THE KABUI AND TANGKHUL NAGAS*

By MISS URSULA GRAHAM BOWER

THE Kabui and Tangkhul Naga areas both lie in Manipur, and outside the Naga Hills proper. Manipur itself is almost cut in half by the long, flat trough of the Manipur Valley; the Kabuis live to the west of it and the Tangkhuls on the east, the Burma side, and though separated by a relatively narrow lowland belt they differ markedly in appearance, customs, and the general level of their culture.

They are only two out of the different peoples in Manipur State, and, before I go on to deal with them in any detail, perhaps I may give you a rough idea of the neighbouring tribes and the country they inhabit. The Manipuris themselves live only in the main valley and the few subsidiary patches of fertile low ground. The valley is dead flat, and except for a few isolated hills and the considerable lakes and stretches of swamp, is all under cultivation and dotted with villages. Imphal, the capital, is a vast agglomeration of such villages grouped round the principal bazaar, the Residency, the Palace and the various Government buildings. The Manipuris are Hindus, but have only been converted to that religion comparatively recently, that is within the last two hundred years or so, and their language is akin to the Chin and Kuki dialects.

At one time Imphal's only link with the outside world was the old

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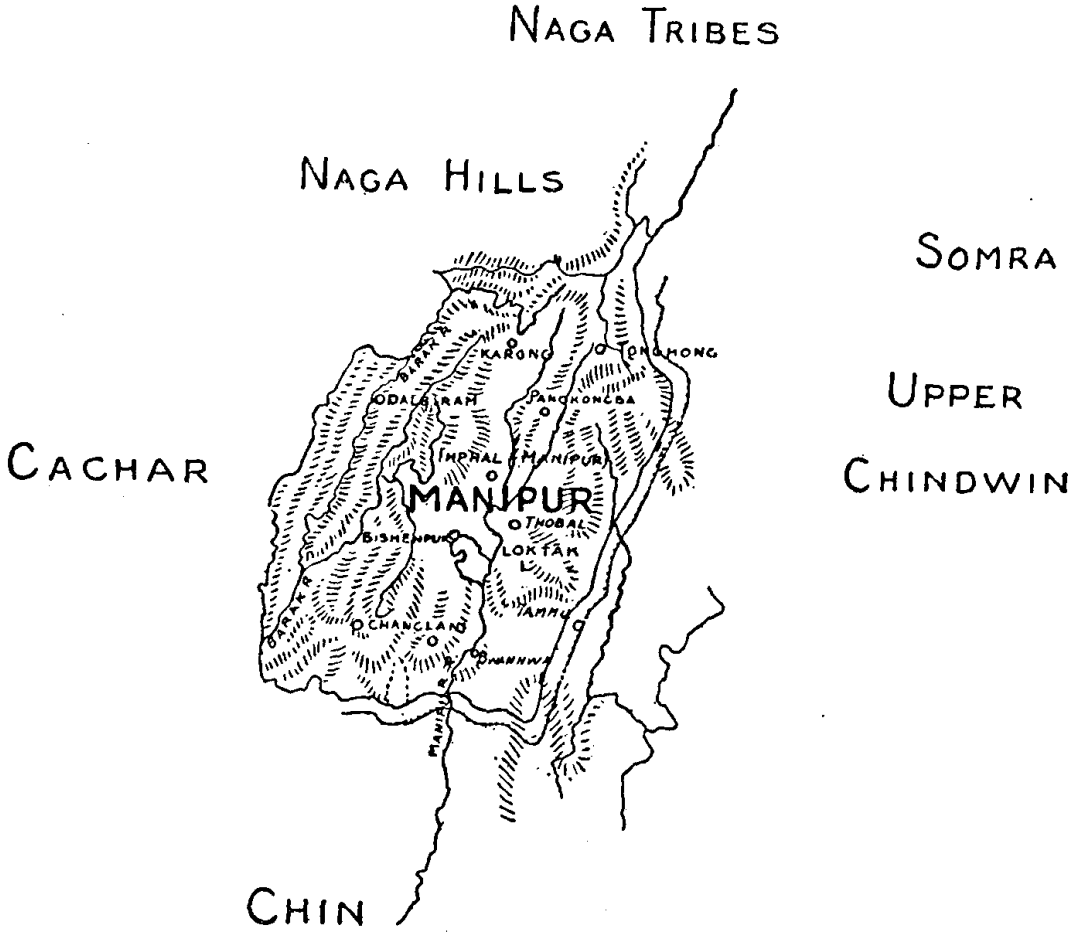
CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen,—

