year's report are quite appropriate to this.

Supply of ammunition to the Munnipoor Militia Force.—A supply of ammunition having been applied for by the Maharaja in May last, consisting of lead, gunpowder, gun-caps and cartridge paper (no supply having been granted since 1869), I having satisfied myself by actual inspection of the magazine that such a supply was really required, it was

recommended for sanction, payment to be made in the proportion of one-third granted free of charge, the balance of the remaining cost to be repaid by easy periodical instalments. This has been agreed to, and the ammunition may be looked for some time during the ensuing cold season.

Falling off of trade.—In former years a brisk trade existed between Bengal and Munnipoor, traders bringing up betelnut and pân chiefly, and carrying down ponies, cloths, &c. Gradually, as by the oppressive measures adopted, the traders were forced to acknowledge that trade could only be carried on at a loss; their visits became fewer, and within the last year or two have almost ceased entirely. As trading has fallen off, so necessarily have failed the profits of former years, and as a consequence to fill the pockets of the authorities, their attention has been more directed to robbing the people of the country, and great and widespread discontent is the result.

MUNNIPOOR AGENCY, }
The 16th November 1875. }

(Sd.) R. BROWN,
Political Agent.