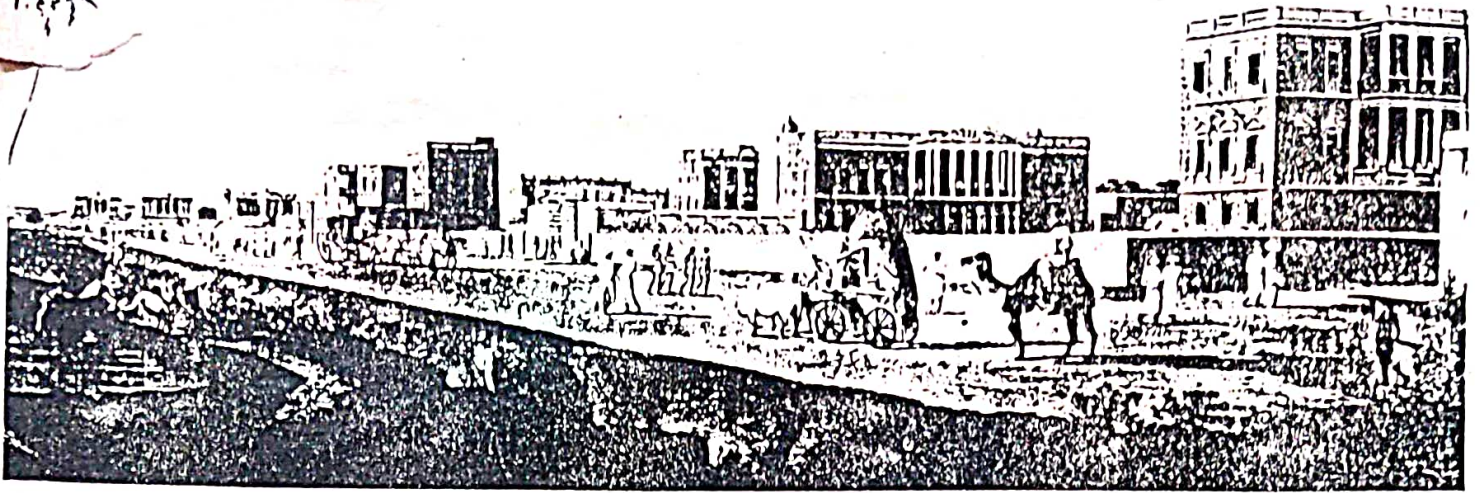


THE STATE OF
COOCH BEHAR

PALACE LIBRARY
COOCH BEHAR



AN OLD VIEW OF CHOWRINGHEE, CALCUTTA.

Illustration from "Oriental Scenery," by Thomas Daniell (1795).

THE STATE OF COOCH BEHAR



COOCH BEHAR, a Native State in political relationship with the Government, is bounded on the north by the Western Dooars of the district of Rungpur; on the east by Rungpur and the district of Goalpara; and on the west by Rungpur and Jalpaiguri. The area of the State, including detached tracts in neighbouring British districts, is about 1,307 square miles in extent.

While it is usually described as an almost triangular plain, its surface is intersected by numerous rivers and streams, but is unrelieved by mountain or hill. In certain portions of the State there are slight undulations which are cultivated chiefly for the growing of tobacco, and upon which the majority of the inhabitants build their houses with the view of avoiding discomfort caused by occasional slight floodings of marshy lands. There are no forests in the ordinary acceptance of the term, although patches of brushwood are frequently found, but a large number of trees have been planted in recent years,

many of the roads being flanked on either side by rows of *Sisu* or *Sal*.

The country is a network of rivers and streams which have played an important part in the process of formation of soil. The Teesta River, formerly one of the largest in Northern Bengal, rises in Lake Chalamu in Thibet, and after flowing through Sikkim, and the north-eastern portion of the district of Darjeeling, it continues in a southwardly direction until it enters the State between the *taluk* of Baxigunj on the west of Nijtaraf-Mekhligunj on the east. Other rivers include the Jaldhaka, Torsa, Dharla, Kaljani, and the Raijak or Sankos. Although these streams are of little value as a means of internal communication, a considerable number of marts and commercial houses stand on their banks, and a large trade of a general character is carried on by Bengali and Marwari merchants with many of the principal commercial centres of Eastern Bengal.

The State is not specially liable to droughts, floods, or plagues, but on June 12, 1897, the severest shock of earthquake ever known in India occurred about five o'clock in the afternoon, and the town

of Cooch Behar was very considerably damaged. The shock lasted for longer than three minutes, and it was followed throughout the night by a number of threatening tremors. All buildings were more or less severely injured, roads were badly fissured, bridges were damaged, and wells and dams were completely choked up. The damage caused to the palace and the public buildings in the town amounted to about Rs. 10,00,000, while private buildings suffered to the extent of about Rs. 75,000.

Cooch Behar, situated almost at the foot of the Himalayas, is naturally the home of a considerable number of types of wild animals. The large game consists of rhinoceros, tiger, leopard, wild buffalo, and black bear, while smaller fauna include wild pig, deer of various kinds, foxes, jackal, crocodiles, and others. Birds comprise vultures, the Indian crane, wild geese, duck, and other fowl.

The variety of the flora of Cooch Behar is almost bewildering, as the rich alluvial soil favours the growth of trees, plants, and vegetables, but special mention might be made of palms and bamboos of several kinds, and timber trees, including



HIS HIGHNESS MAHARAJA JITENDRA NARAYAN BHUP, BAHADUR, K.C.S.I., OF COOCH BEHAR.

Photo by Deccan & Art Studio, Bombay.



HER HIGHNESS THE MAHARANI OF COOCH BEHAR.

Painted by Johann von Hermann, Austria.

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sal, sisu, and teak, while the State might aptly be termed "a veritable land of flowers."

The inhabitants of the State are composed of Hindus (including Meches, Garos, and other animistic tribes), representing not far short of 70 per cent. of the total population, and Mussulmans, nearly 30 per cent., although there are rather more than a thousand individuals who are classed as Christians or Brahmos.

The latest census returns stated the inhabitants were 592,952 in number.

Modern agricultural methods are practically unknown in the State, and practices common among *ryots* to-day are—generally speaking—as primitive in character as they were several generations ago. Owing to the fact that the bulk of the soil is of alluvial formation, and that the loam rarely exceeds a depth of two feet, deep cultivation is neither necessary nor desirable. The major portion of the soil is very fertile, although manure is used by some farmers in connection with the growing of tobacco, jute, mustard seed, sugar-cane, wheat, and barley, but the application of fertilizers is not practised to any appreciable extent. Cultivators usually divide the crops of the State into the following five main groups: (a) food grains, (b) oil seeds, (c) tobacco, (d) produce for manufacturing purposes, and (e) roots and bulbs. Paddy, tobacco, and jute are the principal agricultural products. Tobacco is probably the most profitable of all, and as the quality is excellent a large quantity of leaf is purchased annually by merchants from Burma, Eastern Bengal, and other districts. The wet, marshy land of the State is peculiarly suitable for the production of jute, and its fine, fibrous constituent parts are in great demand in Calcutta.

The great progress which has been made in the jute industry in recent years has encouraged the people to increase the cultivation of the plant to such an extent that it has become a recognized crop with nearly every landholder in the country. Root species include potatoes (universally grown), onions, garlic, ginger, and turmeric.

Nearly all of the people are dependent for a livelihood upon agricultural pursuits in one or other of their manifold aspects. True, there are both men and women who are engaged in industrial work of a minor character, but even in these instances the occupation is generally supplementary to the prime factor, and is usually termed a "home industry." For

instance, the *Endi* silkworm is reared upon leaves of the castor-oil and other plants, and a somewhat coarse kind of silk is woven in a hand loom into cloth some 24 inches in width and 9 feet in length. This material is made entirely by the womenfolk, and is intended for personal wear only. The spinning of cotton is almost a lost art, and with the exception of the manufacture of a few rough cloths for household use, the industry has been superseded by the importation of Manchester piece goods. A large quantity of jute was formerly made into gunnies, but these products are now almost wholly manufactured by the forty or fifty mills near Calcutta. The absence of a sufficient supply of good clay is not conducive to the production of good pottery ware, and the only articles now made include figures, *handis*, and *saras*. A little work is also done in the manufacture of agricultural implements, weapons, knives, gold and brass ornaments, wicker baskets, stools, chairs, sunshades, mats, and fans.

In early days in Cooch Behar the cause of education was encouraged by Maharajas to the extent only of instruction in Sanskrit, although many of the ruling family were excellent Persian scholars. A vernacular school was opened in the town of Cooch Behar in the year 1857 for the education of the relatives of the then Maharaja, and that movement may be regarded as the foundation of a popular system of teaching throughout the State. In 1860 the Maharaja Narendranarayan presented a sum of money to Colonel Jenkins, the Governor-General's Agent on the North-East Frontier, but the latter officer generously requested that His Highness would establish an English school with the money, and this was accordingly done, the institution known as the "Jenkins" school being opened in 1861. The construction of other schools followed rapidly, and in 1888 the Victoria College was built to commemorate the Jubilee of the reign of Her Majesty the late Queen Victoria. Inspectors of schools were appointed, and regulations were framed with regard to the syllabus of instruction and the annual sums to be granted in aid. The support of various maharajas and the efficient control of the Department of Public Instruction in the State have caused a steady and satisfactory progress to be made, and at the present time there are four which teach up to the Matriculation standard of the Calcutta University, 16 are Middle English Schools, 280 are Primary Schools,

30 are Vernacular, 12 are Girls' Schools, and five are Mahommedan *Muklabs*.

