

BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS



MYMENSINGH

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CALCUTTA :
BENGAL SECRETARIAT BOOK DEPOT.
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unfavourably with the flowers of an English hedgerow. The commonest is the heliotrope coloured "jack jungle", a species of *ageratum*. There are flowering trees similar to the lilac and the laburnum, and the red blossoms of the *simul* and *pa/dsh* trees make a good substitute for the gold mohur in many open villages where no other tree grows.

The bamboo and the *bet* are good examples of the complex uses to which the commonest flora of the district can be put, but the palms are equally adaptable from the economic point of view.

In addition to all the plants used mainly for medicinal purposes doctors extract remedies for the common diseases from the bark and roots of the mango, *simul*, *tulsi*, and other generally useful trees. The *bet*, *gdb* and *babul* trees provide gum, the seeds of the tamarind yield oil, which is used in painting idols, and the bark of the guava is used for tanning. Scent is manufactured from the *ksora*, a plant rather like the pineapple, which grows in most *busti* jungle.

Reynolds says that in the middle of the nineteenth century the chars in the north-west contained as many tigers as Fazna. any district in India and that rhinoceros had occasionally been shot. Tigers are still numerous in the Madhupur Jungle and at the foot of the Garo Hills, but without plenty of elephants they are difficult to get. It is possible for a keen sportsman to camp several months in the heart of the jungle, and for kills to be going on all around him without his getting information from the villagers in time to sit up on a tree. Leopards are occasionally shot in all thanas. Bears come down from the hills in the jack fruit season, and are also shot by native shikaris in the Madhupur Jungle.

Wild elephants used to work havoc in the northern villages, but now they seem to confine themselves to wrecking boundary pillars. Kheddah operations were conducted in 1915 by the Susarg Raj just inside the Garo Hills, and a fine tusker followed the captured elephants nearly two days and was finally made captive in the centre of the Durgapur bazar. Three years ago a proscribed elephant was shot a few miles from the thana.

Wild buffaloes are not unknown in the grass jungle north of Kalmakanda and in the north-west of the Madhupur Jungle.

Sambhor (*Rusa aristotolis*), *barasingha* (*Bucerus duvancellii*) hog deer (*Axis porcinus*) and barking deer (*Cervulus mognalis*), are all found, the two former rarely and the two latter commonly. The Garos catch *sambhor* in nets and shoot other deer from hiding places near their drinking holes. At Bausan not far from the Mymensingh-Sylhet border there is a