

THE
GOLD AND SILVER WARES

OF ASSAM,

A MONOGRAPH.

BY

F. C. HENNIKER,

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.



SHILLONG :

PRINTED AT THE ASSAM SECRETARIAT PRINTING OFFICE :

1905.

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GOLD AND SILVER WARES OF ASSAM.



1. Although it would not be correct to say that the gold and silver "ware" of Assam is comprised exclusively of articles of dress, that is jewellery, yet the number of gold and silver products which are not jewellery is so small as to be quite insignificant. Assam cannot, like Burma and Kashmir, point to its carved silver bowls, its candlesticks, its fancy models of the peacock, the "shikara," and the *chenar* leaf. Perhaps it is permissible to conjecture that even in those provinces which produce, in gold and silver, models of local objects of interest the supply results more from the demand of foreign tourists than from the original design of indigenous workmen. Whatever may be the cause, Assam has very little to offer but jewellery. Manipur produces a few gold and silver cups, a hookah, a pán case, etc., but they are only used by the Koyal family of that State. In Sylhet we occasionally find a silver vase for "atar," a silver sprinkler for rose-water, silver buttons, a silver jug, and so on; the Assamese, who is very luxurious, keeps his betelnut in a silver box, called a "tema," or has a plate (*batá*) or bowl (*báti*) of silver; but few or none of these things show any artistic design, and, generally speaking, the gold and silver wares of the province consist of articles of personal adornment, and it is with these that the following pages are chiefly concerned. Assam jewellery is by no means without merit. It incurs the stock reproach of being "unfinished"; it is no doubt rather crude, and the precious stones used are not very precious or very well cut. But it is quaint and characteristic. The gold used is of a high degree of purity. The Assamese goldsmith's customers would not be satisfied with 14-carat or even 18-carat gold, and many of the bracelets, necklaces, etc., are distinctly pleasing even to the critical eye and would attract notice in the midst of quite a good collection of Indian wares.

2. The number of people employed on the manufacture or sale of gold and silver ornaments, etc., together with their dependents, is shown by the Census Report of 1901 to be 14,956, all told. This includes the Native State of Manipur, which indeed is one of the places of special repute for this branch of manufacture. The

percentage of the population engaged in or dependent on the trade throughout the province is about '26. The corresponding percentage for Bengal is about '45, so that Assam has relatively few jewelers. In former days, gold was washed out of the sands of the rivers coming down from the Himalayas into Assam, but the yield of gold was always very small, and the industry has practically died out. At the present day gold is imported from Calcutta by the usual commercial channels.

3. The districts of the province where there are any considerable numbers of workers and dealers in the precious metals are Sylhet, Kamrup (which includes the well-known centre of the trade, Bārpeta), Goalpara, and Sibsagar. The last named district includes Jorhat, which prides itself on its enamelling. No other district, according to the Census Report, has more than 500 male workers though almost every district produces something. Mention has already been made of Manipur, where, though there are few workers, their wares have a special interest, and the same may be said of the Khasi Hills. In the Khasi Hills the work is rarely indigenous, being mostly done by Bengalis who make a business of supplying the peculiar Khasia pattern. In an Appendix will be found a list for each district of all the wares reported to be produced there. This list is not exhaustive, nor can it be so, as even with the conservative Indian a new pattern is sometimes introduced and an old one abandoned. The list, however, may be taken to be fairly complete.

Jorhat.

4. Jorhat, in the Sibsagar district, is the chief place for the manufacture of purely Assamese jewellery and the particular speciality of the Jorhat workmen is their enamelling. This enamel work has been well described by Mr. Darrah, formerly Director of Land Records. His notes are printed in a collection of "Notes on some Industries of Assam" issued from the Assam Secretariat in 1896. The following is an extract from that publication :—

Enamelling on gold is done mainly at Jorhat in the Sibsagar district. The artificers are Sunars, and possess a fair amount of skill. As, however, they work almost entirely for the native trade, the articles produced lack the finish to be seen in ornaments manufactured for European customers. There are many Sunars in Jorhat, who work in nothing but gold. These do not enamel, but those who enamel also work in gold. The different families engaged in the enamelling trade are believed at present to number 38. The enamel (*mina* মিনা) is usually of three kinds, a dark blue, dark green, and white, but red and yellow are also sometimes used. It is bought in blocks exactly like glass slag in appearance, from Marwari merchants. The price varies from 8 annas to Rs. 2 a tola. It comes from Calcutta.

