

THE VICEROY'S TOUR.

VISIT TO CAVE MINES.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

CALCUTTA, MARCH 11.

On Wednesday evening H. E. the Viceroy and Lady Curzon enjoyed some bass fishing in Dehing River. At night the new railway bridge across the Dehing River was illuminated in honour of their Excellencies, affording a unique spectacle from Holder's bungalow, where their Excellencies remained for the night. On the morning of the 8th instant her Excellency and Captain Baker-Carr took numerous photographs of the Daphla, Mishmi, and Naga Phakial Chiefs in their distinctive gala dress. Her Excellency's programme also included a visit to the Assam Railways Coal Mines. The Viceroy's party proceeded first to Tikak, by a special train, over the wonderful funicular railway, which ascends at an angle of 45 degrees in a steep hill, 800 feet high, to the entrance to the Colliery. Special trucks were constructed and fitted for the occasion, making the ascent easy and comfortable. His Excellency entered the mine and saw the coolies working. His Excellency then inspected the inner workings, seated on trolley, under the guidance of the Agent and the Colliery Manager. He afterwards ascended to the top of the hill, from which a wonderful expanse of the primeval scrub jungle stretching from the Collieries into the far distant Brahmaputra, could be seen. Descending the incline the Viceroy and party were conducted to the top of the nearly developed Namdang Mine by a specially-constructed train. The party were conveyed on a two-foot tramway along a beautifully-wooded valley, through which the Namdang River runs. Here his Excellency was shown a wonderful outcrop of Seam coal, eighty feet thick, and a large coking plant, from which the tea industry procures its coke for manufacture.

Returning to Margherita their Excellencies, and a large party, consisting of the Assam Railways, and Makum Tea Company's officers, and their wives were entertained at Mr. Hawkins' bungalow. After tiffin Mr. Hawkins heartily thanked his Excellency for the great interest he had taken in his minute inspection accorded to the Company's various undertakings. He briefly dwelt upon the difficulties the Company had had to contend with since its formation twenty years ago. His Excellency replied in a most happy vein, generally eulogizing the usefulness of the pioneer work the Company had accomplished. Their Excellencies and party then returned by special train to Steamerghat, stopping *en route* at the Chabua Tea Estate for tea. Their Excellencies then inspected the Chabua labour force and arrived at the Ghat, which was brilliantly illuminated. They then left for Tezpur.