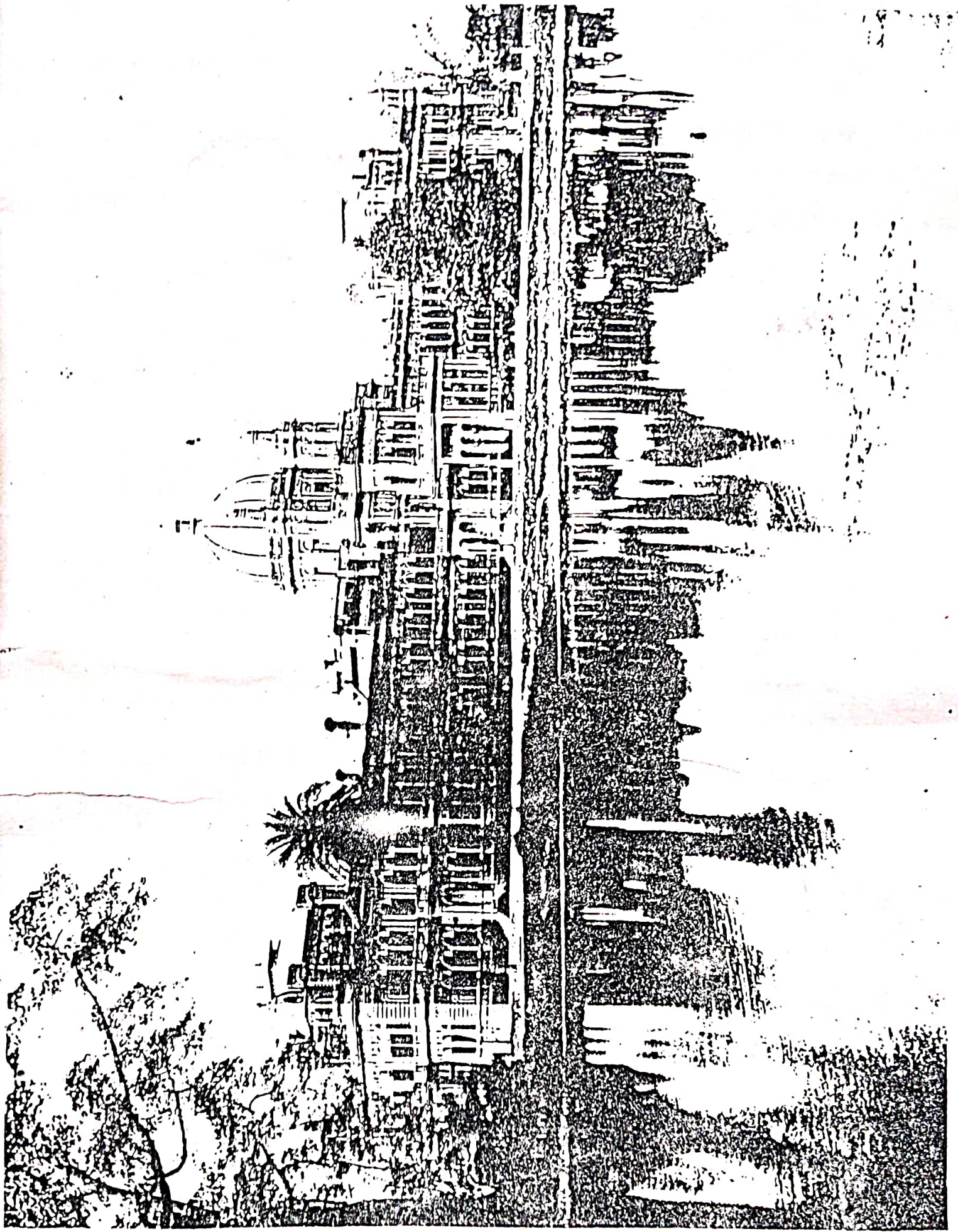
The territory of modern Cooch Behar was originally a portion of the ancient kingdom of Kamarupa, and had no separate existence of its own until about the middle of the sixteenth century, when it was separated from the then existing area of the Kamarupa territory. The greatest difficulty is experienced in obtaining authentic information as to the date of the founding of the above-named kingdom or of its exact geographical situation. There are evidences, however, that it was in existence for considerably more than two thousand years before the Christian era, but passing over the period covered by the reigns of mythological kings, one arrives upon safer historical ground at the commencement of the sixteenth century A.D. when Chandan, the first king of the Koch dynasty ascended the throne. The era of the Cooch Behar family is reckoned from that date, about A.D. 1510. During the time of the Maharaja Naranarayan (1555-1587) Cooch Behar was an extensive kingdom, and comprised, in addition to the State of Cooch Behar of the present day, almost the whole of Northern Bengal, Bhutan, and Assam, as well as the modern States of Kachar, Jaintia, Manipur, and Tipperah, extending to the coast of the Bay of Bengal.

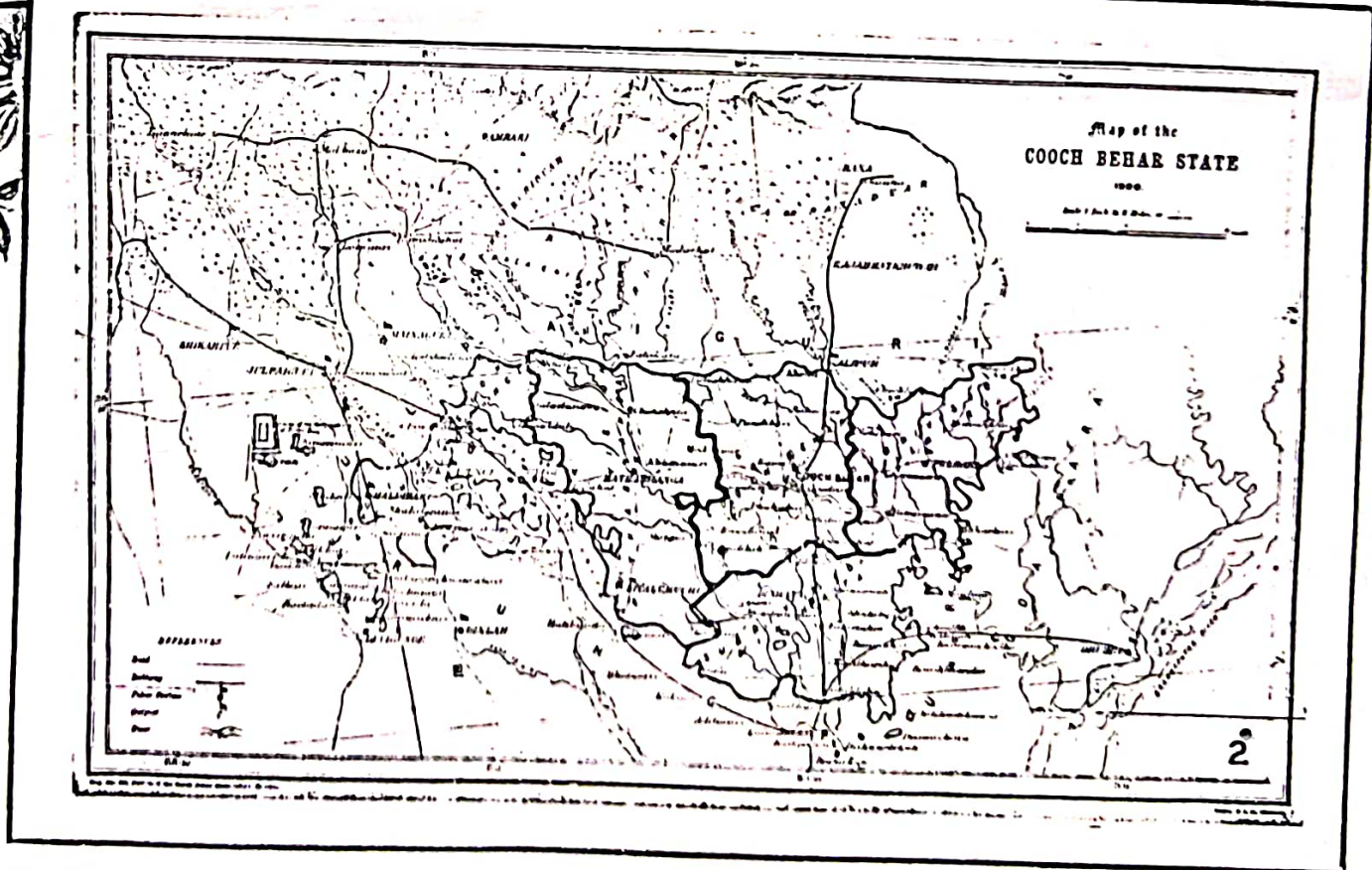
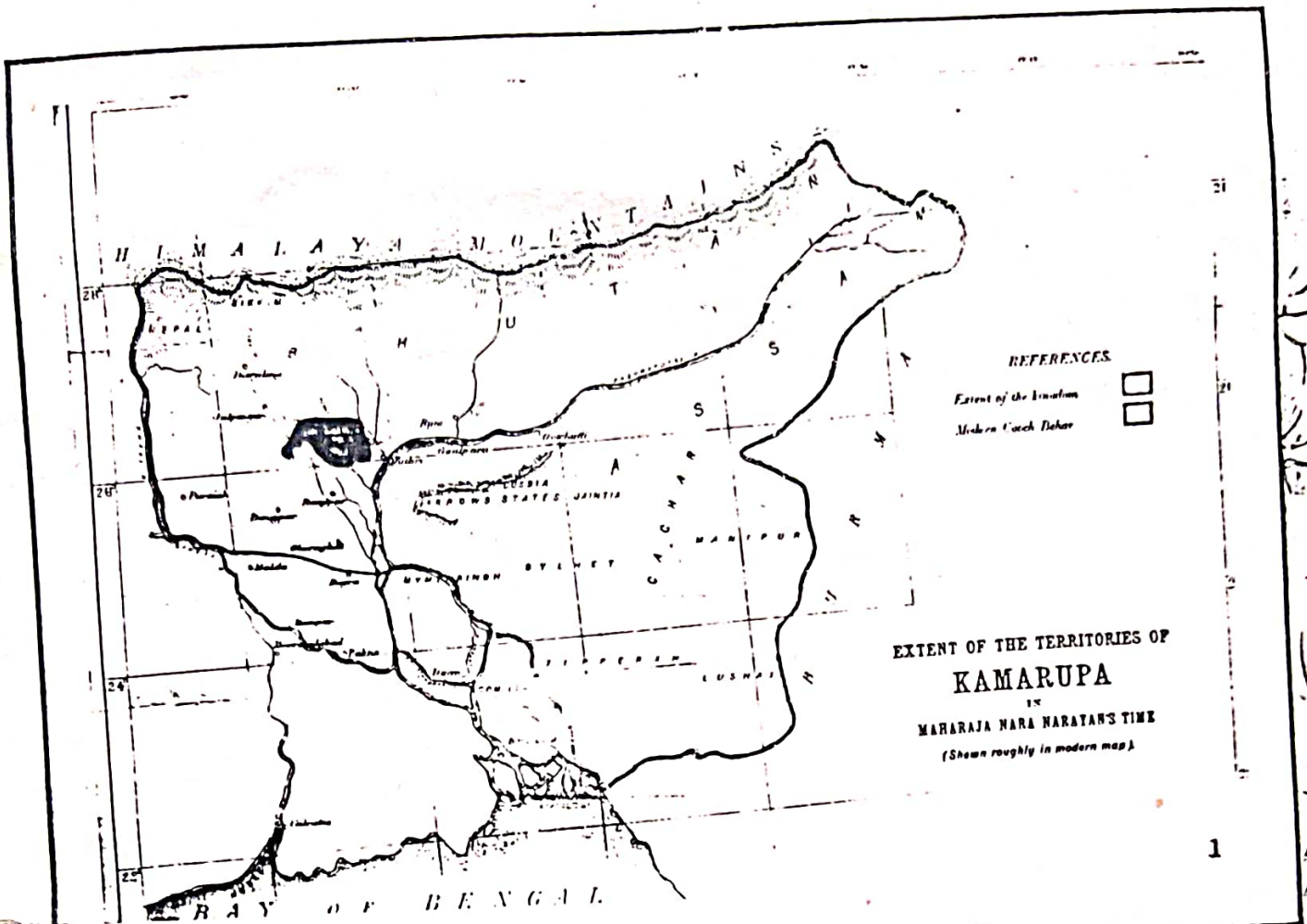
In this reign the Kamrup country was divided into two portions, the Maharaja Naranarayan making over the portion of the kingdom east of the Sankos to his brother Sukladvaja, who thus became ruler of Assam or Eastern Kamarupa, while he retained the western portion for himself. Occupants of the throne in succession to the Maharaja Naranarayan included Lakshminarayan, in whose reign the Moghals invaded Cooch Behar: Biranarayan, whose rulership was marked by loss of territory and tribute money; of Pranarayan, Modanarayan, Vasudevanarayan, Mahendranarayan, and Rupanarayan, who was the last king to hold sway over Western Kamarupa, as from that time the extent of the kingdom was virtually confined to the area of the present State.