The tools used in the manufacture are small hammers, files, pincers and anvils. They are said to be of English manufacture and to come from Calcutta. Some, however, are made in Sylhet. The only tools peculiar to the enamelling process are the following :—

1. *Hola* (হলা).—A small instrument like a knitting needle, flattened at one end, used for putting the enamel into the interstices of the ornament to be operated on.
2. *Ghor* (ঘর).—A half cylinder of baked clay about 3 or 4 inches long, closed at one end and perforated with holes. The ornament is heated under this in the fire to fix the enamel.
3. *Khan* (খান).—A file made in the following way: A stone called *járan* (জাবন) (like a heavy sandstone in appearance) is obtained from the neighbourhood of Gauhati. It is usually brought to Jorhat by Telis, or oil merchants, and sells at 4 annas to 8 annas a seer. This is pounded to powder, and then a piece of lac is heated and pressed into the powder, some of which adheres. The lac is heated again and takes up more powder, and so on till the whole has become a close compound of lac and *járan* powder. The mass so formed is pressed on the end of a piece of bamboo, and made roughly into a square column. This forms a very fine grained file for smoothing the surface of the gold.

The finished ornament usually shows narrow threads of gold arranged in fanciful patterns in the body of the enamel. These are formed of wire, and are laid on before the enamel. When the wires have all been put on, and the pattern which is to appear through the enamel formed upon the ornament in process of completion, some powdered enamel of the desired colour is mixed with water in a shell (*khámuk* স. মুক) and the coarse paste so formed applied by means of the *hola* to the spaces between the gold wires. These having been filled up, the ornament is fixed by a hole, purposely left in it, to the top of a nail, standing up out of a flat piece of iron (*hál páttá* হালপাট্টা), such as is used for binding boxes. The *ghor* is then placed in the *aphuri* (furnace) in a clear space which has been made for it in the charcoal, and the ornament carefully put inside. The whole is then covered up with red charcoal and the *bhāti* (bellows) applied. Very shortly the *ghor* and its contents are red hot, the enamel melts and forms a solid mass in the places it has just previously occupied in a state of paste. When cool, the ornament is boiled in a solution of lime-juice and water. It is then carefully examined to see if there are any spaces without enamel where enamel ought to be. If there are, more enamel is added, and the heating and boiling gone over again. The process of applying and melting the enamel is known as *bhārandia* (ভাবন্দিয়া). When it is finally perceived that no enamel is wanting, the workman takes up the *khan*, and files the ornament until the surface of the enamel corresponds exactly with the upper edge of the gold wires. The latter then look as if they had been inlaid. While being filed the article is kept wet. It is then boiled again in the solution mentioned above and, when cool, brushed with a small bundle of hog's bristles called *páchrangi* (পাচবঙ্গি) and filed again. This is repeated two or three times, until the object presents a perfectly smooth, albeit unpolished, surface. To put a polish on the enamel some care is needed. The ornament is put again under the *ghor* in the middle of the fire, and red charcoal piled up around. The

bhāti is not used, but a hand punkha or fan instead. When the article is red, and it is seen that the enamel is again in a state of fusion, the ornament is taken out of the fire, and cooled with the aid of a blow pipe (*nalichunga*). It is then boiled once more in the acid solution, and the enamel is found to be smooth and polished. The last process employed puts a reddish colour on the gold. Into a small earthenware vessel a little water is poured, and the sides of the vessel rubbed with sulphur. Next, small quantities of salt, sulphate of copper, and the leaves of a tree called *theke ra tenga* (*Ixora acuminata*, Roxb.), are put into water and the solution boiled. Then a string is tied to the now almost finished article, and it is dipped into the boiling liquid and kept there a minute or two. When taken out, the ornament is rubbed with a cloth, and the enamelling process is complete.