It is my privilege and pleasure to introduce the lecturer, Miss Graham Bower. She is naturally an explorer and adventurer, for her grand-uncle was a Mr. Hamilton Bower, a noted traveller. Once in Turkestan, where he happened to be travelling, the British Government asked him to trace the murderer of an English merchant, a Mr. Dalgleish. He succeeded in running the man down, and the murderer was duly executed; which showed everyone that Englishmen can travel in most parts of the world on their lawful occasions and rely on their Government to back them up.

With that blood in her veins, you can understand that Miss Bower takes naturally to exploring. I believe that on her recent journey she visited Manipur. Those of you who are more my age will remember when Manipur was in the news, and when Captain Grant and his half-company wiped up the crowd of rebels and got the V.C. I have not the slightest doubt that she will be as successful there in the future as in the past.

Cachar road which runs from Silchar through to Burma, but the modern motor-road comes in by Kohima and the pass at Mao. It is said that until the rebellion of 1891 wheeled transport was unknown in Manipur, and that the bullock carts which came in with the troops were the first seen there. When attempts were made to get Manipuris as drivers, they flatly declared carts were devilish inventions of the Sahibs and much too difficult for any Manipuris to handle, and eventually drivers had to be imported from the plains.



Nevertheless the Manipuris are fine horsemen, and Manipur is one of the several places credited with being the home of polo. It is said to have developed from Manipuri hockey, which is played thirty a side with long bamboo sticks; there are no goals, but only a back line, and half the team play at a time while the rest sit out as reserves. There are also no rules. A player may hold the ball and run with it, whirling his stick like a propeller to make sure no one tackles him; at a safe distance from the back line he throws the ball up and hits

it as hard as he can in mid-air, and it goes into the crowd like a bullet. The ball is not bullied off, but is thrown into the air over the players' heads; a player, marking his opponent, seizes him round the waist and they dash after the ball together like a three-legged race, and after about half an hour's play there are probably more couples fighting than playing. The reserves are necessary to replace the frequent casualties, but in spite of all this it is an enormously popular sport, and gangs of naked urchins can be seen playing it in every village.

Manipuri polo, though less dangerous, is quite as good to watch. It is played nine a side, and again there are back lines instead of goals, but the stickwork and skill displayed are perfectly amazing. The ponies are tiny, not more than twelve or thirteen hands, and are burdened with a heavy saddle and a pair of huge guards or fenders, which bang and rattle up and down the field. The game is played at terrific speed, and, like the hockey, there are no rules whatever. Casualties are fewer, largely because the polo player is well protected with a heavy *pagri*, a pair of velvet-covered shin-guards, and these massive fenders on the saddle, whereas the hockey players wear as little as possible.

One interesting survival of the old days is the dart, or rather arrow, throwing which was used by retreating cavalry to discourage pursuit. The horseman has a quiverful of long darts on his saddle, and at full gallop throws them up and over, so that they fall behind him in a regular shower. Unfortunately there now are only a few men left who know the art.

Lastly, there is the boat race, rowed, or rather paddled, in large dugouts with some forty men in each, and chiefly notable for the gorgeous costume and unusual headdress, wound so as to form a jutting horn over the forehead, worn by the head boatmen. This state headdress is also worn by wrestlers performing before the Maharajah. In each boat the head boatman is held up like a figure-head by two men behind him, and the rest paddle their heavy craft as hard as they can the length of the course. They are allowed to ram their opponents' boats, and, if possible, drive them into the bank, but they generally prefer the easier method, and each boat pulls in to its own bank and is hauled along there by enthusiastic supporters.

