



*Manipur  
and the  
Naga Hills*

Sir James Johnstone

# MANIPUR AND THE NAGA HILLS



MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JAMES JOHNSTONE  
K.C.S.I.

*With an Introductory Memoir*

**ILLUSTRATED**



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MANIPUR AND THE NAGA HILLS

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## Author's Preface

When I first brought my wife out to India in 1873, I was struck by the comments she made on things which had so long been part of my daily life. I had almost ceased to observe them. Every day she noted something new, and her diary was so interesting that I advised her to write a book on her "First Impressions of India," and she meant to do so, but never had time. Had she lived, this would have been a pleasure to her, but it was otherwise ordained. I feel now that I am in some way carrying out her wishes, by attempting a description of our life in India, though I am fully sensible that I cannot hope to achieve the pleasant chatty style in which she excelled.

I have also striven to give a fair record to the events with which I was connected; and perhaps, as they include a description of a state of things that has passed away for ever, they may not be devoid of interest. I am one of those old-fashioned Anglo-Indians who still believe in personal government, a system by which we gained India, solidified our rule, and made ourselves fairly acceptable to the people whom we govern. I believe the machine-like system which we have introduced and are endeavouring to force into every corner of India, till all personal influence is killed out, to the ill-adapted to the requirement of these Oriental races, and blighting in its effects. Not one native chief has adopted it in its integrity, which is in itself a fair argument that it is distasteful to the native mind; and we may be assured that if we evacuated India tomorrow, personal rule would again make itself felt throughout the length and breadth of the land, and grow stronger every day. I have always striven to be a reformer, but a reformer building on the solid foundations that we already find everywhere in India. Wherever you go, if there is a semblance of native rule left, you find a system admirably adapted to the needs of the population, though very often grown over with abuses. Clear away these abuses, and add a little in the way of modern progress, but always building on the foundation you find ready to hand, and you have a system acceptable to all.

We are wonderfully timid in sweeping away real abuses, for fear of hurting the feelings of the people; at the same time we weigh them down with unnecessary, oppressive, and worrying forms, and deluge the country

with paper returns, never realising that these cause far more annoyance than would be felt at our making some radical change in a matter which, after all, affects only a minority. Take, for instance, the case of suttee, or widow-burning. It was argued for years that we could not put it down without causing a rebellion. What are the facts? A governor-general, blessed with moral courage in a great degree, determined to abolish the barbarous custom, and his edict was obeyed without a murmur. So it has been in many other cases, and so it will be wherever we have the courage to do the right thing. An unpopular tax would cause more real dissatisfaction than any interference with bad old customs, only adhered to from innate conservatism. The great principle on which to act is to do what is right, and what commends itself to common sense, and to try and carry the people with you. Do not let us have more mystery than is necessary; telling the plain truth is the best course; vacillation is fatal; the strongest officer is generally the most popular, and is remembered by the people long after he is dead and gone.

Personal rule is doomed, and men born to be personal rulers and a blessing to the governed, are now harassed by the authorities till they give up in despair, and swim with the stream.

The machine system did not gain India, and will not keep it for us; we must go back to a better system, or be prepared to relax our grasp, and give up the grandest work any nation ever undertook—the regeneration of an empire !

The House of Commons has to answer for much. No Indian administration is safe from the interference of theorists. Today it is opium that is attacked by self-righteous individuals, who see in the usual, and in most cases harmful, stimulant of millions, a crying evil; while they view with apparent complacency the expenditure of \$120,000,000 per annum on intoxicating liquors in England, and long columns in almost every newspaper recording brutal outrages on helpless women and children as the result.

Then the military administration is attacked, and in pursuance of another chimera, an iniquitous bill is forced on the Government of India calculated to produce results, which will probably sap the efficiency of our army at a critical moment. So it goes on, and it is hardly to be wondered at that the authorities in India give up resistance in sheer disgust, knowing all the while that, as the French say, *le deluge* must come after them.

It may be said, "What has all this to do with Manipur and the Naga Hills?" Nothing perhaps directly, but indirectly a great deal. The system which I decry carries its evil influence everywhere, and Manipur has

suffered from it. I describe the Naga Hills and Manipur as they were in old days. I strove hard for years to hold the floods back from this little State and to preserve it intact, while doing all I could to introduce reforms. Now the floods have overwhelmed it, and if it rises again above them it will not be the Manipur that I knew and loved. May it, in spite of my doubts and fears, be a better Manipur.