The following list comprises almost all the articles in which enamel forms the main decorative feature:—

- (1) *Gejerá* (গেজেরা).—This is a boat-shaped shell of gold, suspended from a necklace (*dhár* ধার) of coral and gold beads (coral=*royál*, পোয়াল; bead=*mani* মনি). One side only of the *gejerá* is enamelled, the back being engraved gold. The inside is filled with lac. The value varies with the size and the quantity of gold, the price being usually Rs. 80 to Rs. 100.
- (2) *Thuriá* (থুরিয়া).—These are a pair of ear ornaments for women, in the shape of small cylinders about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long. One extremity of each expands into a kind of flower, often ornamented with stones. The sides of the cylinder only are enamelled. The price runs up to Rs. 140.
- (3) *Keru* (কেৰু).—Very similar to the above, but smaller. Price about Rs. 40.
- (4) *Biri* (বিৰি).—A cask-shaped locket, attached usually to a necklace. Often a row of these forms a semi-circle. One side is enamelled, the other either plain or set with false rubies. They are worn both by men and women, those used by the former being much smaller than those seen with the latter. Those worn by men cost Rs. 15 or Rs. 20, those worn by women from Rs. 80 to Rs. 100.
- (5) *Dugdugi* (ডুগডুগি).—A heart-shaped pendant for a necklace, very graceful in form, and usually tastefully decorated with an elaborate gold wire pattern set in the enamel. One side only (that which rests on the bosom) is enamelled, the other being usually set with stones.

5. The above holds good to the present day, and a Jorhat goldsmith may be seen at any time using the processes described. The name of the plant used to make the bitter infusion was given to the writer as *thengasi tenga*. The jeweller also does not necessarily use wire to form the pattern, as a partition between the spaces to be filled with enamel can be made of fine strips of gold. The boiling in the bitter infusion puts a better colour on the gold and makes it appear of greater purity. The material used for enamelling is believed to be a preparation of silicates.

6. The Jorhat goldsmiths are commonly either Britial or Sonar by caste. It is curious that the brush used for polishing enamel is said to be of hog's bristles. They can draw out a fine wire of gold and also do filigree work, which is called "rewa." Gold wire is fined and drawn out by means of an iron plate perforated with holes of various degrees of fineness through which the wire is successively passed. The end of the wire is pointed with a hammer on the anvil till it will pass through the next finer hole for perhaps half an inch. This is sufficient to grip with the pincers, and the well-known ductility of the metal permits it to be dragged through and so fined and elongated. The wire work of Indian workmen is celebrated, indeed it has never been surpassed, but no particularly fine specimen of this kind of work is produced in Assam so far as is known. The industry in India generally is said to be dying out. Filigree work is usually done by successive welding of one minute globule of gold on to the preceding one. For this the blow pipe is used and a kind of joining material, which is an alloy of copper and gold called "páin." Borax (vernacular "sohága" derived from the "tincal" of commerce largely imported from Tibet) is applied to "flux" the gold and the two edges soon fuse and unite under the oxygen flame. Precious stones are not usually mounted in filigree work, but many ornaments consist of links and pendants of which some are filigree and others set stones. The stones are apparently rubies* (*dalima bakhar*) and emeralds (*pána*), but their quality is somewhat doubtful, nor are they well cut and finished. The result is an irregularity of appearance when several stones are set together to form (say) a pendant. The rubies are said to come from Burma. The Kayas sell them as they do gold, but an imitation stone is sold to poorer people. Coral also is frequently used, especially in the form of beads. The following is a description of some more Jorhat-made ornaments in addition to the enamel ones named by Mr. Darrah:—

- (1) *Earrings (Thuriá)*.—Sometimes enamelled (*vide* list of enamelled articles). The term earring is only appropriate so far that the ornament is worn in the ear. Actually it is not a ring but a short gold cylinder, diameter $\frac{1}{2}$ inch to $\frac{5}{8}$ inch, about 2 inches long, narrowed in the middle. It is not solid gold, the interior is filled with a composition of lac and sand. This is pushed through a hole in the lobe of the ear. At the end visible in front of the wearer is a rosette or star with 12 points large and small alternately, each set with a stone called by the Assamese *dalima*, or ruby.

* The author of the Census Report, Part I, page 165, paragraph 218, assumes that they are garnets. Mr. Darrah called them rubies. The Assamese dictionary, Hema Kusha, edited by Major Gurdon, translates *dalima* by ruby, so called from its resemblance to the seed of the pomegranate (*dalim*).