From Imphal, roads radiate to the foot of the hills and there join bridle-tracks running to Tamu and Burma, Cachar, and the two outposts, Tamenglong on the Kabui side and Ukhrul on the east. Like its tribes, Manipur's scenery is extremely varied. Once one

leaves the low ground the country is a tangle of long, narrow ridges divided by deep valleys four or five hundred feet above sea-level. The hills are mostly between four and five thousand feet in height, but rise here and there to eight thousand or more. Villages and staging bungalows alike are perched on the tops, and often in the early morning one sees the whole valley filled with mist, and range upon range rising out of it like islands.

Chakpi, at the south-east of the valley, has open grassland and coppices like Sussex oakwoods. Just short of the hills is the small area where most of the pots for Manipur are made, and all along the road from this part of the valley one passes huge loads of pots and jars being taken forty-odd miles to sell in Imphal bazaar. At the edge of the hills, though the people seem to be basically Kuki, there is an astonishing mixture of types, some Mongolian, some resembling the Manipuris, and some almost Caucasian. Only a march or two up the road, though, the woods change to thick jungle, and the easy-going Topokpi people give way to the unmistakable dark-clothed Kukis of Mombi.

Up in the north, near the Naga Hills border, the hills are higher and much of the land is cleared, but where the forest still stands it is dense, with some fine timber. The Angami sub-tribes who inhabit the district are a fine type physically, active, well built and muscular, with faces broad across the cheekbones and often freckled, and they practise the same complicated system of terrace cultivation as the rest of the Angamis and the Tangkhuls. As far as full dress goes they must be the most picturesque tribe in Manipur, though their ordinary costume is drab enough; their villages stand high, Mao in particular, and in the cold weather the Mao Naga is generally wrapped to the eyes against the wind which blows almost constantly through the Mao gap.

When in dance dress they wear the usual Angami kilt of black cotton sown with lines of cowrie shells, bands or baldrics of white stuff patterned with brilliant scarlet and green thread, a sort of sporran of bamboo sticks wound with more bright thread, a collection of vivid necklaces, and a tremendous headdress like a peacock's tail, made of lengths of split bamboo tipped with white down and held to a frame on the back of the head by fine cane and more coloured thread wound between the spokes. The frame itself is fastened to the man's own long back hair, which is wound round and round with ropes of raw cotton till the headdress stands well out behind. The more distin-

guished men wear hornbill feathers, and spears of various types, massive armlets, either real ivory or white wooden imitations, and possibly a shield or some of the characteristic ornaments fringed with red-dyed hair complete the costume. Nowadays wealth and social standing have superseded the real qualifications for the warrior's insignia, and it is nothing unusual to see a young man wearing hornbill feathers which should properly indicate he had taken five heads.

To the south of Mao a long spur runs down to the head of the Manipur valley, and on it, directly above the main road, stands the large village of Maram. When bullock-carts were the only means of transport the Maram men used to slip down by night, cut off the last cart or two of a train, kill the sleeping drivers, and then take bullocks, carts and all up to the village, where they took the drivers' heads, broke up the carts for firewood, and cooked the bullocks, and so celebrated the head-taking and disposed of the evidence in one. Modern travel on the Manipur road is not without its excitements, but at least the police and the motor-car have removed Maram from the list.

If the Mao men have the best dance dress, the Tangkhul leads where ordinary clothes are concerned. He is unmistakable, partly for his handsome red and blue clothes, but chiefly for his extraordinary cockscomb haircut. While other tribes crop their hair round like a skull-cap, grow it long or leave a top-knot to be twisted up, the Tangkhul shaves the side of his head completely and leaves a stiff crest over the top. The style varies slightly in different villages, some tying a knot in the tail of hair behind, some leaving the tail off, some keeping the crest broad, and others cutting it down to a three-inch strip, but it always retains the essential line. Small boys have their hair shaved or cropped close, and after that it grows by stages from a patch on the crown to a patch and a long tail, and, finally, to the man's upstanding mane.