## Introductory Memoir

These experiences were written in brief intervals of leisure, during the last few months of the author's busy life, which was brought to a sudden close before they were finally revised. Only last March when his nearest relations met at Fulford Hall to take leave of the eldest son of the house, before he sailed for India, the manuscript was still incomplete, and Sir James read some part of it aloud. His health had suffered greatly from over-fatigue in the unhealthy parts of India, in which his lot had been chiefly east, but it was now quite restored and a prolonged period of usefulness seemed before him.

Improvements on the farms on his estate, a church within reach of his cottagers, to be built as a memorial to his late wife, and the hope of being once more employed abroad, probably as a colonial governor, were all plans for the immediate future, while the present was occupied with the magisterial and other business (including lectures on history in village institutes), which fill up so much of an English country gentleman's life. He had saved nothing in India. What the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal wrote in 1872 of his early work at Keonjhur, applied to everything else he subsequently undertook: "Captain Johnstone's schools, twenty in number, continue to flourish, attracting an average attendance of 665 children. Captain Johnstone's efforts to improve the crops and cattle of Keonjhur have before been remarked by the Lieutenant-Governor. His sacrifices for this end and for his charge generally, are, His Honour believes, almost unique."<sup>1</sup> But in 1881 by the death of his late father's elder brother, he inherited the Fulford estate on the boundaries of Worcestershire and Warwickshire, as well as Dunsley Manor in Staffordshire. The old Hall at Fulford, a strongly built, black and white, half-timbered erection of some centuries back, had been pulled down a few years before, and Sir James built the present house close to the old site. It was here that he was brought back in a dying state on June 13th, 1895, about 10 A.M., after riding out of the grounds only ten minutes before, full of life and energy. No one witnessed what occurred; he was a splendid horseman, but there was evidence that the horse, always inclined to

be restive, had taken fright on passing a cottager's gate and tried to turn back, and that, as its master's whip was still firmly grasped in his hand, there had been a struggle.

He was engaged to assist the next day at the annual meeting of the Conservative and Unionist Association at Stratford-on-Avon. The Marquis of Hertford, who presided, when announcing the catastrophe in very feeling terms, spoke of the excellent work that Sir James Johnstone had done for the Unionist cause in Warwickshire. At Wythall Church (of which he was warden) the Vicar alluded, the following Sunday, to "the striking example he had set of a devout and attentive worshipper."

A retired official who had been acquainted with him in India for over thirty years, wrote on the same occasion to Captain Charles Johnstone, R.N.: "Your brother was a type of character not at all common, high-principled, fearless, just, with an overwhelming sense of duty, and restless spirit of adventure. It is by characters of his type, that our great empire has been created, and it is only if such types continue that we may look forward and hope that it will be maintained and extended."

Although the family from which Sir James Johnstone sprang is of Scottish origin, his own branch of it had lived in Worcestershire and Warwickshire for nearly a century and a half. "It has taken a prominent part in the social and public life of the Midlands, and has produced several eminent physicians."<sup>2</sup> He was the eleventh in direct male descent from William Johnstone of Graitney, who received a charter of the barony of Newbie for "distinguished services" to the Scottish crown in 1541. A remnant of the old Scottish estates was inherited by his great-grandfather, Dr. James Johnstone, who died at Worcester in 1802, and who, being the fourth son of his parents, had left Annandale at the age of twenty-one to settle in Worcestershire as a physician, but who always kept up his relations with Scotland, and meant to return there in his old age. His anxiety to secure this estate—Galabank—in the male line, really defeated his purpose; for he bequeathed it to his then unmarried younger son, the late Dr. John Johnstone, F.R.S., whose daughter now possesses it, to the exclusion of his elder sons who seemed likely to leave nothing but daughters. One of these elder sons was Sir James's grandfather, the late Dr. Edward Johnstone of Edgbaston Hall, who had married the heiress of Fulford, but was left a widower in 1800. Dr. Edward Johnstone was remarried in 1802 to Miss Pearson of Tettenhall, and of their two sons, the younger, James, born in 1806, practised for many years as a physician, and was President of the British Medical Association when it met in