- (2) Necklace (*hár*) of many patterns. Each pattern has its own name more or less descriptive thus :
- (a) *Gaja mathi hár* or elephant pearl necklace. This is set on 6 gold wire cables (fine drawn wire). It has 3 pendants, each set with rubies and one central emerald. There is another pendant set with one emerald below. The gold clasps attaching the pendants to the cables are set with rubies. A little rosette at either end serves as a guard to keep the pendants in position.
- (b) Strings of small gold and coral (*poal*) beads—8 strings. For pendant there is a crescent-shaped ornament (*bána*) set with rubies, enamelled black between the stones with a fringe of small gold beads. The reverse of the pendant, enamelled in dark green, is really (to the European taste) more artistic than the other side, with its somewhat uneven stones.
- (c) Similar to the above, but with larger beads on silk thread. Also the coral beads are larger and there are more strings of small gold beads.
- (d) *Chipat mani*.—Bead necklet without pendant. Small gold beads alternating with a larger gold bead, and a button of gold set with rubies. Five such strings are joined to form the necklet.
- (e) *Mani* (a general term for beads—or a bead necklace). Four strings of beads which alternate at the back of the neck; 15 filigree beads alternating with solid beads; on each side of the neck several inches of fine gold beads. In front 20 solid beads, the centre one set with rubies strung on four threads of silk. The fine beads on separate strings.
- (f) *Kexá Bangali biri*.—The most artistic of the Jorhat trinkets,—a gold chain on which are slung 9 filigree caskets. The casket is drum-shaped. The term "biri" means firstly the pendant, then it comes to mean a string of biris or pendants forming a necklace. Work very handsome, unites with a simple hook and eye.
- (g) *Galpatá*.—So called because it lies flat on the neck—consists of 15 segments, each dovetails into the other, but not rigidly. Each segment in the form of a St. Andrew's cross—set with rubies on the face—and handsomely enamelled in green and blue on the back, another instance in which work which many would consider the more elegant is put on the side which is invisible when the necklace is worn. Two rows of small gold beads on each side.

(3) *Tiara*—*Sitipáli*—(*Siti*=the parting of the hair)—

This resembles the *galpatú* necklace (2 *g* above) with some additions. It has 29 segments, surmounted in the centre by an upright about $1\frac{1}{8}$ inch long. This upright is designed to lie in the parting of the hair (hence the name). Beneath is a crescent-shaped pendant about an inch wide. Each segment carries as a minor pendant two small rubies set in gold. Gold beads in a row on the upper and lower edge. The whole is kept in position by a string passing over the head, and fastening at the back.

(4) *Bracelets*.—

- (a) *Kháru*—*bakharani* (set with rubies). Made in two halves, uniting with two pins, one pin being the hinge, the other the fastening. Embossed gold with rows of rubies, vertical and horizontal. Upper and lower borders fluted. The inside smooth. The bracelet about 3 inches long.
- (b) *Báli*.—Heavy bangles—gold, set with uncut rubies.
- (c) *Gám kháru*.—Something similar to (b), but larger and worn by men.

7. A more detailed list of the Jorhat manufactures will be found in the Appendix. The same list also shows approximate prices charged for each ornament. The charges vary. It must be remembered that neither at Jorhat nor elsewhere in the province (except perhaps to a small extent in Sylhet) does the goldsmith ordinarily keep a stock of wares ready for sale. He only makes articles to order, and the customer usually supplies the materials required. The charge is then fixed at so much per tola of the weight of metal worked, varying according to the intricacy of the work. It is often said that the trade is declining; that fewer articles of jewellery are ordered nowadays. Various causes are assigned, but, whatever they are, it would be a great pity if these wares were no longer procurable.

8. Another place in Assam Proper, but further down the valley, Kamrup. having a great local reputation for its gold and silver work, is Barpeta in the district of Kamrup. Of the castes engaged the following account is given:—

“There were goldsmiths in the country in the old time, and their work was not fine. Raja Rudra Sing of Assam imported goldsmiths from Benares to teach Assamese how to manufacture better sorts of gold and silver ornaments. It appears the Raja selected certain Kalitas to learn and to do the work, hence Sonaris

formerly were Kalitas only. The business proving lucrative, and there being no check to any people taking to any trade or profession during the last days of the Ahom Rajas, people of other castes, such as Keots and Koches, learned the work and became Sonaris. The Haris (Brittial Banias) applied themselves earnestly to the trade, as, besides their original work of scavengers, they had no art or trade to fall back on for their maintenance. By this means some of them became so rich that they were made Hazarikas and Saikias (head of a "thousand" and a "hundred" respectively of their own community). We have, therefore, in the community Sonaris (goldsmiths) who are Kalitas, Keots, Koches, Domes, and Brittial Banias."

