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enough coal to cover its own usage. The tea industry* has become world renowned. It was this industry that led the British government to penetrate the jungles, to explore the mountain sides of the Himalayas, and to enter the head-hunters' territory of the Singphos, Mishmies, Abors, and other places. The East India Company, in the early part of the nineteenth century, saw in the fertile valley of the Brahmaputra great possibilities, but did not fully appreciate its resources which are by no means as yet exhausted.

The Surma Valley is about one-third the size of the Brahmaputra Valley, and the elevation is only from forty-one to eighty-seven feet.

The hill tracts, or the Assam range of mountains which divides the two valleys, attains a height of nearly ten thousand feet in the Japva peak which overhangs Kohima. These mountain ranges are inhabited by various Mongolian tribes which were formerly barbarous head hunters, but who, since the occupancy of the British government, eke out a livelihood through tilling the soil on the fertile hillsides.

The principal characteristics of the climate of Assam are a comparatively low and equable temperature, and a great humidity. The average temperature found at three extreme points on the plains were: Sibsagar, yearly average, 72.3; Dubri, yearly average, 74.2; Silchar, yearly average, 75.5.

* *Thea Assamica*, the indigenous tea plant of Assam is thought by botanists to be the original parent species, from which the varieties cultivated elsewhere are derived. The English government commenced its cultivation at Jaipur in 1835, and in 1836, the year of the founding of the mission, the first pound of Assam tea was sent to London. Later the Assam Tea Company was organized, and it reported in 1886, an annual export of tea amounting to thirty million rupees. Assam tea is valued for its superior aromatic and medicinal qualities. (*The Whole World Kin*, p. 124.)

The story goes that the climate of Assam is so enervating that when a dog chases a rabbit they both walk!

The humidity of the atmosphere, which is closely related to temperature, is a marked feature and the following gives the average mean relative humidity of the three above mentioned stations: Sibsagar, yearly average, 84.0; Dubri, yearly average, 78.0; Silchar, yearly average, 79.0.

The rainfall recorded in Assam is the second highest in the world. The average for the Province during the ten years from 1881 to 1891 was one hundred and thirteen inches. The heaviest rainfall registered at Cherpa Punji in the Khasia Hills is over four hundred and seventy-five inches.

The density of population for the entire Province is one hundred thirty-seven per square mile. One hundred seventy-nine for the Assam Valley division, sixteen for the frontier tracts, fifty-two for the Manipur State, and one hundred forty for the Surma Valley, including the Khasia Hills. This will be referred to again in a later chapter.

Due to improvements in sanitation and to prevention of various diseases and scourges, such as kala azar, malaria, dysentery, cholera, etc., the mortality ratio has been reduced considerably during the last decade or two. The population is increasing constantly, both by birth and by immigration. The forty years from 1891 to 1931 mark an increase of nearly 4,000,000, showing that there were 9,247,857 in the province in the year 1931.³

For the major part, the people of Assam are agriculturists. The Census Report says that 97 per cent of the people in Assam reside in villages and tea gardens, and it may be said that in the entire province there is not a