Then followed the period covered by independent kings of Cooch Behar, which was marked by continual unrest caused by disorders within and invasions from without, and in 1772 application was made to the Government of India for assistance against the Bhutias and other enemies. A treaty was concluded on April 5, 1773,



1. HIS HIGHNESS THE LATE MAHARAJA SIR NRIPENDRA NARAYAN, OF COOCH BEHAR, IN FULL DRESS.
2. HIS HIGHNESS THE LATE MAHARAJA SIR NRIPENDRA NARAYAN, OF COOCH BEHAR (IN BENGAL CAVALRY UNIFORM).





1. MAP SHOWING EXTENT OF THE TERRITORIES OF KAMARUPA IN MAHARAJA NARA NARAYAN'S TIME.
2. MAP OF THE COOCH BEHAR STATE.

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between the Honourable East India Company and the Nazir Deo, on behalf of Dharendranarayan, Raja of Cooch Behar, which provided, *inter alia*, for the payment by the Raja of a sum of Rs. 50,000 in return for military services to be rendered by the Company, for the subjection of the Raja to the will of the Company, and for the annexation of the State to the Presidency of Bengal. The right of annexation, however, subsequently waived by the Government.

Cooch Behar became a Feudatory State by virtue of the above-named treaty, and Maharaja Dharendranarayan, on whose behalf the treaty was concluded by the Nazir Deo, was the first ruler of the country who acknowledged allegiance to the British Government.

Harendranarayan was less than four years of age when his father—the last-named Maharaja—died, and two rival parties sprang up in the State, namely, those who supported the Maharani, and others who were in favour of the administration of the Nazir Deo. Trouble arose, too, with the Collector of Rungpur in whom the representation of the State was vested, but eventually the Nazir Deo proclaimed himself king and placed a strong guard over the young Maharaja and his mother. The prisoners were subsequently released on the authority of Mr. Peter Moore, who had become Collector at Rungpur, and the Government, whose attention had been drawn to the distracted state of the country, appointed a Commission in 1788 to report on the matter of succession. This inquiry resulted in a declaration of the full sovereignty of the Maharaja and of the deposition of Nazir Deo. The Government thereupon appointed Mr. Harry Douglas as Commissioner or Resident at Cooch Behar during the minority of the Maharaja. Reforms were instituted by that official, the principal being in connection with land revenue, and in the year 1801 Maharaja Harendranarayan assumed control. The rule of the Maharaja was not a peaceful one owing to foreign and domestic disputes, but it is worthy of note that the reign marked the transition from the old to the new system of administration, and it was largely due to the action of the Maharaja that Cooch Behar is still a Feudatory State, uncontrolled in its internal affairs and having a constitution independent of foreign interference. That ruler was followed by Maharajas Shivendranarayan and Narendra Narayan, and then by Colonel His Highness Maharaja Sir Nri-

pendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, G.C.I.E., C.B., A.D.C., the father of the present ruler, His Highness Maharaja Jitendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur.