The tribe occupies a long tract of country running north and east along the Burma border. Rather towards the south is the subdivisional headquarters of Ukhrul, which is about fifty miles from Imphal and connected to it by two bridle-roads. Both roads climb up and down over several ranges, but that is more inconvenient to touring officers than to the Tangkhuls, who, like most Nagas, prefer going uphill to walking on the level, and regard thirty miles as a fair day's march. The limit for coolie-loads is 60 lbs., but a Naga travelling on his own often carries 80 lbs. and more. Loads are packed in

tall baskets and carried by a headband or a headband and wooden shoulder-yoke.

Generally speaking, the Tangkhul is less heavily built than the Angami; he is lean, tall, and wiry, and has a distinctive cast of feature. His usual dress consists of a waistcloth, and over it one or more large body-cloths, the inner one usually white and the outer turkey-red with broad stripes of a blue so dark it looks black. The blue stripes are edged with narrow white lines, and the cloth is crossed with bands of embroidery finished with small tassels of the same thread. This is the cloth most usually worn, but there is another used by headmen and men of some position. It is a rich wine-red and very large, and is striped lengthways with white bands four inches wide. On each side of these is a strip of the same width with lines of embroidery, and outside these again a narrow white stripe. The women wear a red skirt or petticoat with a broad band of embroidery, and an outer wrap, sometimes plain and sometimes like the ordinary man's cloth. All these cloths are of a fine, close weave and surprisingly warm. The best ones are beautiful pieces of work, and though they are made in strips and sewn together the joins are almost invisible, and even in the hand the cloth seems to be woven all in one piece.

The Tangkhul is nothing like so friendly as the Angami, but he has a sense of humour and is perfectly ready to enjoy himself when he gets the chance. In keeping with his dignified and rather statuesque appearance is his avoidance of the elaborate ornaments and decorations which the Kabuis and Angamis favour so much. Many of the Tangkhul men wear large metal earrings much the size and shape of napkin-rings, but these are so heavy they are often discarded for comfort and the lobe left empty. Women do not wear earrings to anything like the same extent, but some of the older women wear a short section of bamboo through the lobe. Necklaces, on the other hand, are worn by everybody from the babies up. They vary with the wearer's taste and means from a single string of beads, through the collars of small disks much worn by the young bucks, to the headmen's long, elaborate necklaces of a dozen strings or more. The Tangkhul's principal weapons are the usual Naga ones, a spear and a *dao*, to which he sometimes adds an oblong, hide-covered shield about four feet long and rather under two feet wide. The characteristic Tangkhul spear is of enormous length, sometimes as much as twelve or fourteen feet, but round about Ukhrul there is a lighter, shorter type about six feet long. It is sometimes made with a wooden shaft and

iron head and butt, but is often made entirely of polished metal. These last are most beautiful weapons, with small leaf-shaped heads and squared shafts with two rounded sections as handgrips. The Tangkhul is a skilful fighter with the short spear, and the war-dance, or sham duel, is most impressive to watch. In fact, so worked up do the dancers get, particularly the young bucks, that one of the headmen has to jump in between and keep them apart throughout the dance, or there would probably be murder done.

Like all Nagas the Tangkhuls build their villages high up on ridges and summits, and the few modern, rather straggling Christian settlements are in great contrast to the compact and older pagan ones, built with an eye to defence. Down the slopes below every village run the elaborate terrace-systems, sometimes well over two thousand feet in vertical height. The level ground in the valleys is also cultivated, when there is any, but the bulk of the rice crop is grown on the terraces, which are faced with stone or turf, and on steep slopes are only a few feet wide. The various rivulets and small streams are most ingeniously used, and are led in and out and from level to level by bamboo water-pipes, which are also used to provide a kind of wayside drinking-tap where a runnel crosses a bridle-path.

A Tangkhul village has a main street which follows the line of the ridge and usually climbs it in a series of large, broken steps, with a house to each step and other houses ranged at varying angles behind. The street itself is full of rain-gullies, pigs, dogs, hens, children, buffaloes, refuse, and even graves. At the top of the village is a level space where the rich men's houses are and where the dances and gatherings take place. This space is ringed with houses and the tall, bare posts, like dead trees, put up to mark the "*gennas*" or feasts by which a man acquires social distinction. The houses themselves are large and built of timber, and have lower and flatter roofs than among the Kabuis and Angamis. There is a post well forward under the jutting end of the roof, and the space underneath is planked in and made into a kind of antechamber. The front wall and post of a rich man's house are elaborately carved and painted, and the usual shaggy thatch is replaced, at least in the front, by wooden shingles.

