In 1881 the population was returned at 1,969,009, of whom 999,785 were males and 969,224 females. Hindus numbered 949,353, Mohammedans 1,015,531, and hill tribes 3708. The only places with a population exceeding 5000 are Sylhet town (14,407) and Kashba Baniachang, a large village (24,061). Sylhet town, the administrative headquarters of the district, is situated on the right or north bank of the Surma, and besides the usual public offices contains a handsome church and the mosque of Sháh Jalál (a fakir whose miraculous powers contributed greatly to the Mussulman conquest of the country), which attracts pilgrims from great dis­tances. Out of the total area 3080 square miles were returned as under cultivation in 1882-83 and 654 as cultivable. The staple crop is rice, which yields three harvests during the year. There are immense forest tracts in the south-eastern parts of Sylhet. The chief industries are the weaving by Manipuri women of cotton cloths called *Manipuri khesh,* also handkerchiefs and mosquito curtains tastefully embroidered with silk. The manufacture of mats, ivory and shell carving, and other ornamental work are also pursued with much skill and elegance.

Sylhet with the rest of Bengal passed into the hands of the British in 1765. Previous to 1874 Sylhet formed an integral part of Bengal, being included in the Dacca division ; but in September of that year it was annexed, together with the adjoining district of Cachar, to the chief-commissionership of Assam.

SYLT (probably from the Old Frisian *Silendi, i.e.,* “sea- land ”) is the largest German island in the North Sea, being 40 square miles in area and nearly 23 miles long. It is, however, very narrow, generally about half a mile in width, except in the middle, where it sends out a peninsula 7 miles across. It belongs to the province of Schleswig- Holstein, and lies from 7 to 12 miles from the Schleswig coast. Its long and slender outline is highly suggestive of its former position as part of a continuous line of coast, now in great part swept away. The invasion of the sea has made considerable progress even within a compara­tively recent period, and several hamlets were swallowed up in the 13th and 14th centuries. The process of gradual waste is still going on, though it is now obviated to some extent by the exertions of the Prussian Government, and counterbalanced by deposits of mud on the landward side. The central peninsula contains some “marshland” and moorland pasture, on which a few thousand sheep are grazed, but the rest of the island consists merely of dunes or sand-hills, which at places attain a height of from 100 to 150 feet. The inhabitants, about 3000 in number, are of Frisian origin, though a few in the extreme north of the island speak Danish. Their occupations are fishing, oyster-dredging, seamanship, and wild-duck catching ; the women make large quantities of woollen jackets. The chief places are Keitum (850 inhabitants), Westerland, which is annually visited by about 1500 sea-bathers, and Morsum. Some very interesting pagan tombs have been found on the island.

SYLVESTER. See Silvester.

SYMBOL. See Creeds.

SYME, James (1799-1870), surgeon, was born at Edin­burgh on 7th November 1799. His father was a writer to the signet and a landowner in Fife and Kinross, who lost most of his fortune in attempting to develop the mineral resources of his property. James was sent to the High School at the age of nine, and remained there until he was fifteen, when he entered the university. For two years he frequented the arts classes (including botany), and in 1817 began the medical curriculum, devoting him­self with particular keenness to chemistry. His chemical experiments led him to the discovery that “a valuable substance is obtainable from coal tar which has the property of dissolving india-rubber,” and could be used for waterproofing silk and other textile fabrics,—an idea which was patented a few months afterwards by Macintosh of Glasgow. In the session of 1818-19 Syme became assistant and demonstrator in the dissecting room of Liston, who had started as an extra-mural teacher of anatomy in competition with his old master Barclay ; in those

years he held also resident appointments in the infirmary and the fever hospital, and spent some time in Paris practis­ing dissection and operative surgery. In 1823 Liston handed over to him the whole charge of his anatomy classes, retaining his interest in the school as a pecuniary venture ; the arrangement did not work smoothly, and a feud with Liston arose, which did not terminate until twenty years later, when the latter was settled in London. Syme’s next venture was the Brown Square school of medicine, which he started in 1824-25 in conjunction with Dr Macintosh, Dr Fletcher, and others ; the partner­ship was again inharmonious, and soon came to an end. Announcing his intention to practise surgery only, Syme started a surgical hospital of his own, Minto House hos­pital, which he carried on from May 1829 to September 1833, with great success as a surgical charity and school of clinical instruction. It was here that he first put into practice his method of clinical teaching, which consisted in having the patients to be operated or prelected upon brought from the ward into a lecture-room or theatre where the students were seated conveniently for seeing and taking notes. His private practice had become very considerable, his position having been assured ever since his amputation at the hip joint in 1823, the first of the kind in Scotland. In 1833 he succeeded Russel as professor of clinical surgery in the university. Syme’s accession to the clinical chair was marked by two import­ant changes in the conditions of it : the first was that the professor should have the care of surgical patients in the infirmary in right of his professorship, and the second, that attendance on his course should be obligatory on all candidates for the medical degree. When Liston removed to London in 1835 Syme became the leading consulting surgeon in Scotland. On Liston’s death in 1847 Syme was offered his vacant chair of clinical surgery at Uni­versity College, London, and accepted it. He began prac­tice in London in February 1848; but early in May the same year difficulties with two of his colleagues at Gower Street and a desire to “ escape from animosity and conten­tion ” led him to throw up his appointment. He returned to Edinburgh in July, and was re-instated in his old chair, which the crown authority had meanwhile found a difficulty in appointing to. The judgment of his friends was that “he was always right in the matter, but often wrong in the manner, of his quarrels.” In 1849 he broached the subject of medical reform in a letter to the lord advocate ; in 1854 and 1857 he addressed open letters on the same subject to Lord Palmerston; and in 1858 a Medical Act was passed which largely followed the lines laid down by himself. As a member of the General Medical Council called into existence by the Act, he made considerable stir in 1868 by an uncompromising statement of doctrines on medical education, which were thought by many to be reactionary ; they were, however, merely an attempt to recommend the methods that had been characteristic of Edinburgh teaching since Cullen’s time,—namely, a con­stant reference of facts to principles, the subordination (but not the sacrifice) of technical details to generalities, and the preference of large professorial classes and the “ magnetism of numbers'” to the tutorial system, which he identified with “cramming.” In April 1869 he had a paralytic seizure, and at once resigned his chair ; he never recovered his powers, and died on 26th June 1870.

Syme’s surgical writings are numerous, although the terseness of his style and directness of his method save them from being bulky. In 1831 he published *A Treatise on the Excision of Diseased Joints* (the celebrated ankle-joint amputation is known by his name). His *Principles of Surgery* (often reprinted) came out a few months later ; *Diseases of the Rectum* in 1838 ; *Stricture of the Urethra and Fistula in Perineo* in 1849 ; and *Excision of the Scapula* in 1864. In 1848 he collected into a volume, under the title of *Contributions*