Birmingham in 1856. His eldest son, the subject of this notice, was born in a house now pulled down in the Old Square, Birmingham, on February 9th, 1841. Brought up in the midst of the large family of brothers and sisters, whose childhood was passed between their home in the Old Square and their grandfather's residence at Edgbaston Hall, where they spent the summer and autumn: he used also to look back with particular pleasure on his visits to his maternal grandfather's country house, where he first mounted a pony. His mother was his instructor, except occasional lessons from the Rev. T. Price, till at the age of nine he entered King Edward's Classical School, of which his father was a governor. The head master at that time (1850), was the Rev. (now Archdeacon) E.H. Gifford, D.D., and in the school list for 1852, Johnstone senior is placed next in the same class to Mackenzie (now Sir Alex.), the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

In 1855, young James Johnstone went to a military college in Paris, which was swept away before 1870, with a great part of the older portion of the city. After a year and a half in Paris he was transferred to the Royal Naval and Military Academy, Gosport, and a few months later qualified for one of the last cadetships given under the old East India Company. Without delay he proceeded to India, which was at that period distracted by the Indian Mutiny, so that his regiment the 68th Bengal Native Infantry, consisted only of officers attached to different European regiments, or acting in a civil capacity. With the 73rd (Queen's Regiment) he marched through the country, and was actively employed in the suppression of the insurgents, after which he was stationed for some time in Assam where he also saw active service. There, in 1862, he met with the accident he alludes to on pp. 26 and 36. It came in the course of his duty, as the population of a village which had been disarmed had sent to the nearest military post to ask for assistance against a tiger (panther), causing destruction in the neighbourhood; but he was very much hurt, and the weakening effects of this accident, seem to have predisposed him to attacks of the malaria fever of the district, from which he frequently suffered afterwards.

His next post was at Keonjhur, where there had been an outbreak against the Rajab by some of the hill-tribes and the chief insurgent had been executed. Lieutenant Johnstone was appointed special assistant to the Superintendent of the Tributary Mehals at Cuttack, in whose official district Keonjhur lies. The Superintendent wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor (Sir William Grey of Bengal in 1869): "Captain Johnstone has acquired their full confidence, and hopes very shortly to be able to dispense



with the greater part of the Special Police Force posted at Keonjhur. He appears to take very great interest in his work, and is sanguine of success." The same official when enclosing Captain Johnstone's first report, wrote: "It contains much interesting matter regarding the people, and shows that he has taken great pains in bringing them into the present peaceable and apparently loyal condition,' and a little further on, when describing an interview he had with the Rajah: "From the manner in which he spoke of Captain Johnstone, I was exceedingly glad to find that the most good feeling exists between them." He also adds, apropos of a recommendation that the Government should pay half the expense of the special commission instead of charging it all on the native state: "Nearly one half of Captain Johnstone's time has been occupied in Khedda (catching wild elephants) operations, which have been successful and profitable to Government, and totally unconnected with that officer's duty in Keonjhur."

A year later the superintendent (T.E. Ravenshaw, Esq.) reports: "Captain Johnstone, with his usual liberality and tact, has clothed two thousand naked savages, and has succeeded in inducing them to wear the garments;" and again, "Captain Johnstone's success in establishing schools has been most marked, and there are now nine hundred children receiving a rudimentary education. . . Captain Johnstone has very correctly estimated the political importance of, education and enlightenment among the hill people, and it is evident that he has worked most judiciously and successfully in this direction." And again: "In the matter of improvement of breed of cattle, Captain Johnstone has, at his own expense, formed a valuable herd of sixty cows and several young bulls ready to extend the experiment . . . Captain Johnstone's experiments on rice and flax cultivation have been very successful" (two years later this is attributed to his having superintended them himself). The official report sums up, "Of Captain Johnstone I cannot speak too highly; his management has been efficient, and he has exercised careful and constant supervision over the Rajah and his estate, in a manner which has resulted in material improvement to both."

Subsequently, when Captain Johnstone was on leave in England, the Keonjhur despatches show that he sent directions that the increase of his herd of cattle should be distributed gratis among the natives. They were at first afraid to accept them, hardly believing in the gift.

"Keonjhur," says the Government report of India for 1870-1, "continues under the able administration of Captain Johnstone, who, it will be remembered, was mainly instrumental in restoring the country to quiet three years ago."