The above, as well as other useful information about Kamrup jewellery, has been supplied by Rai Madhav Chandra Bardalai, Bahadur. The Rai Bahadur's list of articles does not seem to include a filigree necklace offered for sale at Barpeta. An illustration of this handsome and apparently unique specimen of Barpeta work will be found amongst the plates appended (plate I, fig. 1). The price asked was Rs. 378, which, as it weighs 14 tolas, amounts to Rs. 27 per tola. It was probably made to order, as indeed are most of the articles of Barpeta work. The Barpeta jewellers do not enamel, and do not, as a rule, produce work in which stones are set. A few only of their ornaments have stones, as will be seen from the list appended. The finest of their work is filigree, which distinguishes the Barpeta wares, just as enamel and set stones mark the Jorhat productions.

Burma
Valley.

9. Sylhet has actually the largest number of persons engaged in or dependent on the manufacture of the precious metals of any district in the province, but, inasmuch as it contains far the largest population, the relative numbers are not great. Neither Sylhet nor Cachar is noted for its gold or silver ware: still, there is a considerable production. The goldsmiths of Sylhet are mostly Manipuris, some are upcountry men, a few are natives of the district, and others are from Dacca. The Dacca men are said to be far the most skilful. Besides articles of jewellery, they make vases, cups, and trays, and exhibit considerable skill in embossing and chasing gold and silver. Gold riband is sometimes plaited with ivory, making a pretty and artistic fan, which, if there were nothing else, would render noteworthy the work of Sylhet. In Sylhet, the Manipuri workmen are said to be the most popular, not only on account of the lowness of their charges but because of their superior honesty. With other Sonars, it is the usual thing for the customer to sit and watch while his ornament is being made. Even then (it is said) an expert Sonar can substitute portions of amalgam for the gold or

silver, and so abstract some gold while avoiding shortage of weight. A story is told of a Muhammadan goldsmith who went on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Previously to the pilgrimage, he charged 4 annas in the rupee for his work. After returning, he raised his charge to 8 annas. On being asked the reason of this increase, he replied that formerly he charged 4 annas and cheated to the extent of 4 annas more. Now, being a holy man and a Haji, he could no longer steal and had to raise his prices accordingly. In justice to the goldsmiths of Assam Proper, it must be said that no similar accusation of dishonesty has been brought against them. It has already been mentioned that the gold and silver of Assamese work has a high degree of purity, and a Jorhat necklace sent to be tested by a European jeweller proved to be about 20 carats of fineness.

10. In Sylhet, to some extent the goldsmiths—or at least the Dacca men—keep stocks of jewellery for sale. Special weights are used as follows:—

4 dhans = 1 rati (1 rati = $1\frac{1}{4}$ grains Troy).

8 ratis = 1 masha.

12 mashas = 1 tola (1 tola = 180 grains Troy).

5 tolas = 1 chatak.

In Karimganj (a subdivision of Sylhet) the workers are mostly Sonars by caste, but others are Sudras, Nama Sudras, Changs, etc. It is here that some of the Khasi jewellery is made. In Sunamganj the workmen are all foreigners. In Cachar also, foreigners work. Some are from the well-known Bikrampur in Dacca, a place which prides itself on the enterprise of its inhabitants. A Cachar jeweller may be seen using the blow-pipe with the flame of an oil lamp. In Jorhat the blow-pipe is (as a rule) used with a charcoal fire.

