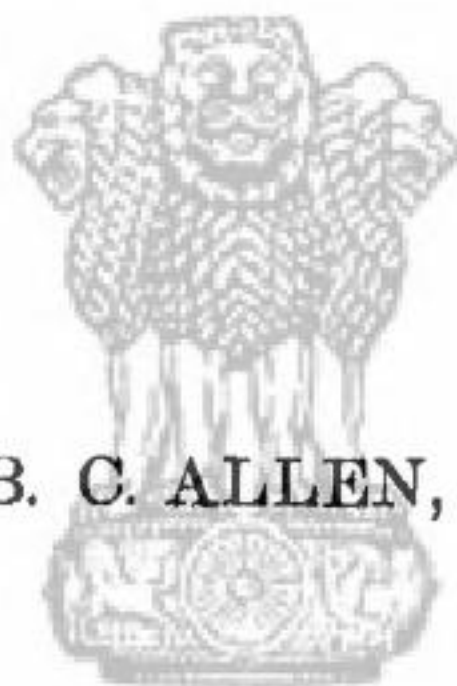


ASSAM DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.

VOLUME X.

THE KHASI AND JAINTIA HILLS,
THE GARO HILLS AND THE LUSHAI HILLS.



B. C. ALLEN, c s.

सत्यमेव जयते

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are *saurauja punduana*, *schima wallichii*, *duabanga sonneratoides*. Figs are common, and at high elevations *quercus* and *castanopsis* abound. Palms such as *pinango*, *caryota*, *licuala* and *calamus* are frequent on the lower slopes. The undergrowth consists of such species as *clematis grewiaeflora*, *abutilon polyandrum*, *hibiscus*, *triumfetta*, *crotalaria*, *flemingia*, *rubus*, *combretum*, *mussaenda*, *ixora*, *ardisia*, *jasminum*, *phlogacanthus*, *clerodendron*, *girardinia*.

Sutamineous plants of the genera *curcuma*, *amomum* and *alpinia* are quite common. Epiphytic plants are well represented by the abundance of orchids belonging to such genera as *dendrobium*, *bulbophyllum*, *eria*, *pholidota*, *cymbidium*, *aerides*, *vanda*, &c. Species of *raphidophora* are also very common. The herbaceous vegetation is not prominent consisting chiefly of such widely spread plants as *ageratum conyzoides*, *conyza stricta*, species of *blumea*, *gnaphalium*, *desmodium*, *begonia*, *hedyotis*, *heliotropium*, *mazus*, *toveria*, *rungia*, *plantago*, *amarantus*, *polygonum*, &c. Ferns are common belonging to such genera as *pteris*, *asplenium*, *nephrodium*, *polypodium*, *onychium*, *lygodium*, *angiopteris*

Wild animals are numerous in the more sparsely **Fauna.** populated portions of the district and include elephants, the two horned rhinoceros, bison, tigers, leopards, bears, and various kinds of deer. Bears are of two varieties, the Himalayan black bear (*ursus torquatus*) and the Malay bear (*ursus malayanus*) and are unusually

common. In 1904 rewards were paid for the destruction of 249 of these animals, or very nearly half the total number of bears killed in the Province of Assam. Wild dogs also are common and frequently kill off young stock. The serow (*nemorhædus*) is found on the higher hills. Small game include jungle fowl (*gallus ferrugineus*) and several kinds of pheasants.



सत्यमेव जयते



PART III.

LUSHAI HILLS DISTRICT.

सत्यमेव जयते

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सत्यमेव जयते

Arts and industries.

The arts and industries of the hills are naturally not of much importance. The women weave excellent cloths from their home grown cotton, and the men are clever enough at making baskets. Earthen pots and pipes are also manufactured, and the blacksmiths are more skilful than is usual in Assam. Very good moulding in brass is occasionally to be met with, and some of the smiths are able to manufacture gun locks.

Food and dress.

The staple food of the people is rice, but they will eat almost anything that they can get except rhinoceros and the hooluk monkey. They are not particular either, as to the state of putrefaction that their meat has reached. Milk, like the other hill tribes of Assam, they eschew. When a feast is given in a village the meat is boiled in huge earthen pots, and spread out on mats and plantain leaves. The guests then eat their meat without condiments, and wash it down with draughts of the water in which it was boiled. After they have finished the first course they retire to their houses and eat great quantities of rice. Beer made of fermented rice is the national drink, and is not unfrequently taken to excess. Both sexes smoke continuously. The men use pipes with bamboo bowls and a long straight stem, the women's pipes have bowls of clay and are constructed on the principle of the *huka*. The water impregnated with nicotine is carefully preserved, and each man carries a small gourd full of it. From time to time he sips a mouthful, keeps it in his mouth for a few minutes, and ejects it. It is said to act as a kind of stimulant.