The Maharaja Nripendra Narayan was

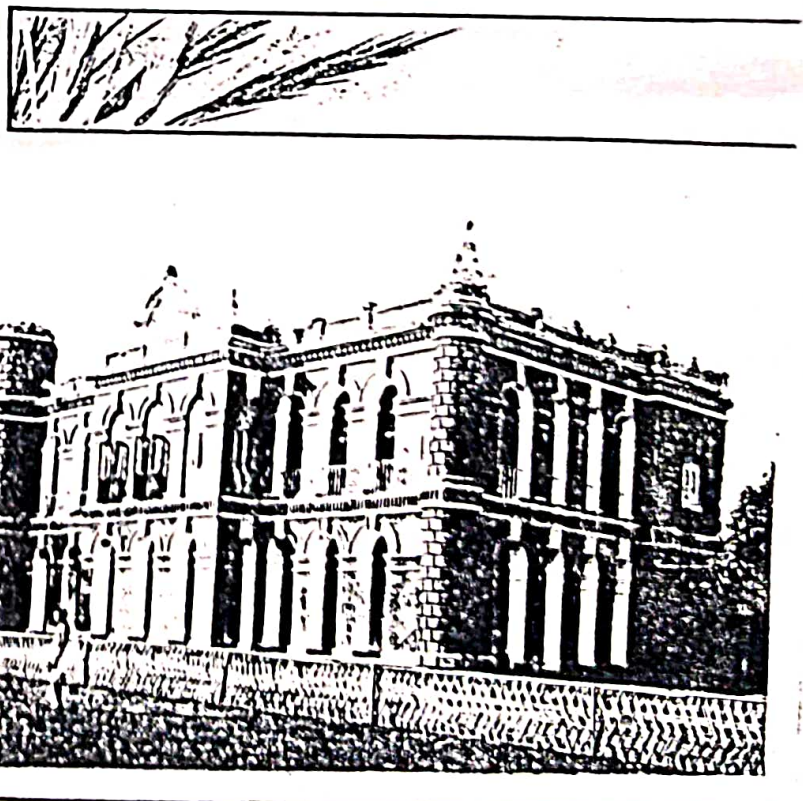
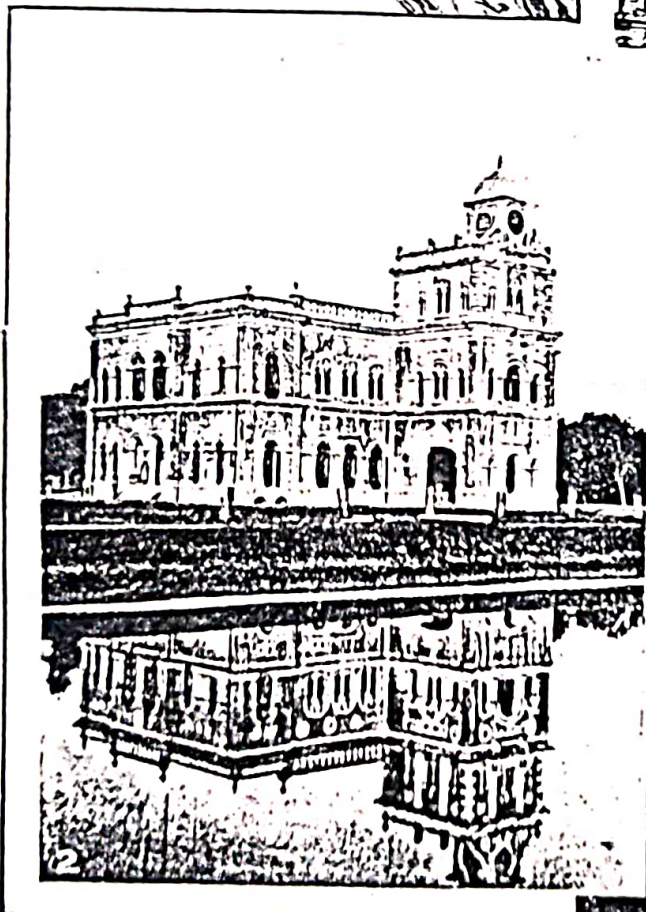
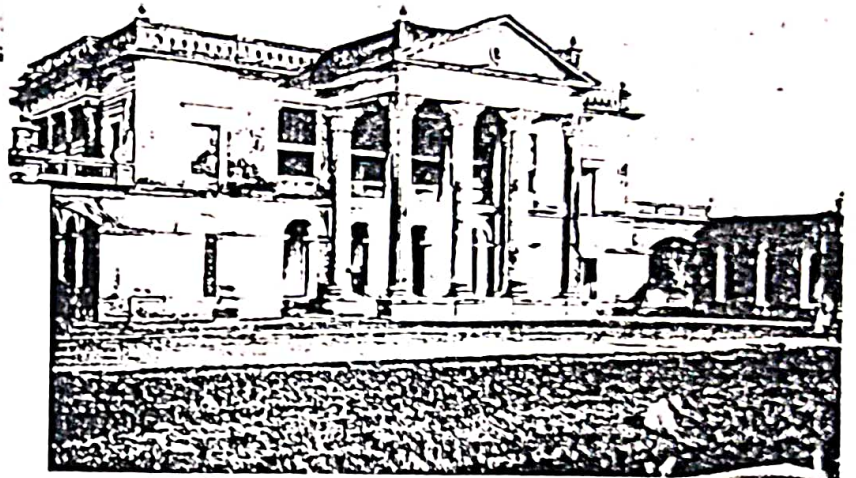
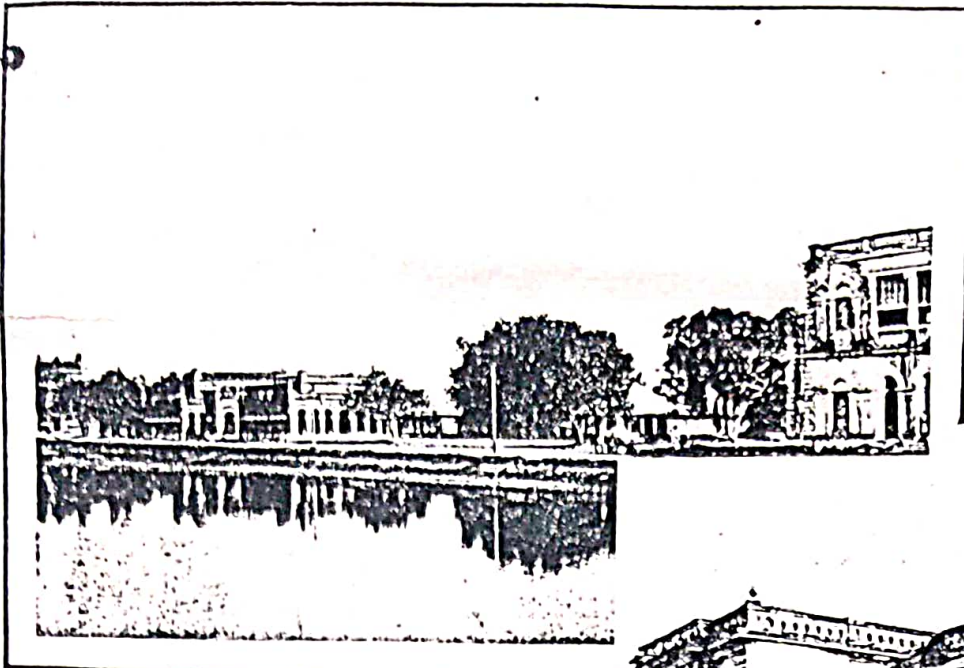
ensue, deputed Colonel J. C. Haughton, Governor-General's Agent, North-East Frontier, to Cooch Behar as Commissioner in charge of the administration, this step being considered imperative as the on-



HIS HIGHNESS THE LATE MAHARAJA RAJ RAJENDRA NARAYAN,
OF COOCH BEHAR.

born on October 4, 1862, just ten months and four days prior to the death of his father, the Maharaja Narendra Narayan. Dissensions arose in the family as to the guardianship of the young heir, and the Government, fearing complications might

mean of effectually providing for the care and education of the young Maharaja. The first five years of the boy's life were spent at Cooch Behar, where lessons in Bengali were given to him, but as Colonel Haughton, whose most anxious care was to

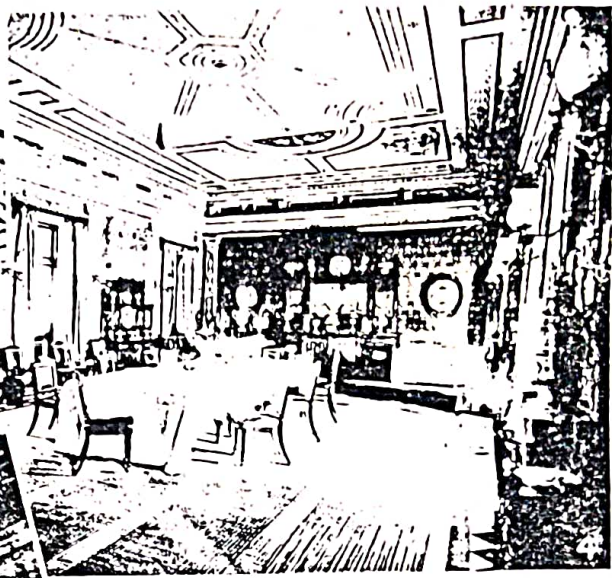
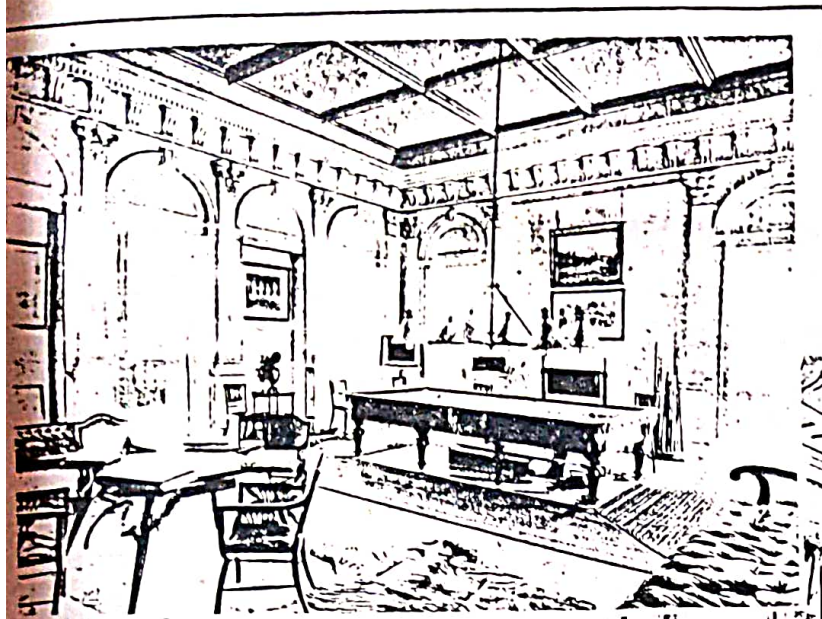


1. COUNCIL OFFICE.

2. LANSDOWNE HALL.

3. RESIDENCE OF PRINCE VICTOR NARAYAN (LATE DEWANKHAN).

4. JENKINS SCHOOL.



1. THE BLUE DRAWING ROOM (THE PALACE).
3. THE LIBRARY (THE PALACE).

2. THE BILLIARD-ROOM (THE PALACE).
4. THE DINING-ROOM (THE PALACE).

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secure proper training for his ward, strongly advised his removal from the capital, on February 6, 1868, the Maharaja, accompanied by his mother, brother, and three other boys as companions, left Cooch Behar under the charge of Mr. Smith, Deputy-Commissioner, and was placed in the Wards Institution at Benares. Satisfactory progress was noticeable during the Maharaja's course of study, and in 1869 Captain Lance, Deputy-Commissioner, observed that "if he continues in the same course the State will reap all the advantages to be gained from a good ruler." Early in 1872 the ward was transferred to the Patna Collegiate School, where he remained for about five years. The Maharaja had a tour in 1875 in the North-Western Provinces, Oudh, and the Punjab, under the guidance of his tutor, Mr. H. St. John Kneller, and in December 1877 he went in charge of the Commissioner, Lord Ulick Browne, to the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi, where he was received by His Excellency the Viceroy, the late Lord Lytton. On March 6, 1878, His Highness was married at Cooch Behar to Srimati Suniti Devi, daughter of the late Babu Keshav Chandra Sen, the celebrated Brahmo Reformer and founder of the New Dispensation Church. Immediately after that event His Highness proceeded on a tour to Europe under the joint guardianship of Dr. later Surgeon-General Sir Benjamin Simpson and Mr. Kneller, and in the course of ten months the party visited Italy, France, and Belgium, where they were received with special marks of royal favour. While in England His Highness had the honour of being presented to Her late Majesty Queen Victoria and to his Royal Highness, the then Prince of Wales. He returned to India in February 1879 and was most enthusiastically received by his friends in Calcutta and his family in Cooch Behar. Before the end of that year His Highness was admitted as a law student at the Presidency College in Calcutta, he residing at "The Woodlands" in Alipore, a fine mansion which was subsequently purchased by the State.