11. The Native State of Manipur produces certain gold and silver wares. The following note by a former Political Agent in Manipur gives a good general account of the trade there:—

The Sonari class in Manipur have four different castes. Their names are Kangbum, Taurangbum, Kaisam, and Konsum. They are not held in such high esteem as the caste from whom most of the sepoy are recruited, known generally as "Meithei" men. Some of the Sonaris have, however, risen to positions of great influence and power in the State, as, for instance, Tangal General, who is a Kangbum by caste. Enamelling is unknown. Almost all the jewellery in Manipur is made of gold. Silver is only used for *pán* boxes (কুপা বাগৌক), cups, and in ornamenting hookahs. Brass ornaments are common and cheap, and resemble the patterns used in gold work. Precious stones are not allowed to be set in gold necklaces, except for the ladies of the Maharaja's palace. I have seen some pretty necklaces set with small rubies and emeralds which belong to the Maharaja. Gold bracelets and necklaces are only worn on public festivals. Women are not allowed to wear them on ordinary occasions.

The usual design for a bracelet is the one known in Assam under the name of Madoolie, in shape like a small drum or cask (*sannubung*). On the front of the drum different designs of flowers and leaves in gold are attached by a hook, which is run into the drum.

The process of manufacture is as follows:—

The Sonari takes two or more pieces of gold, places them on a piece of charcoal with a little saltpetre (ৰূপাহিদাক *rupáhidák*), and with the tongs (কোৰিচেগপ *korichegap*) heaps charcoal all round the gold, fanning the fire with a hand fan (হুমাঈ *humái*), and afterwards increasing the heat by blowing through a blow tube. Bellows are not used. When the gold is fused, he places it on a round anvil, which is buried in the ground (থামজেমানবি *thámjete mámbi*) and hammers it out. After repeatedly firing and hammering the lump until it is reduced to gold leaf, he cuts some of the leaf into strips and runs them through a perforated iron plate with holes in it of different sizes (কোৰিচিংনবা *korichingnába*) in order to convert the gold leaf into rounded wire. He then places some of this wire on a flat piece of wood, and rolling it round and round with one hand he dents it with a blunt knife which he holds in the other hand, giving the wire a frosted appearance. He then twists the wire round an iron pin with a flattened end (য়েন্থাঙ *yentháng*) into a spiral shape not unlike the main spring of a watch. This forms the centre of the flower pattern which he intends to make. He cuts another piece of wire into small pieces, each of which he places in a perforated piece of charcoal and fuses in the fire. This process converts the pieces into small gold shot to be afterwards affixed to different parts of the flower pattern. He then takes a piece of the gold leaf, and twists the corners into shapes like a leaf, in the centre of which he places the spiral piece of wire mentioned above. Round this, he places four leaves, which he makes by twisting some gold wire into the required shape, and by placing in the centre gold shot, which is hammered flat until the hollows are filled up. The different pieces of the leaf and flower pattern are then fixed together by the help of saltpetre. The drum he makes out of gold leaf by constantly heating and hammering it on a long pointed anvil (য়োংকোই *yotkoi*). By rubbing charcoal on each piece of gold and then joining them he is able to hammer out four or five half drums at once. With a pincer he afterwards separates them again. After this he gives a finishing touch to each half of the drum and fills the interior with a tree gum (মেকুক *mekruk*). The two halves are joined, and the flower ornament is hooked inside the drum, and a catch is placed on the top, through which the string is passed which connects all the little drums together. There are generally 16 or more of these drums in a necklace. Gold beads are strung along between each catch.

The instruments used in the manufacture of gold ornaments are of the commonest and coarsest description. It is wonderful that with such clumsy tools the Manipuri Sonari is able to turn out such delicate gold work. A flat round anvil, 3 sizes of hammer, a pair of scissors more like shears, an iron pin, 2 long shaped anvils, pincers, perforated iron plate, and a file is a complete list of the instruments in use. Most of them except the file are made in Manipur. The general name for a necklace is *lik* and for a bracelet *khuyi*. There are special names for necklaces according

to their pattern. The full name of a necklace the manufacture of which I have just described is *sanabung ngangoi*. The other most popular patterns are *kyanglikphang*, long gold pendants attached to circular gold lockets; *maraisaba*, small pendants attached to little gold balls strung together; *haryaisaba*, round gold discs fastened to gold balls through which a string is run. The literal meaning of the name of this ornament is fruit-like, from the gold discs having a "fruit-like" appearance.