Outside the headman's house at Ukhrul and on the edge of the flat dancing-space is a small stone cairn. In the old days heads taken in a raid were brought back here and thrown down on the cairn, and after the necessary ceremonies and celebrations they were placed on shelves in the antechamber of the headman's house, where a large

number of them still are, though many more were destroyed in a fire a few years ago.

Ten days after our return from Ukhrul we were off again, this time for Tamenglong, the sub-divisional headquarters on the Kabui side. Our party consisted of Mr. C. F. Jeffery, the State Engineer, Miss Macdonald (my hostess), and myself. Our plan was to go up to Tamenglong and then on to the Barak river, which rises away to the north-east of Mao, takes a big loop round the Maram spur and cuts its way through the hills to the west before turning south again and running more or less straight to the Cachar road. We were to take to rafts at the bridge beyond Tamenglong and go down-river for a week, halting a day on the way at the Margery Falls, and then walk out along the Cachar road.

The hills here were covered in dense bamboo jungle which changed to timber on the heights. The road itself was well-graded, with suspension bridges over the bigger streams and tin-roofed transport sheds every few miles, but, like the Ukhrul roads, it went straight down one side of a range and up the other. The Kabuis are smaller and slighter than either the Angamis or the Tangkhuls, and their features are coarser, but as we went south and west down the river the type changed completely, and grew darker skinned and much more primitive. The usual costume here, round Tamenglong, was a short waistcloth or kilt of coarse cotton stuff, and over it the dandies sported a wide-ended sash decorated with yellow orchid skin which had the effect of rich silk embroidery. The body-cloth was generally white, and much smaller than that worn on the Tangkhul side. Different villages had different patterns, some plain, some striped, and some embroidered, and the cloths were worn in a number of ways, round the waist, wrapped round the shoulders or knotted up into a tunic. A few men wore cane rings below the knee, and almost all, even the naked boys, carried *daos*. This was very noticeable after the Tangkhul side, where we only saw two *daos* in a fortnight, though the Tangkhul seems to carry a spear more often than the Kabui does. Conch-shell and bead necklaces were very common, and every man, almost without exception, had raw cotton, marigolds or red berries as decoration in his hair or ears. The hair is cropped round like a thick, bushy skull-cap, but a tuft on the crown is left long and knotted up, sometimes in a tail, but more often in a regular bun. The girls were often very attractive, with sleek, black, bobbed hair and skins sometimes no darker than our sunburn. They wore

a striped cloth wrapped round them, and a body-cloth like a man's, but dyed dark blue; the married women were dressed in much the same way, but they wore a different body-cloth and tucked their hair up in a twist of stuff.

It was at Liwapokpi, four days out, that we met our first bamboo *basha*. It was built entirely of bamboo, with matting walls, door, beds and tables and an ingenious roof made of split and interlocked stems. There was not a nail in the place, and everything was tied together with bamboo bark. There was one great advantage the *basha* had over the staging bungalow, at least from the photographic point of view, and that was that we lived very largely in the open and our camps were always swarming with intensely curious Nagas; though their curiosity was sometimes too much of a good thing, as here at Liwapokpi, where they stared at us all afternoon and then queued up for the *basha* windows after dark.

We were now only ten miles from Tamenglong, but eight miles of the march were uphill, and steep at that. We had eighteen Kabui coolies, and as they climbed we counted at least eight different tunes or variations on the four-beat coolie-chant. We tried to note some of them, but they were too complicated to memorize, as most of them were in several parts. The method is simple, however; each man takes one note of the few used and sings it to a sonorous "Ho!" once every four steps, and when eighteen or twenty men are singing the tune goes swinging away through the jungle with great effect. Largely from high spirits, the Kabui bucks punctuate it with shrill yells which are like nothing else on earth but an express train whistle, and several of our camps on the Barak might have been near a railway junction.