His Highness completed his twenty-first year on October 3, 1883, but the installation ceremony did not take place until a month later. In handing over the charge of the State, His Honour Sir Rivers Thompson, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, in memorable words, directed the attention of His Highness to the great responsibility of the trust committed to

him, and the latter in reply, said, "It shall be my earnest endeavour to do justice to the great trust which I now undertake." A very large number of European as well as Hindu guests attended the festivities, and the extensive preparations made for their entertainment were carried out on a most lavish scale.

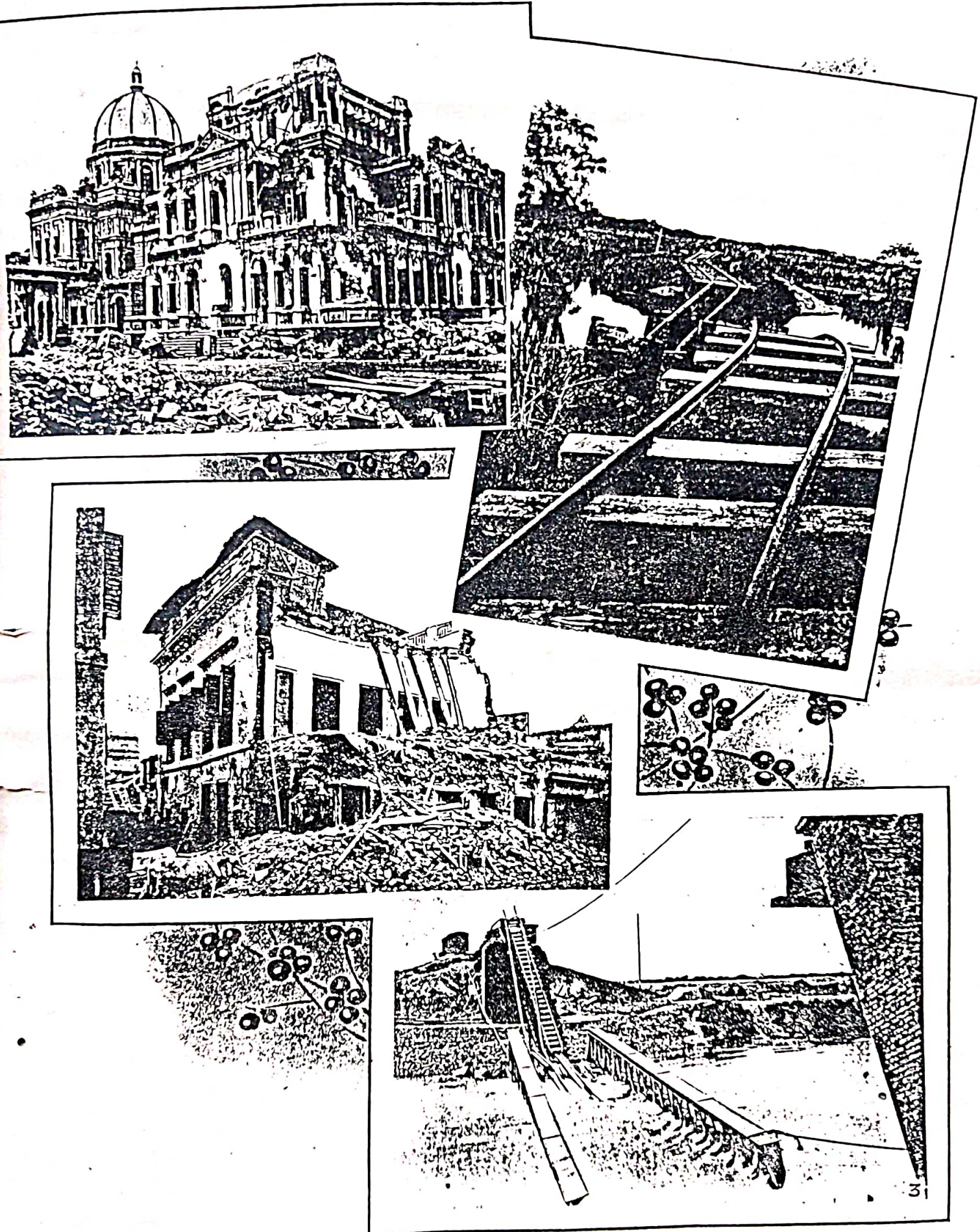
The Maharaja visited England in 1887, on the celebration of the rejoicings on the occasion of the jubilee of the reign of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria, when he was invested with the insignia of a Knight Grand Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire. His Highness was accompanied by Her Highness the Maharani, who was the first Indian lady to be received at the English Court, and a further honour was accorded her when Her Majesty bestowed upon her the Imperial Order of the Crown of India. The Maharaja travelled in India again in the years 1894, 1896, and 1898, and in the year 1902, he attended the coronation ceremony of His late Majesty King Edward VII in his capacity as A.D.C. His Highness was unfortunately compelled to seek medical advice in London in the years 1908 and 1910, and died at Bexhill, in England, in 1911. A special military funeral was ordered by His Majesty the King-Emperor George V, and his remains were cremated at Golders Green, near London, the ashes being transferred to India to find a last resting-place in the home of his forefathers.

Although the Maharaja held only honorary rank in the British Army, he was always ready to avail himself of opportunities of making himself fully acquainted with the duties of a soldier. He had training with the 17th Lancers at Meerut, afterwards becoming Hon. Major of that regiment, and Colonel of the 6th Bengal Cavalry. But His Highness was determined not to be a mere figure-head in the Army, for when disturbances occurred on the North-West Frontier, and when war threatened in the Pamirs in Central Asia in 1885, he not only offered to raise troops, but also expressed his willingness to take his place in the field. He joined the Tirah Expeditionary Force in 1898, and was present in several engagements. His gallant services were acknowledged in despatches from General Sir William Lockhart, His Excellency the Viceroy, and others, and the congratulations of Her late Majesty were strengthened by her bestowal of a Companionship of the Bath upon him.

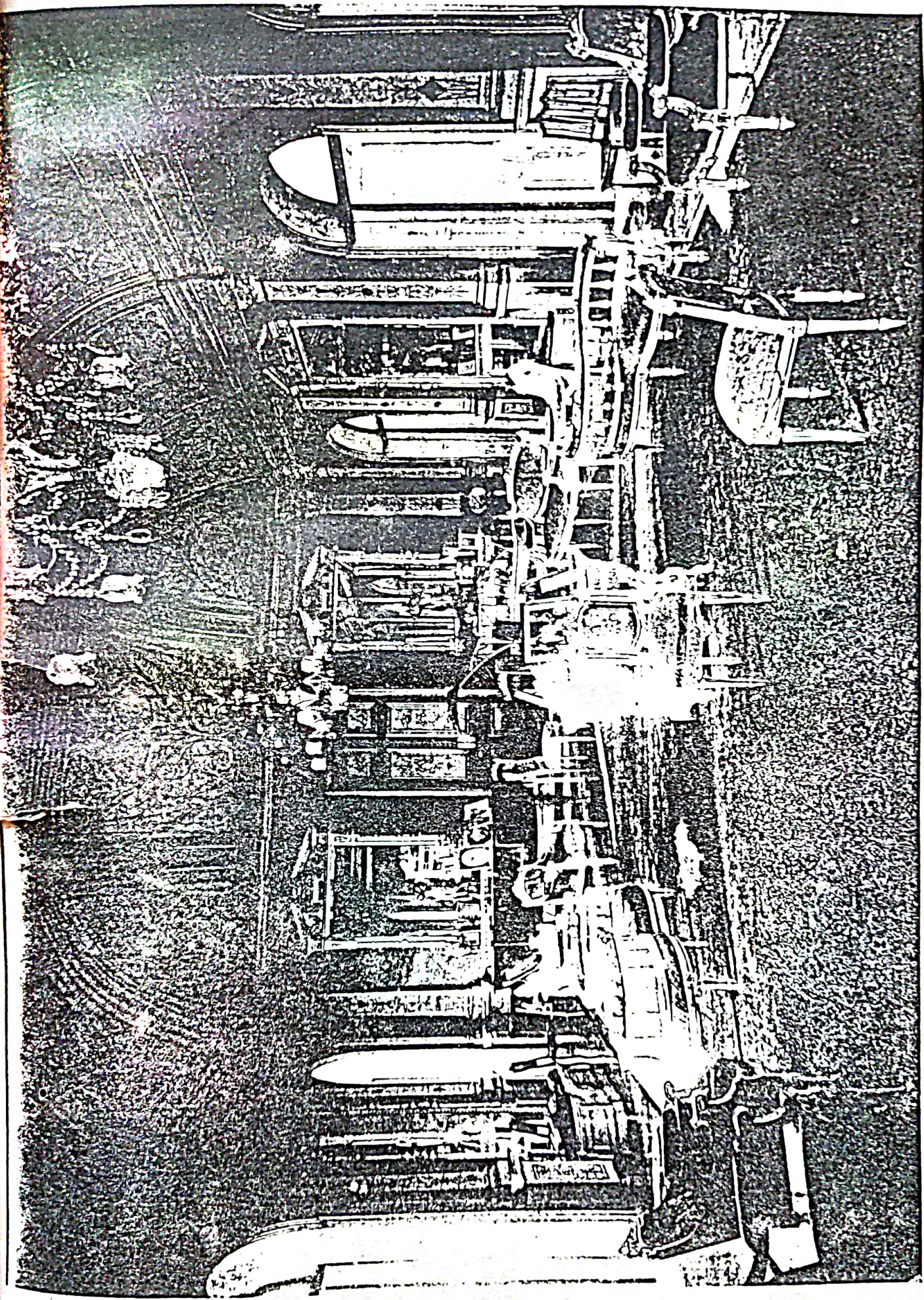
The Maharaja was initiated by special dispensation as a Mason in the year 1878, and during his membership he held practically every office in the craft. He was a Past Grand Senior Warden of England; Past Deputy District Grand Master of Bengal; Past District Grand Mark Master of Bengal; Past Grand Senior Warden of Mark Masons of England; Past Grand Principal Conductor of Work on the Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters of England and Wales, Colonies, and Dependencies of the British Crown; and Past Grand Senior Warden of the Grand Council of Allied Masonic Degrees of England and Wales.