About 40 or 50 men are constantly employed either in making gold ornaments or the common brass necklaces and bracelets sold daily in the bazar. A number of men of the Sonar caste only cultivate or serve in the Maharaja's army. Each Sonari has to give 10 days in every 40 to the Maharaja without salary or reward. I am quite unable to give any estimate of the probable income earned by a first-rate Manipuri Sonari. I don't believe that any Sonari knows himself. Their profits must vary extremely, according to the general wealth of the people and their ability to pay a high price for the work done. To give the gold a brighter colour the Sonari in Manipur dips it into a solution of the *haibung* fruit, a sour fruit like the tamarind (২৫:৩৫). There is no attempt made to colour the gold. Charcoal is cheap, which is the only outlay necessary after the tools have been bought, so the actual cost of the production is not heavy. The gold is, as a rule, provided by the person who orders the ornament.

12. The Khasias produce certain articles of gold and silver of a pattern peculiar to themselves, and quite different from anything else in the province. The Siems (local chiefs) wear on State occasions gorgeous necklaces of large gold and coral beads; the women frequently wear these and other ornaments, and on the occasion of a festival, such as the annual Nongkrem dance, the performers wear elaborate silver coronets with a peak at the back and a tassel at the end of a long rope hanging behind (all of silver). There is also a special kind of silver belt. The best known and commonest of Khasi jewellery is the large bead and coral necklace already alluded to. The coral is imported from Calcutta. The gold bead is not solid, but a hollow sphere filled with lac. The jewellers are rarely or never Khasias, most of the gold and silver work being done by foreigners, some, for instance, at Karimganj in Sylhet. It is said that a trader will order a supply of articles and then hawk them through the hills. The price of gold here, as elsewhere, is from Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 per tola for leaf gold; Rs. 20 to Rs. 26 for bar gold. In plate II a number of Khasi ornaments are illustrated. As an exception to the rule that they are all made by foreigners, particular mention must be made of the gold ornaments numbered 28, 4, 10. This filigree work was done by a Khasia in Maokhar, named U Konjro. The work is delicate and intricate and shows considerable technical skill. Whether it can be called artistic is another question. It is perhaps a little too precise and formal, but it certainly proves that the Khasia has aptitude for learning a foreign

The Khasi
and Jaintia
Hills.

art. If one of them can acquire the jeweller's art to this extent, there is no limit to the progress they might make. Of the other ornaments shown, No. 14 is the coral and gold bead necklace already mentioned as a common feature. Nos. 2 and 3 are the crown and tassel worn at the Nongkrem dance. The Khasi patterns are, as will be seen, quite different from Bengali work. In the Appendix under "Karimganj" there will be found a list of ornaments made there for export to these hills.

13. Not much remains to be said of other districts in the province. For completeness' sake there has been added to this monograph a list, exhaustive as far as possible, of the gold and silver wares produced in each district. There is also given a list of instruments used, and certain particulars of prices and charges. To discuss all these wares in detail would be tedious and involve iteration. There is no very great diversity of design. The same design recurs again and again, a favourite one being the *sitipati* or *tiara*. This is found in almost all plains districts, including Jorhat. The wares of Jorhat, the Khasi Hills, and Manipur are much the most interesting, because they are distinctively national and possess special features not shared by Bengal and other Indian provinces. The Kamrup work must also be called truly Assamese, and it is artistic and refined. In Kamrup we approach nearer (geographically as well as figuratively) to Bengal. The wares of Goalpara and the Surma Valley districts which adjoin or lie close to the greater province have no style peculiarly their own, and the jewellers produce only such ornaments as may be found in any of the rural parts of Eastern Bengal. Rich people of Sylhet import ornaments from Dacca and Calcutta. Probably the same is the case with also the Goalpara district. There is said to be no gold and silver work in Darrang, Nowgong, the Naga Hills, and the Lushai Hills. Goldsmiths are of various castes, Haris, Bunias, etc., but, whatever their caste, they enjoy a low status in society generally.

14. The sources of supply of the precious metals are various. A European jeweller generally uses standard bar gold as imported by the banks, and the native jeweller also uses this sometimes. His supply often is drawn from old jewellery melted down and from China gold leaf. The latter is the finest gold procurable in commerce. It is not always obtainable. The Jorhat workmen use it, and it was obtainable (at a recent date) at a Kaiya's shop in that town. China gold leaf consists of very thin sheets 3 inches by 5 inches, sold in packets. A sheet is stamped as follows:—

MADE IN CHINA W. O. SHING

No. 1.