When we left Tamenglong for the Barak two days later the road took us through the Kabui village. It was far more sprawling than any Tangkhul village; the street was much wider and, on the whole, cleaner, and the houses did not face on to it so strictly at right angles. The houses themselves were far higher and steeper in the roof than those of the Tangkhuls, and were more like those of the Kachcha Nagas, whom the Kabuis resemble in many respects. All the houses were largely built of bamboo on a timber frame, the roof sloped steeply down from front to back, the thatch was thick, and the eaves came so far down at the sides that it was almost impossible to see the walls. The roof was fully twenty feet high at the front, where it jutted out like a porch, and there was a small space like a yard

between the house and the street. The porch and front wall were hung with buffalo skulls, and baskets, firewood, trays of chillies, and other household oddments were scattered round the yard.

The Kabuis have no elaborate terracing system, like the Tangkhuls and Angamis, but they use *jhum*-fields. They first clear off the jungle, then allow it to dry and burn it off, and grow their crops on the natural slope of the hill. After a couple of years that patch is exhausted, and they allow it to go back under secondary jungle and clear another section.

A day's march from Tamenglong we reached the Barak and the upper bridge, and halted there while our rafts were building. These rafts were made of forty or fifty bamboos lashed together like a part-opened fan, and there was a matting platform amidships for us to sit on. They were about eighteen feet long and five feet wide at the stern, and, frail though they looked and felt, they proved surprisingly strong in actual practice.

During our first day on the river we met rapids every ten minutes or so, and with the consequent delay and the fact that the march was much longer than we had expected, we found ourselves obviously some distance from camp when the light was failing and darkness setting in. It presently grew pitch dark, and there was no sign of either camp or coolies, and it began to look as though we should have to camp where we were in the jungle or on a sandbank. We shot one rapid in the dark, and as we were paddling down the long pool beyond we saw a light in the distance, and when at last we came up to it we found a fire and a group of Nagas waiting for us. They settled us by the fire and we sat and thawed and drank thick, smoky *zu*—rice-beer—until Mr. Jeffery arrived; but when we reached the camp we found it still in confusion as the *lambu* in charge of the coolies had lost the way and the whole party had been groping along in the jungle for an hour or more.

The next two marches were short ones, and we got the coolies to agree to double them, but as soon as we had left camp they changed their minds, and so after a march of only three miles we found ourselves at a camp set in a small clearing and surrounded by walls of high bamboo which shut out most of the daylight.

The Kuki chowkidar had never seen anything like us before, and after building a fire for us outside the *basha* he pulled up a log, sat down at our feet, and gazed at us in speechless astonishment for the rest of the evening. Among those who passed through the camp was

a Naga with six jungle rats which he evidently preferred fresh, for they were all alive and squirming. As a general rule the Naga will eat almost anything; small birds, rats, monkeys, squirrels, and particularly dogs, are articles of diet, and many of the traps he sets for birds and small animals are of a complicated and most ingenious description.

Next day Mr. Jeffery delighted our two Kabui boatmen by catching first a 30-lb. mahseer and then a twenty-pounder. They told us that though they often saw these big fish—the record for the Barak is 45 lb.—they never managed to catch them themselves. Our next camp was the last before the falls, and it stood by a Naga path and above a ferry. There was a large camp of Nagas on the opposite bank and smaller parties were dotted in the jungle behind our *basha*. As soon as we arrived they all swarmed into camp to look at us and the big fish, and several of the young men amused themselves by joy-riding in our rafts, which were of a more luxurious pattern than any they bothered to make for themselves.

The next morning we left Paparam for the Margery Falls. Early in the afternoon we saw the hills begin to close in until they seemed to shut the valley like a solid wall, and as we went on we heard the roaring of the falls. We disembarked about half a mile above them, and Miss Macdonald and I left Mr. Jeffery and the shikaris fishing and went on with our two Kabui boatmen and most of our loose baggage to find a suitable spot for lunch. We found one on top of a set of tiger tracks, but, when we settled down to unpack the basket, nothing would part our two Nagas from us, and they sat down beside us with every intention of helping, or at least seeing what was inside the box. We gave them cigarettes to keep them quiet while we ate our lunch, and in spite of having no word of any language in common we were getting on extremely well when Mr. Jeffery and the others came up.