Captain Johnstone was too good a classic not to remember the Roman method of conquering and subduing a province; and as far as funds would permit, he opened out roads and cleared away jungle. But he suffered again from the malaria so prevalent in the forest districts of India, and took three months' furlough in 1871, which meant just one month in England. Although he had lost his father in May, 1869, and his absence from home that year gave him some extra legal expense, he would not quit his work till he could leave it in a satisfactory state; yet the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal (Sir George Campbell) twice referred to this furlough as being "most unfortunate," particularly as it had to be repeated within a few months. The superintendent wrote from Cuttack in his yearly report to the Lieut.-Governor: "Captain Johnstone's serious and alarming illness necessitated his taking sick leave to England in August, 1871. He had only a short time previously returned from furlough and with health half restored, over-tasked his strength in carrying out elephant Khedda work in the deadly jungles of Moburdhunj."

In the spring of 1872, Captain Johnstone was married to Emma Mary Lloyd, with whose family his own had a hereditary friendship of three generations. Her father was at that time M.P. for Plymouth, and living at Moor Hall in Warwickshire. Their first child, James, died of bronchitis when six months old, and they returned to India a short time afterwards, at which point the experiences begin. Their second child, Richard, was born at Samagudting, and is now a junior officer in the battalion of the 60th King's Own Royal Rifles, quartered in India. The third son, Edward, was born at Dunsley Manor, and two younger children in Manipur.

Manipur, to which Colonel Johnstone was appointed in 1877, was called by one of the Indian secretaries the Cinderella among political agencies. "They'll never," he said, "get a good man to take it." "Well," was the reply, "a good man has taken it now." The loneliness, the surrounding savages, and the ill-feeling excited by the Kubo valley (which so late as 1852 is placed in Manipur, in maps published in Calcutta) having been made over to Burmah, were among the reasons of its unpopularity. Colonel Johnstone's predecessor, Captain Durand (now Sir Edward) draws a very glaring picture in his official report for 1877, of the Maharajah's misgovernment; the wretched condition of the people, and the most unpleasant position of the Political Agent, whom he described as "in fact a British officer under Manipur surveillance. . . . He is surrounded by spies. . . . If the Maharajah is not pleased with the Political Agent he cannot get anything—he is ostracised. From bad coarse black atta, which the

Maharajah sells him as a favour, to the dhoby who washes his clothes, and the Nagas who work in his garden, he cannot purchase anything." Yet, well knowing all this, Colonel Johnstone readily accepted the post, confident that with his great knowledge of Eastern languages, and of Eastern customs and modes of thought, he should be able to bring about a better state of things, both as regarded the oppressed inhabitants and the permanent influence of the representative of the British Government. Whether this confidence was justified, the following pages will show.

**Editor**

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1. Resolution, Political Department, No. 87, 1872.
2. *Birmingham Daily Post*, June 15, 1895.
3. Printed official reports.

## CHAPTER-I

# My Experiences in Manipur and Naga Hills

*Arrival in India— Hospitable friends—The Lieutenant—  
Governor—Journey to the Naga Hills—Nigriting—  
Golaghat—A Panther reminiscence—Hot springs—A village  
dance—Dimapur—My new abode.*

I left England with my wife on November 13th, 1873, and after an uneventful voyage, reached Bombay, December 9th. We proceeded at once to Calcutta, where some of my old servants joined me, including two bearers, Seewa and Keptie, wild Bhooyas from the Cuttack Tributary Mehals, whom I had trained, and who had been with me for years in all my wanderings, in that wild territory. Thanks to the kindness of my friends the Bernards (now Sir C. and Lady Bernard), we spent only a day at an hotel, and remained under their hospitable roof till we left Calcutta.

My old appointment in Keonjhar had been abolished, and I had to wait till another was open to me. I had several interviews on the subject with the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir G. Campbell. Finally it was decided that I should go to Assam (then about to be made into a Chief Commissionership) and act as Political Agent of the Naga Hills, while the permanent official—Captain Butler—was away in the Interior, and subsequently on leave. I knew a large part of the district well, as one of the most malarious in India, and when asked if I would take the appointment, said, "Yes, I have no objection, but just hint to the Lieutenant-Governor that unless he wants to kill me off; it may be better policy to send me elsewhere, as the Medical Board in London said, I must not go to a malarious district, after the experience I have had of it in Keorjhar." The Secretary conveyed my hint, and when I next saw him, said, "The Lieutenant-Governor says, that is all stuff and nonsense." Later on Sir G. Campbell asked if my wife would go with me. I quietly replied that she would go anywhere with me.