His Highness was a member of several clubs in London, including the Marlborough, Cavalry, Portland, Prince's, Queen's, Ranelagh, and honorary member of the Hurlingham Club and of the Marylebone Cricket Club. In India he belonged to the United Service Club, Simla; the Wheeler Club, Meerut; the Himalayan Club, Mussoorie; the Darjeeling Club; the Calcutta Turf Club, and the Calcutta cricket, racket, and polo clubs.

The Maharaja was a keen, all-round sportsman, not merely as an onlooker, but as a competitor who had few equals in many contests. Among his personal successes may be mentioned the following: he conquered Webb, the amateur champion, at rackets; won the Darjeeling squash tennis handicap, commencing play with his scoring sheet showing minus 60; he was an excellent polo player, and a fine exponent of billiards. He started the Bengal Ghymkana (for Indians only), to be conducted on the lines of the Calcutta Club, for games of Association football, cricket, hockey, and tennis. In connection with cricket it was the custom of the Maharaja during the winter months to engage two professionals from England in order to coach young players. His Highness was first president of the club, and that position is now held by the present Maharaja. He started the Pilgrims Polo Club for the formation of a team to play in matches beyond the borders of Calcutta, and in the first year of its formation the team won the championship at Lucknow, beating the 15th Hussars in the final round. The Cooch Behar team consisted of Thakur Dhokul Singh, (2) Shah Mirza Baig, (3) the Maharaj Kumar of Cooch Behar, and (4) Captain Alan Campbell-Ross. The Maharaja gave cups annually for racing fixtures at Calcutta and Meerut, and for football



1, 2, 3, 4. DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE EARTHQUAKE OF 1897.



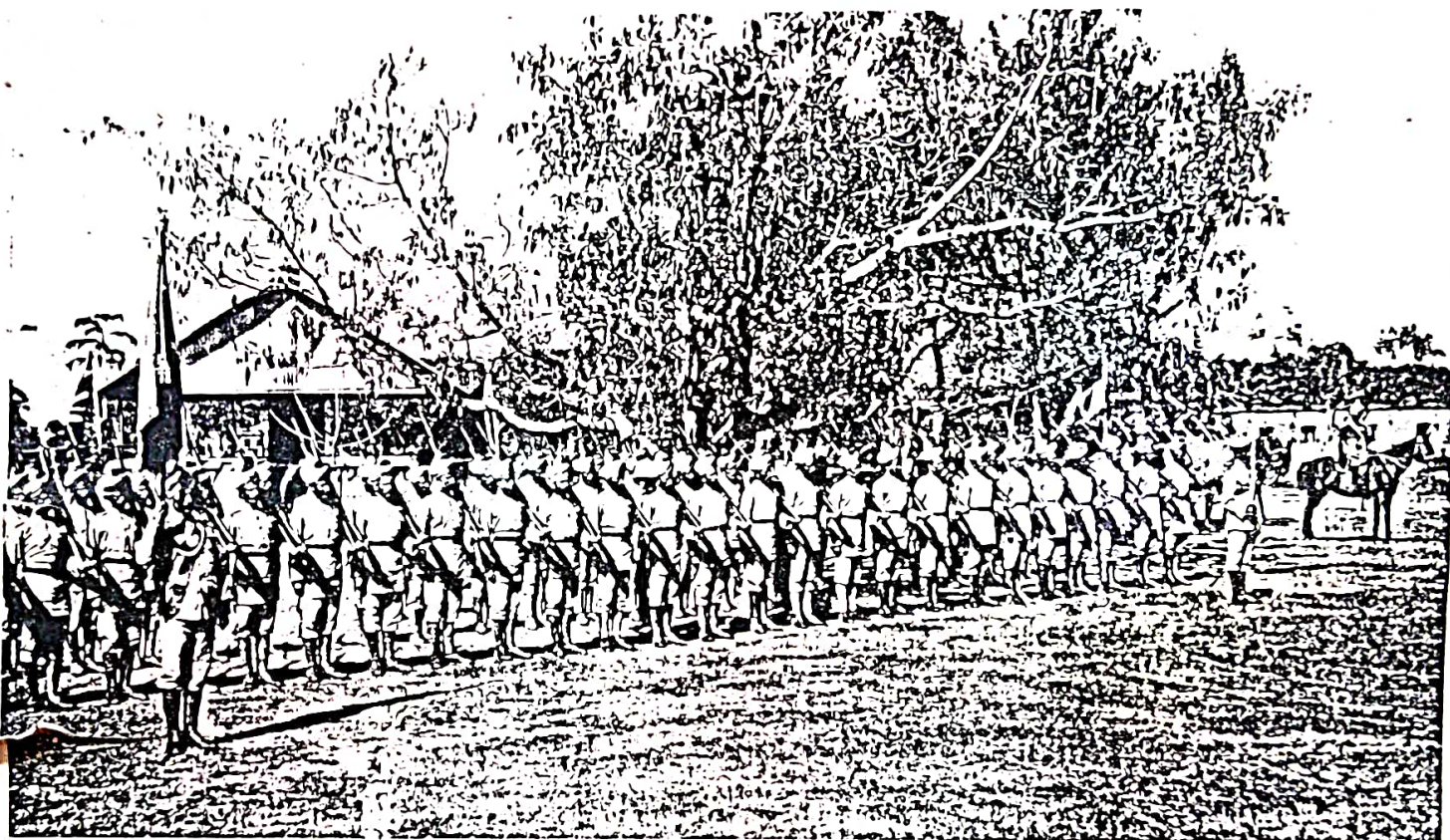
THE DRAWING-ROOM OF THE PALACE.
Photo by Johnson & Hoffmann, Calcutta.

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matches at Calcutta and Cooch Behar, and it may be added that similar cups are now offered by the present Maharaja. With the above facts in view it will not be a surprise to any one to learn that His Highness made an illustrious name for himself as one of the most intrepid and most successful hunters of big game of modern times. In the year 1908 he compiled and published "Thirty-seven Years of Big Game Shooting in Cooch Behar, the Duars, and Assam: a Rough Diary by the Maharaja of Cooch Behar." That hand-

records for the first ten years given in the book, 1871-80, are unfortunately incomplete, but they show the following results: 75 tigers, 31 leopards, 55 rhinos, 123 buffaloes, 1 bear, 118 hog deer, 47 sambhurs, 11 antelopes, 40 barasinghs, and 24 pigs. Early in February 1881 a bull buffalo was shot, the horns measuring 10 feet $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches from point to point on the outside of the crown, and the base of each horn measured 24 inches. Two years later His Highness and two cousins accounted for five leopards on one day, and

a considerable number of charges by the beasts, no fewer than eight were accounted for. March 2nd was memorable owing to the fact that two elephants were severely cut by a rhino, a third was slightly wounded, and a fourth was gored by a buffalo in one of its forelegs. In 1884 His Highness was engaged in an expedition for capturing elephants, and was therefore not "out for game," but he relates a curious bag taken on February 19th, which consisted of 1 pig, 1 pea-fowl, 1 partridge, 1 porcupine, and a python