From there we went on by a Naga path which was often nothing more than a ledge three or four inches wide until at last we came out on broad sandstone terraces walled in by thick jungle, and over these terraces the Barak poured in two falls, some 40 feet high, separated by two or three hundred yards of broken water. Below the second fall there was another fiercer rapid, and then the water swept into a tremendous shoot and disappeared over the third and highest fall, which was so shut in by the sheer cliffs that we could see neither the beginning nor the end of it. We went round it by a precipitous path

through the jungle and scrambled down a steep hillside to a side creek, the Morai Lok, where our camp was situated. Our coolies and the Nagas from the camp were gathered on the shelving rocks like a row of bronze statues as we crossed the log bridge and went up to the *basha*. The glen in which the camp stood was steep-sided and very narrow, so that the jungle rose up behind us like a wall, and in the evening the mist came down and hung in the tree-tops only a few feet over our heads. Our camp housemaid was a good-looking and cheerful Naga boy with a beautifully decorated sash, and I was very anxious to photograph him, but as we were out up the river all the day that we halted there, the only time we saw him was when the light was far too bad for photography, to his disappointment, I think, as much as my own. On the day that we left, however, the housemaid, whom we nicknamed " Marigold," because of the number of those flowers he managed to fit into his top-knot and ears, was in charge of the ferry which crossed the river just below the falls. It consisted of a bamboo raft like our own, and a cane cable which crossed the river over the fast water at the tail of the rapids. The raft was attached to the cable by a loop of cane and the ferryman took hold of the main cable and hauled the raft and himself over, hand-over-hand, a feat requiring considerable strength as the current was strong enough to send over two rafts whirling downstream. However, we got across safely, and Marigold was just disembarking the coolies and *jappas* when he saw us on the top of the bank with the camera. He let go of the raft and came dashing up towards us among the rocks, but when about 20 feet away he was overcome with shyness and jumped up on a ledge among the *jappas*, and so we photographed him, but unfortunately the sash was completely hidden behind a large *jappa*. Some young girls were standing just behind him and were included in the picture too; the only good photograph we got of Kabui girls during the entire trip. They were extremely shy, and turned tail and bolted the moment they saw the camera.

About dusk we reached our next camp, Shempong, and here we noticed a decided change in type among the Nagas. They were darker-skinned and far more primitive in appearance. There was only one boy wearing black cane rings below the knee, only a few men wore the Kabui top-knot, and hardly any cut their hair in the skull-cap crop. The next day was almost the most eventful of the trip. As soon as we left in the morning the servants, who had grown tired of Naga paths along the bank, decided to try rafting on their own,

and while taking the first rapid in bobsleigh style lost the pani-wallah overboard and left him entangled in a clump of overhanging bushes. Further on we heard drumming from a village on the heights; shut in as we were between cliffs and thick jungle the noise seemed almost to come from the river, and it was some time before we realized what it was, and even then it was only the characteristic rhythm of the Kabui dance that gave us the clue. A few minutes after that we suddenly found ourselves shooting a four-foot waterfall. The raft put her nose under and disappeared altogether, but eventually she came up again and we reached the bank very wet, but with most of the baggage safe.

Lastly, fishing and long, silent pools with no current combined to delay us and we were benighted again, but luckily there was a moon this time, and we arrived at camp at about 7 o'clock with Miss Macdonald and I at the paddles instead of the exhausted boatmen. Just short of the camp we saw flares bobbing on the bank and saw a group of Nagas hurrying back the way we had come, and they hailed us and said they were a search party out for one of our coolies, who was missing. A few minutes later we reached the camp itself and clambered up the steep bank by the light of a hurricane lamp. The moment we arrived we were confronted by a wildly excited headman, who was pulling along after him a tall young Naga with a gashed hand. We took out the medicine chest and started work on our patient, who was so overcome at being face to face with us at a range of about a foot that he could only sit and look at us with eyes twice their normal size, while the old headman of Okoklong hovered paternally behind him. Here the last traces of the type we had seen north of the falls had disappeared, and these men, though still Kabuis, differed from the northern people in build, colour, feature, and dress. Many of them had dark blue cloths and all their clothes were of the coarser stuff, almost like sacking. Some of them carried *daos*, but there was not such unanimity as in the stretch between the upper bridge and the falls, where out of eighteen coolies at least sixteen had *daos*.