Finally, on December 30th, we left Calcutta, and after a night in the train, embarked in one of the I.G.S.N. Co.'s steamers at Goalundo, for Nigrating on the Burrhampooter, where we had to land for the Naga Hills. The steamers of those days, were not like the well-appointed mail boats now in use. The voyage was long, the steamers uncomfortable, and the company on board anything but desirable. All the same, the days passed pleasantly, while we slowly wended our way up the mighty river, amid lovely and interesting scenery all new to my wife, to whom I pointed out the different historic spots as they came in view.

We halted at Gowhatty for the night, and early in the morning I swam across the river for the second time in my life, a distance of about three miles, as the current carried me in a slanting direction.

At last we reached Nigrating, and were landed on a dry sandbank five or six miles from the celebrated tea gardens of that name, and the nearest habitations. Fortunately, I had brought a tent and all things needful for a march; and my servants, well accustomed to camp life, soon pitched it and made us comfortable, and my wife was charmed with her first experience. We had a message of welcome from Mr. Boyle, of Nigrating Factory, and the next day went to his house in canoes, whence we set out for Golaghat.

It was to Nigrating that I was carried for change of air nearly twelve years before, when, in April, 1862, I was desperately wounded in an encounter with a large panther near Golaghat, where I had been stationed. I then lived for a week or so in a grass hut on a high bank, and the fresh air made my obstinate wounds begin to heal. Thus it happened that all the people knew me well, and I was long remembered by the name of "Baghe Khooah" literally the "tiger eaten," a name which I found was still familiar to every one. Loading our things on elephants, and having a pony for my wife, and a dandy (hill litter) in case she grew tired, we set off for Golaghat, and had a 'picnic luncheon on the way. How delightful are our first experiences of marching in India, even when we have, as in this case, to put up with some discomfort; the cool, crisp air in the morning; the good appetite that a ten-mile walk or ride gives; the feeling that breakfast has been earned, and finally breakfast itself; and such a good one. Where indeed but in India could we have a first-rate meal of three or four courses, and every dish hot, with no better appliances in the shape of a fireplace, than two or three clods of earth? Often have I had a dinner fit for a king, when heavy rain had been falling for hours, and there was no shelter for my men, but a tree with a sheet thrown over a branch.

We breakfasted at a place called "Char Alleé" and the march being



long (nearly twenty miles), the sun was low long before reaching Golaghat. As we passed some road coolies, I began a conversation with the old Tekla (overseer) in charge, and asked him if he could get me a few oranges. He said, "Oh no, they are all over." He then asked me how I came to speak Assamese so well. I said, "I have been in Assam before." He said, "Oh yes, there have been many sahibs in my time," and he pamed several, "and then long ago there was a 'Baghé Khooah' sahib, I wonder where he is now?" I looked at him and said, "Ami Baghé Khooah" (I am the Baghe Khooah). The old man gazed equally hard at me for a moment and then ran in front of me and made a most profound obeisance. Having done this, he smilingly said, "I think I can find you some oranges after all," and at once ran off, and brought me some for which he refused to take anything. The good old man walked about a mile farther before he wished me good-bye; and my wife and I went on, greatly pleased to find that I was so well remembered.

We did not get to Golaghat till long after dark, and pitched our tent on the site of the lines of the old detachment, which I had commanded twelve years before. What a change! Trees that I had remembered as small, had grown large, and some that were planted since I left, already a fair size.

In the morning we received a perfect ovation. People who had known me before, crowded to see me and pay their respects, many of them bringing their children born since I had left. All this was pleasant enough and greatly delighted my wife, but we had to proceed on our way, and it is always difficult to get one's followers to move from a civilised place, where there is a bazaar, into the jungle, and henceforth our road lay through jungle, the Nambor forest beginning about five miles from Golaghat. At last coolies to carry my wife arrived, and I sent her on in her "dandy" with her ayah, charging the bearers to wait for me at a village I well knew, called "Sipahee Hoikeeah." The men replied, "Hoi Deota" (Yes, deity<sup>1</sup>) and started. The elephants were a great difficulty, and it was some hours before I could get off; and even then some had not arrived. However, off I started, and hurried on to "Sipahee Hoikeeah" so as not to keep my wife waiting, but when I reached the spot, I found to my amazement that the village had ceased to exist, having, as I subsequently learned, been abandoned for fear of the Nagas. I hurried on in much anxiety, as my wife did not speak Hindoostani, and either ayah nor bearers spoke English. At last I caught them up at the Nambor hot springs, called by natives the "Noonpoong" where we were to halt.