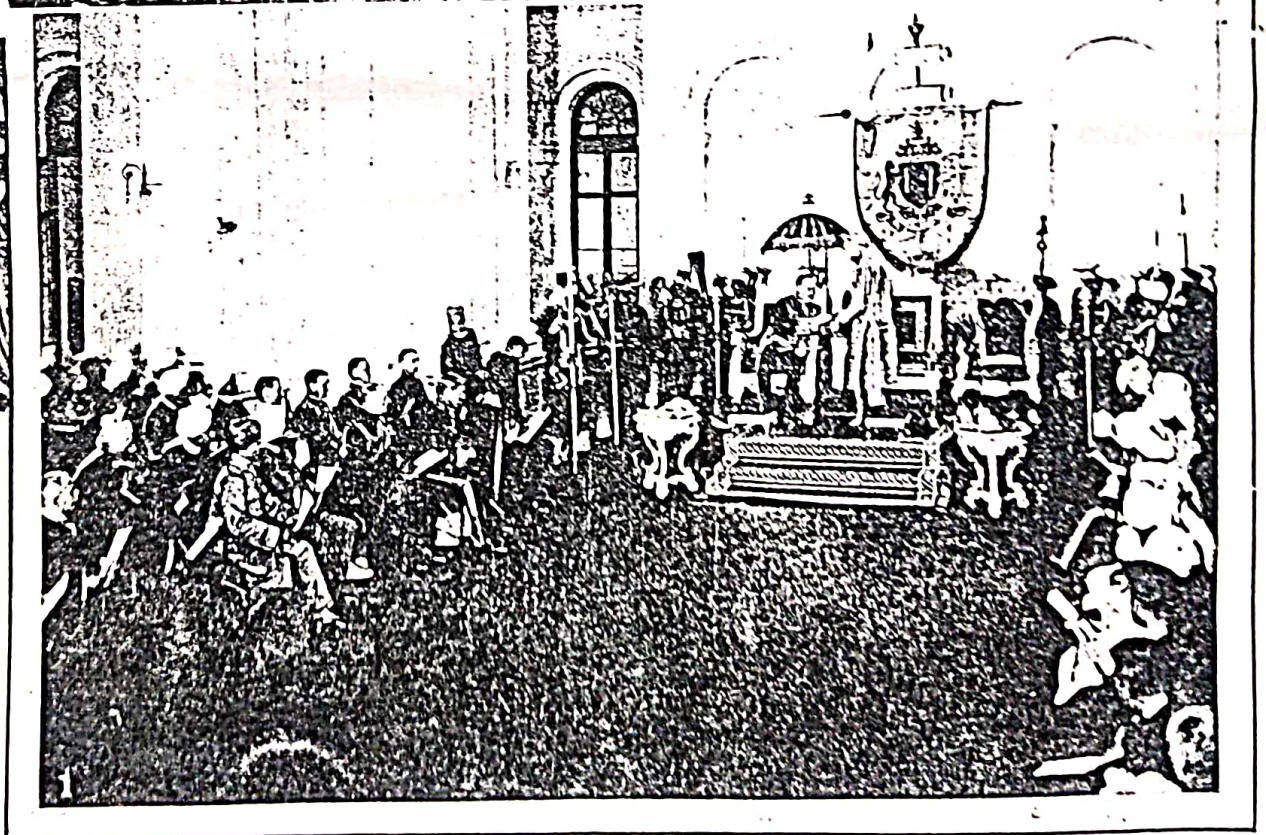
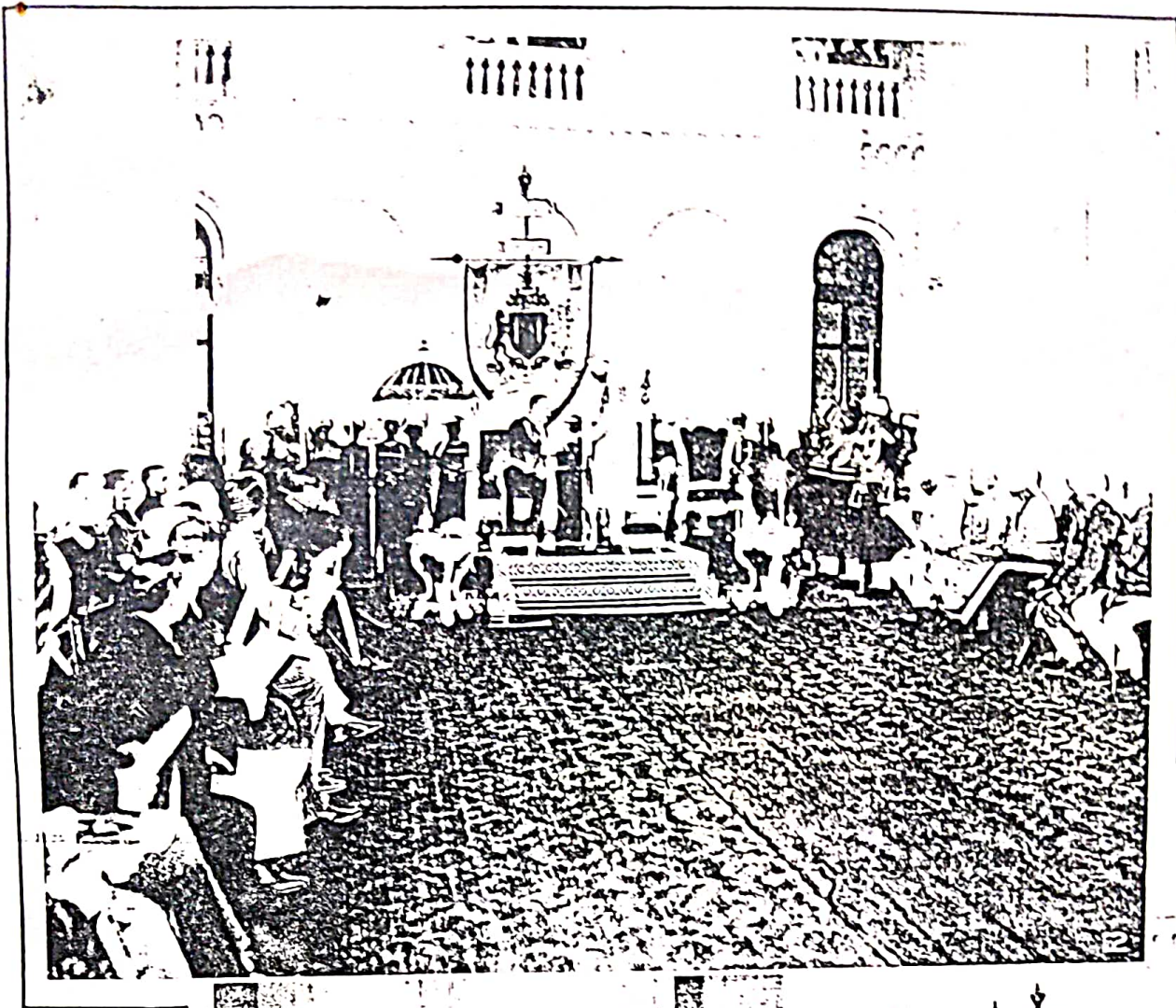
H.E. THE GOVERNOR INSPECTING THE GUARD OF HONOUR.

Photo by Johnston & Hoffmann, Calcutta

some volume, crammed with most interesting accounts of the author's experiences when following tiger, leopard, bison, buffalo, rhino, and other inhabitants of the jungle, was "dedicated by special permission to His Majesty King Edward VII, Emperor of India." In an introductory note it is explained that the country over which His Highness shot extended from the foot of the Himalayas southwards, and rarely more than thirty-six miles distant from the base of the hills. The jungles in Cooch Behar, the Duars, and Assam, are all very similar, consisting of heavy grass of different kinds intersected by rivers and numerous nullahs, and dotted with trees outside of the Forest Reserves. The

two days later they encountered a tiger which showed great sport. The beast was tracked for a considerable distance, and before he was bagged he severely mauled no fewer than seven elephants. This was a very fine animal, measuring 10 feet $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. The usual annual shoot for the year 1883 commenced on February 18, the party consisting of the Maharaja and eight friends. Some of the guns returned on March 15, and the remainder on the 23rd, but the bag included 4 tigers, 6 rhinos, 22 buffaloes, 1 bison, 1 bear, 14 barasinghs, 4 sambhurs, and 10 hog deer. One of the days—February 26th—deserves notice, as the party got among a herd of 15 buffalo, and in spite of

which measured 15 feet 5 inches. His Excellency the Earl of Mayo joined the Maharaja's shooting party on February 22nd, but good luck was not experienced until about the middle of March, when the kill consisted of 2 tigers, 10 rhinos, and 2 buffaloes. Some of the rhino were brave fighters, one charged four times, and was not stopped a moment too soon. A five days' shoot about the end of the month yielded a tiger, leopard, 2 rhinos, and 2 buffaloes, one of the last-named standing 6 feet 3 inches at the shoulder and measuring 14 feet 3 inches from nose to tip of tail. Three weeks' shooting in 1885 produced 10 tigers, 2 leopards, 7 rhinos, 16 buffaloes, and 3 bears. On



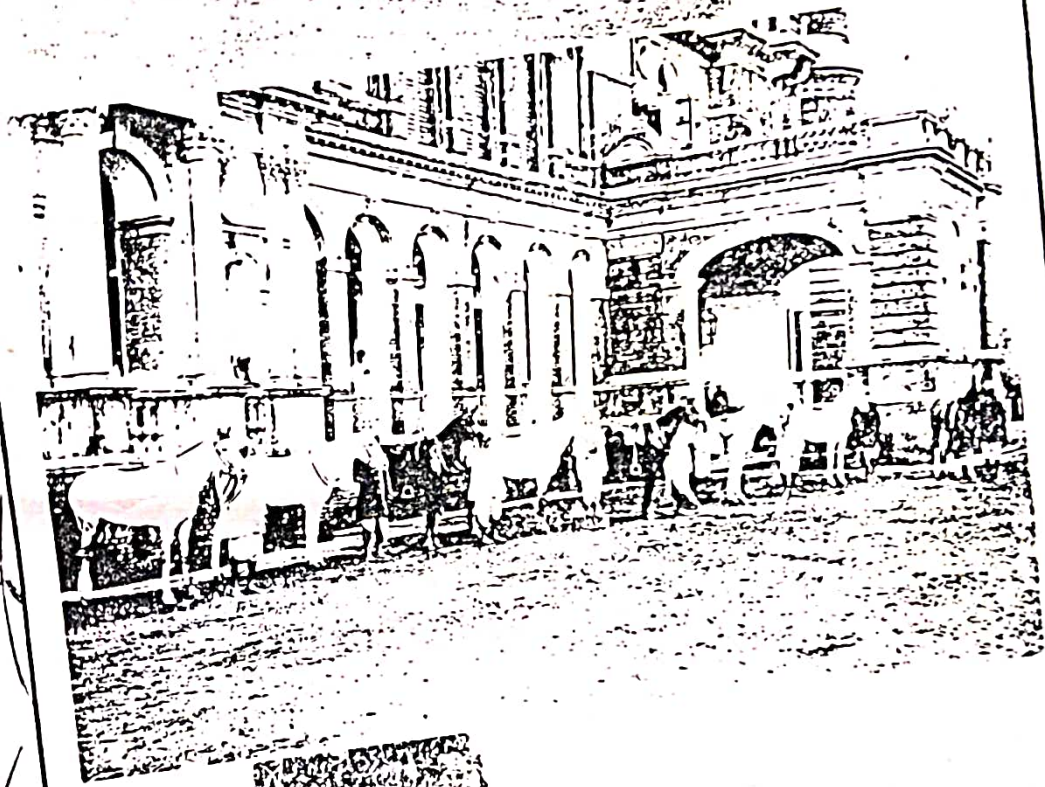
1. THE INSTALLATION CEREMONY, H.H. THE MAHARAJA PRESENTING THE NAZZUR TO H.E. THE GOVERNOR.

