

BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.

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PALAMAU.

[Price—In India, Rs. 3; in England, 4s. 6d.]

BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.

PALAMAU.

BY
L. S. S. O'MALLEY,
INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.



CALCUTTA:
THE BENGAL SECRETARIAT BOOK DEPÔT.

1907.

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PREFACE.

PALAMAU occupies a somewhat unique position among the districts of Bengal. It is the youngest district in the Province, having been part of the Lohārdagā district until 1892; and it has been characterized as the driest and probably the poorest district in both Bengal and Eastern Bengal. Five districts only surpass it in size; on the other hand only three districts have fewer inhabitants, and nowhere, except in Angul, is the density of population so small. Ethnologically, it is a kind of neutral ground between the tracts which still form the home of aboriginal tribes and those inhabited by people of Aryan descent; its people, their manners, customs, and land tenures, are different both from those of Chotā Nāgpur proper and from those of Bihār. Physically, it is a land of hill and jungle interspersed with picturesque valleys and ravines, which to the north merge into a level plain along the banks of the Son. It is one of the most beautiful districts in the Province, and a country which wins the affections of every officer who serves in it.

The account contained in this volume has been compiled mainly from the Statistical Account of Bengal, Vol. XVI, by Sir W. W. Hunter, from the Reports on the Settlement of the Government Estate by Mr. L. R. Forbes and Mr. D. H. E. Sunder, and from materials supplied by the local officers. I desire also to acknowledge gratefully the ready and cordial assistance given by Mr. F. F. Lyall, I.C.S., who has kindly revised the proofs and made many valuable additions, and to express my thanks to Mr. T. S. Macpherson, I.C.S., for his careful and hearty co-operation.

L. S. S. O'M.

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