The Noonpoong is situated in a lovely spot amidst fine forest. The

hot water springs out of the ground, at a temperature of 112 degrees and fills a small pool. It is similar in taste to the waters of Aix-la-Chapelle, and is highly efficacious in skin diseases, being resorted to even for the cure of severe leech bites, which are easily obtained from the land leech infesting all the forests of Assam. Fortunately some of our cooking things, with chairs and a table arrived, also a mattress, but no bed and no tent. We waited till 9 pm, and finding that no more elephants came up, I made up a bed for my wife on the ground under a table, to shelter her from the dew, but while sitting by the camp fire for a last warm, we heard the noise of an elephant, and saw one emerging from the forest. Fortunately he carried the tent which was quickly pitched; and we passed a comfortable night.

The hot springs are not the only attraction of the neighbourhood, as about two miles off in the forest, there is a very pretty waterfall, not high, but the volume of water is considerable, and it comes down with a thundering sound heard for some distance. The natives call it the "phutta hil," literally "rent rock." The Nambor forest is noted for its Nahor or Nagessur trees (*Mesua Ferma*) a handsome tree, the heart of which is a fine red wood, very hard and very heavy, and quite impervious to the attacks of white ants. Europeans call it the iron wood of Assam. It is very plentiful in parts of the forest between the Noonpoong and Golaghat, and also grows in the lowlands of Manipur.

The next morning we set out for Borpathar, a village with a fine sheet of cultivation on the banks of the Dunseree, and took up our quarters in the old blockhouse, which had been converted into a comfortable rest house. Here again we received a perfect ovation, the people, headed, by my old friend Hova Ram, now promoted to a Mouzadar, coming in a body, with fruit and eggs, etc., to pay their respects. The population had sadly diminished since my early days, the people having in many cases fled the country for fear of Naga raids.

The march having been a short one, all our baggage had time to come up. In the evening the girls of the village entertained us with one of their national dances, a very pretty and interesting sight. After a good night's rest we again started, our march lying through the noble forest, where buttressed trees formed an arch over the road, showing plainly that Gothic architecture was an adaptation from nature. I had never marched along the road since it was cleared; but I was there in 1862, in pursuit of some Naga raiders, when it would have been impassable, but for elephant and rhinoceros tracks. Even then I was struck by its great beauty, and now it was a fairly good cold weather track.



We halted at Deo Panee, then at Hurreo Jan, and Nowkatta, and on the fourth day reached Dimapur, where we found a comfortable rest house, on the banks of a fine tank about two hundred yards square. This, with many others near it, spoke of days of civilisation that had long since passed away, before the Naga drove the Cacharee from the hills he now inhabits, and from the rich valley of the Dunseree. Near Dimapur we passed a Meekir hut built on posts ten or twelve feet high, and with a notched log resting against it, at an angle of about seventy degrees by way of a staircase, up which a dog ran like a squirrel at our approach. The Meekirs occupy some low hill ranges between the Naga hills and the Burhampooter.

The country round Dimapur is exceedingly rich, and everywhere bears the marks of having been thickly populated. It is well supplied with artificial square tanks, some much larger than the one already referred to, and on the opposite bank of the river we crossed to reach our halting place, are the remains of an old fortified city. Mounds containing broken pottery made with the wheel, abound, though the neighbouring tribes have forgotten its use. At Dimapur, in those days, there were three or four Government elephants and a few shops kept by "Khyahs," an enterprising race of merchants from Western India.

The ruined city is worth describing. It was surrounded originally by solid brick walls twelve feet in height and six in thickness, the bricks admirably made and burned. The walls enclosed a space seven hundred yards square; it was entered by a Gothic archway, and not far off had a gap in the wall, said to have been made for cattle to enter by. Inside were tanks, some lined with brick walls, and with brick steps leading to the water. Though I carefully explored the interior, I never saw any other traces of brickwork, except perhaps a platform; but I found one or two sacrificial stones, for offerings of flowers, water and oil. One corner of the surrounding wall had been cut away by the river. The enclosure is covered with forest. Near the gateway are some huge monoliths, one eighteen feet in height. All are covered with sculpture, and some have deep grooves cut in the top, as if to receive beams. It is difficult to conjecture what they were brought there for, and how they were transported, as the nearest rocks from which they could have been cut, are at least ten miles away. If the Assam-Bengal Railway passes near Dimapur as is, I believe, arranged, this interesting old city wall will probably be used as a quarry for railway purposes, and soon none of it will remain. Alas, for Vandalism!