Another day on the rafts brought us to the Cachar road and the lower bridge. Here the coolies and the men who had built our camp were from Kambirong, a powerful village some four miles from the river. We had a day's halt here and were hoping to have a party with the Nagas in camp, but unfortunately Kambirong was holding a five-day *genna*, none of those inside the village could come out, and

those outside with us were not allowed to return until the *genna* was finished. As a result most of our carriers were women and boys, but the old headman in charge was a delightful person with a keen sense of humour, and we held a quite successful party with the aid of field glasses and a shaving mirror. Nothing would induce the girls to look in the mirror, but the boys and men fairly fought for it. As a gauge of these people's height, when Miss Macdonald and I were out in the middle of the crowd we found we could hand things to and fro quite comfortably over their heads. Of course most of them were boys and women, but of the few men there none approached the height of, say, an average Tangkhul, though the tallest Kabui we saw anywhere was our patient at Okoklong, and he must have stood five feet nine inches or five feet ten inches.

We were now very nearly out of the Kabui country, and our next march took us through Oinomlong, the last Naga village before the plains. While Mr. Jeffery was checking over some stores at the rest-house, Miss Macdonald and I went up to the Naga village with the *lumbu*. Now the Naga, who lives four or five thousand feet up, naturally chooses a wife as much for her muscle and carrying power as for any less useful forms of beauty, and the thing he values above all others is a really muscular pair of calves. I am particularly blessed in that respect, and our previous trip to Ukhrul had not made them any smaller. We were only a few days out on the second trip when I noticed they were attracting favourable attention from the Nagas. At first I thought it was a leech on my leg, but I was enlightened by the rest of the party, and after that, whenever we passed travellers on the road or met a group of headmen, they gathered at a respectful distance and hardly ever took their eyes off my legs. We had grown used to it by this time, and were certainly not thinking about it when we went up the village. I stopped to photograph an elderly woman, and crossed the street to take a picture of a girl who was seeding raw cotton in a little hand-mill. I had just taken the photograph when I was aware of a fluttering and clucking going on round my legs, and looking down I found a very respectable Kabui lady sitting in front of me and patting my mahogany-brown calves up and down while she sang a little song of admiration. Round us in a delighted ring stood most of the male population of Oinomlong. I shook her off and fled, but unfortunately went up and not down the village, and as it was built on the usual Naga plan, in large steps, I gave the population who followed close behind me a magnificent view of my legs in rapid

action. They gathered round us at the top, and there I recovered myself sufficiently to take a photograph.

From Oinomlong we marched down to Mukru and so out of the Kabui country to Jhirighat. Already civilization, in the shape of shirts and various trade goods, is spreading through the hills. Bazaar stuffs are replacing home-made cloth, and with the improvement of roads and transport and increased trade it is only a question of time before old customs are forgotten and the original culture is replaced by foreign importations. The process has already begun on the fringes of the Kabui area, which are within comparatively easy reach of Imphal and the plains of Silchar; and it cannot be long now before it spreads into the inner and still almost untouched country.

The CHAIRMAN: We must all feel that we have had a most entertaining lecture this evening. I have never seen more beautiful photographs. The description of the river country was most enlightening, and I liked the lecturer's account of a village street: "filled with dogs, pigs, children and other refuse."

I have met some of the people she talks about, and I have an admiration for the Naga. He is a good fighting man and a good carrier.

A MEMBER: Do any traces of human sacrifice remain among the customs of the tribes in that region?

Miss BOWER: As I said, the recurrence of head-hunting at Kambarong in 1932 showed that the memory of the custom was still alive. I do not know exactly the history of what happened on that occasion, except at second-hand, but I believe it was most interesting as so many old customs came out again.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you will all join me in thanking Miss Bower for a most interesting lecture.