2. THE INSTALLATION CEREMONY, H.E. THE GOVERNOR PLACING THE RING ON H.H. THE MAHARAJA'S FINGER, ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

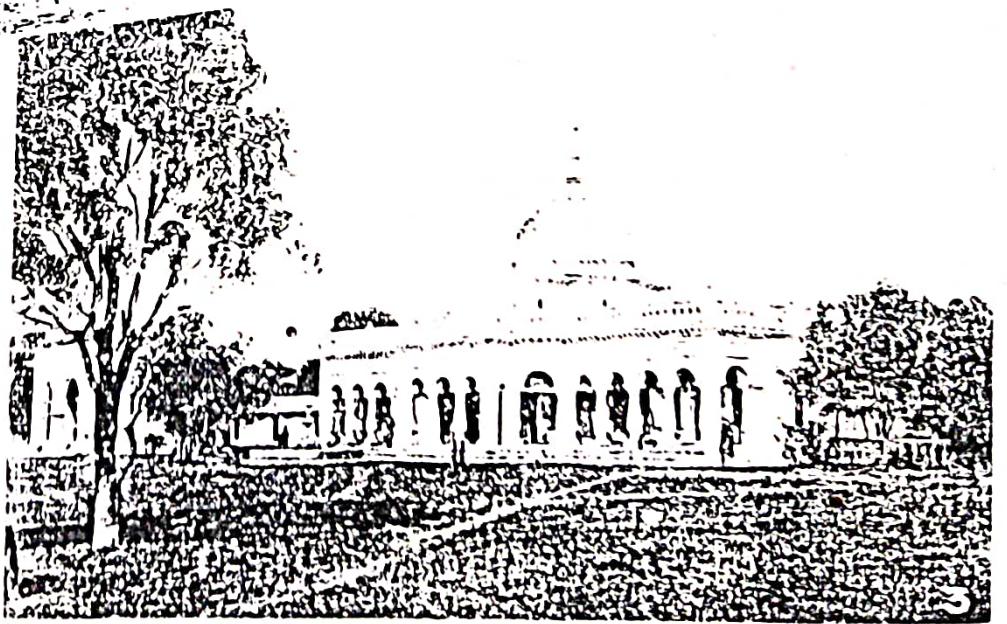
Photos by Johnston & Harrison, Calcutta.



1. BAND AND GUARD.



2. POLO PONIES.



3. MADAN MOHAN TEMPLE.

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and other important buildings. The Bairagidighi tank was considerably enlarged in the year 1897, and it is now 446 feet in length, 440 feet in breadth, and has an average depth of 289 feet.

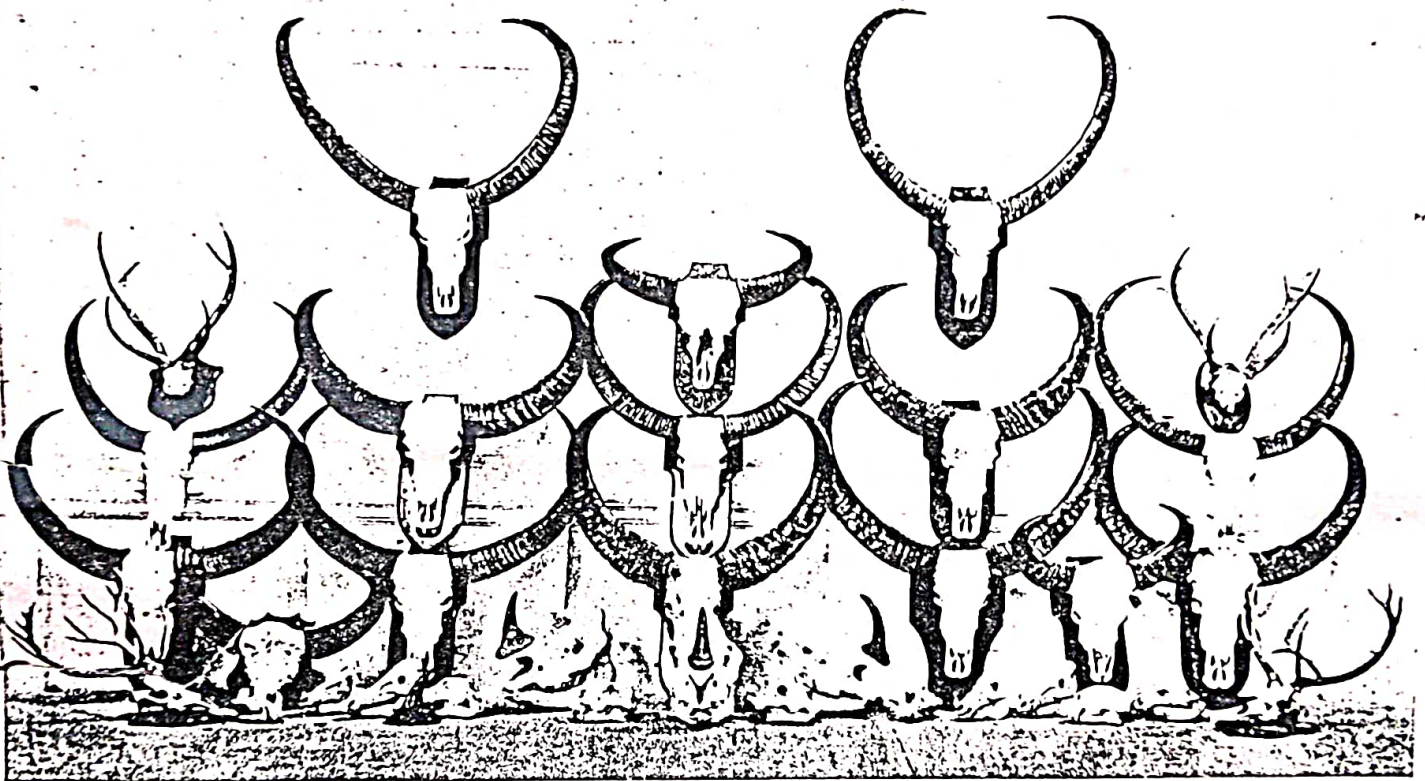
The town is symmetrically and picturesquely laid out by means of straight and broad roads, which intersect one another at right angles, and they are planted with palm, *sisa*, mango, and other trees. On every hand is seen a wealth of luxuriant verdure, and as one alights from the train at the railway station an

ground. Other apartments include a large number of bed or dressing-rooms, dining and drawing-rooms, a billiard room, four *Toshkhana* rooms, eleven bathrooms, and ladies' gallery and vestibule.

This fine mansion, decorated and furnished in the most sumptuous manner very largely according to English ideas, is situated in the south-western portion of an extensive park, and is surrounded by tastefully laid out and well-kept gardens. Within a short distance are stables, coach-

modated in Lansdowne Hall, which was erected in honour of the visit to Cooch Behar of the Earl of Lansdowne, Viceroy of India in the year 1892.

During the minority of His Highness Maharaja Sir Nripendra Narayan, the Government assumed control of administration, the State being governed by a Commissioner, but on attaining his majority he was given full powers, and from that time the Estates have been controlled by a Memorandum of Administration issued by him.



BUFFALO HEADS.

exceedingly pretty view of the town is obtained. Green woods and pastures abound, and away to the north and north-west are the blue-grey summits of the Bhutan Hills, and the peaks of the Himalayas in the far distance.

The Maharaja's Palace is a large and magnificent structure, beautifully classical in design and workmanship. It covers an area of 51,309 square feet, it is 393 feet in length, and 296 feet in breadth. The Durbar Hall, 72 feet by 65 feet, is on the ground floor, and the central portion is covered by an elegantly shaped metal dome surmounted by a lantern, the top of which is 124 feet 10 inches above the

houses, motor garages, and quarters for servants, while on the north side of the palace are spacious lawn tennis courts, covered tennis and racket courts, and a skating rink. The State library, which must not be overlooked, was established by Colonel Haughton in the year 1870, and one historian has expressed the opinion that "the little State of Cooch Behar on the borders of Assam can boast of a library richer than any to be found in Bengal outside Calcutta." It contains about nine thousand volumes, chiefly in English, although there are works in Bengali, Sanskrit, Urdu, Persian, and other languages. The library is now accom-

The functions of the State Council are three-fold, viz.: legislative, executive, and judicial. The Vice-President of the State Council is the head of the General Department, which has branches relating to education, public works, agriculture, forests, and other subjects; the Dewan is the head of the Revenue, Settlement, and *Dabutter* Department, and the Civil and Sessions Judge presides over the judicial department.

The inhabitants of Cooch Behar have for a considerable number of years enjoyed the advantages of being ruled by wise administrators, who have taken a deep personal interest in all State affairs,

THE STATE OF COOCH BEHAR

and have encouraged the people to raise themselves in moral, social, intellectual, educational and other problems.

The present Maharaja is greatly respected throughout the State, and his geniality and kindness of heart have become household words.

His Highness is now causing the town

of Cooch Behar to be greatly improved in general appearance by the opening up of new roads, the planting of trees, the installation of electric light for general use, and by the construction of a complete system of waterworks. Particular attention is being devoted to the class or style of architecture of the principal buildings

now being erected, and English and Indian designs are occasionally blended with very pleasing effects.

In connection with Freemasonry it may be added that His Highness was, in the year 1905, initiated by special dispensation, and at the present time he is District Grand Warden of Bengal.



BERTRAM'S RHINO.