History tells us little about the origin of Dimapur, but probably it was once a centre of Cacharee civilisation, and as the Angami Nagas advanced, the city wall was built, so as to afford a place of refuge against sudden raids. It is a strange sight to see the relics of a forgotten civilisation in the midst of a pathless forest.

On our march up, we frequently came upon the windings of the river Dunseree. At Nowkatta it runs, parallel for a time with the road, and we took our evening walk on its dry sandbanks, finding many recent traces of tigers and wild elephants. From that time till we finally left the hills, the roar of tigers and the trumpeting of elephants were such common sounds, that we ceased to pay attention to them, and my wife, though naturally timid, became devoted to the wild solitude of our life.

At Dimapur we enjoyed the luxury of fresh milk, which, of course, the forest did not supply. The night was delightfully cold, and the next morning crisp and invigorating, and we set off at an early hour, for our last march into Samagudting.

For the first eight miles our road was through a level forest country, with the exception of a piece of low-lying grass land, and at a place called Nichu Guard the ascent of the hill commenced. This entrance of the gorge through which the Diphoo Panee river enters the low lands is very beautiful, the stream rushing out from the hills over a pebbly bottom, and it was a favourite encamping ground for us in our later marches. Now, we had not time to halt, so hurried on. The road up the hill was in fair condition for men and elephants, but did not admit of wheeled traffic, had there been any carts to use. We accomplished the ascent, a distance of four miles, in about two hours, obtaining several lovely views of the boundless forest, on our way.

The vegetation on the hill itself had been much injured by the abominable practice hillmen have, of clearing a fresh space every two or three years, and deserting it for another, when the soil has been exhausted. This never gives it time to recover. At last we reached the summit, and took possession of the Political Agent's house, a large bungalow, built of grass and bamboo, the roof being supported by wooden posts, on the highest point of the hill. A glance showed me that the posts were nearly eaten through by white ants, and that the first high wind would level it with the ground. It had been built by a man who never intended to stay, and who only wanted it to last his time.

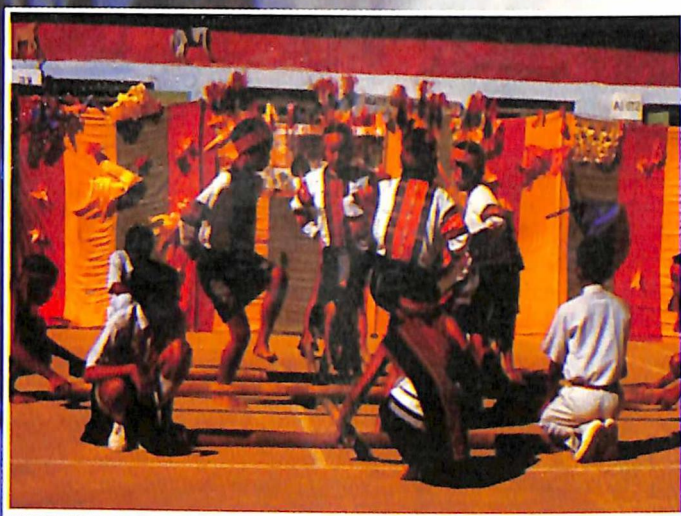
Later in the day, I took over the charge from Mr. Coombs, who was acting till my arrival, and thus became, for the time, chief of the district. My staff consisted of Mr. Needham, Assistant Political Agent, and



Mr. Cooper, in medical charge, the usual office establishment, and one hundred and fifty military police. Most of these, together with Captain Butler, for whom I was acting, were away in the Interior with a survey party. Mr. Coombs left in a day or two, and I then occupied his bungalow lower down the hill, and in a more exposed position, so as to allow of the larger house being rebuilt. Besides the Government establishment, we had a fair-sized Naga village on the hill, and just below the Political Agent's house. These people had long been friendly to us, and were willing, for a large recompense, to do all sorts of odd jobs, being entirely free from the caste prejudices of our Hindoo and degenerate Mussulman fellow-subjects.

### Reference

1. One of the witnesses at the trial of the Regent and Senaputty of Manipur, in 1891, stated that Mr. Quinton was partly induced to enter the palace from which he never emerged alive, by the Manipuris saying, "Are you not our deity?"—ED.



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