

mese, by the treaty of Yandabo agreed among other things to abstain from all interference in the countries now constituting Assam.⁵ Geographically, then, in 1833, the parts of Assam that could be said to be definitely under British control were the districts of Kamrup, Nowgong, and Darrang.*

In that same year, however, Rajah Purandar Singh signed a treaty that he would administer the country under British rule on principles of peace and justice and would pay a tribute of Rs. 50,000 yearly. Captain Jenkins, who was then the Governor-General's agent and commissioner in Assam, writes of this arrangement saying that the native territory "was subject to the control and interference of the British officers in political matters and in cases of complaint of any gross mismanagement or injustice".⁶

In 1838, the territory under Purandar Singh was taken over by the government because he had fallen hopelessly behind in his payment of the tribute and was forced to declare himself unable to carry on the administration. His portion of the Assam Valley was then annexed to Bengal and was to be administered as lower Assam had been before, that is, under complete British rule.

The story of the southern valley is extremely obscure; and the fragments of history available and relating to it are not reliable. The true history has been lost in the fugitive memory of a barbarous people unacquainted with letters. In the nineteenth century, the Burmese had taken possession of Manipur and threatened to annex Cachar as well. The English, seeing the danger of the Burmese coming in from the south, decided to prevent it and took up the cause of the Cachar-

* Darrang extended to Bishnot. Above that was North Lakhimpur which came under the rule of Purandar Singh.

is. The Burmese were driven out and Gobind Chandra was placed on the Cachari throne. He paid a specified tribute to the British government from 1824; but in 1830 he was assassinated, and since he did not leave any male heir, his kingdom was annexed by the British.

Thus it occurred that before the inception of Christianity in Assam, most of the present area was under British rule. The borders along the two mountain ranges were, however, not very well defined as these tracts were inhabited by wild head hunting tribes. Since these tribes were not important enough to cause any significant disruption in the administration of the plains, they were for the most part left to their own devices and peculiar methods of social development.