100 TOUCH GOLD LEAF.

Down the right-hand margin there are stamped Chinese characters in vertical column.

15. It would be difficult to adulterate this gold leaf, because it is so thin, and the least expert goldsmith has sufficient appliances for testing the quality of gold, so far as it is disclosed by the surface of the metal. For this, the native jeweller relies mainly on the touchstone, a close grained specially-prepared stone on which the gold to be tested is rubbed and the quality judged from the colour of the deposit: pure or nearly pure gold leaves a reddish deposit, the alloyed metal is white.

It is generally known that an English sovereign has a high standard of purity, it is in fact what jewellers call "22 carats fine," that is (about) 22 parts of gold and 2 parts copper. This must be understood subject to the qualification that absolutely pure gold (24) does not exist, the purest known being about 23.75.

The Assam jeweller rarely uses the English sovereign, because it is hardened by the alloy and not easy to work with the hammer. For silver work the rupee melted was formerly used, but nowadays it is getting generally known that a tola of silver is obtainable for about 12 annas.

16. It is difficult in a verbal description to do justice to those gold and silver ornaments with which the reader has no previous acquaintance. A catalogue from an English jeweller conveys information to the customer because he is already familiar with the standard types. It is comparatively easy to describe novelties which are only departures from the standard, and a jewellers' catalogue always contains illustrations, where needed, to supply information which the letter press fails to convey. Assam jewellery, or at least that of Assam Proper, is so different from anything else that it is difficult to obtain a good idea of it without either a picture or seeing the original. Some illustrations have been secured for Assam work and are appended hereto. In June 1904 there was held in Shillong a small exhibition, which included as one section specimens of all sorts of Assam gold and silver work. Some of the finest exhibits (on loan) came from the private stores of native gentlemen. The collection as a whole was extremely attractive, and many of the articles which were for sale found ready purchasers, thus showing that Assam work, when known, is capable of being appreciated. It is to be hoped that the description now given may serve to some extent to arouse in the reader a similar interest in the gold and silver wares of Assam.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

LIST OF GOLD AND SILVER WARES OF EACH DISTRICT OF THE PROVINCE.

SILCHAR (DISTRICT CACHAR).

(a) The following ornaments are made:—

FOR THE HEAD.

Sithi (সিথি)—A sort of tiara worn across the forehead with a branch over the centre of the head.

Jháptá (জাপটা)—A triangular ornament with tassels which hang over the forehead.

Chiruni (চিরুনি)—An ornamental comb fixed on the knot of hair at the back of the head.

Máthárpul (মথারপুল)—A model of a flower worn in the hair.

Kántá (কাঁটা)—Hair pins.

EAR ORNAMENTS.

Kán (কান)—An ornament of the shape of the ear which hangs from the hair and covers the ear.

Kánbálá (কানবালা)—Shaped like a bangle. Fixed in the hair over the ear.

Jhumká (জুমকা), Kánphul (কানফুল), Máchhi (মাছি), and Tem (টেম)—These are earrings and drops of different shapes.

Mákrí (মাকড়ী)—A large ring with an ornamental edge worn in the ear.

NECKLACES.

Kanthen (কণ্ঠি)—A string of barrel-shaped beads.

Sunápuki (সোনাপুকী)—A string of ornamental heart-shaped beads.

Dána (দানা)—A string of small beads. There are sometimes 3, 5, or 7 strings, each longer than the other, and then the necklace is called Tínlari, Pánchlari, and Sátilari, and so on.

Kesli (কেচলি)—A long chain made of very fine gold wire.

Darihár (দড়িহার)—A cable of gold wires.

Hásli (হাসলি)

Chick (চিক)

Dhukdhuki (ধুকধুকি)

} Various designs.

FOR THE NOSE.

Nákphul (নাকফুল)—A small flowery pattern drop, worn on the left side of the nose.

Nath (নথ)—This is a large gold ring ornamented in the middle and worn on the left side of the nose.

Bolák (বোলাক)—A circular pendant worn from the centre of the nose.

Nolak (নোলক)—A small pendant for the nose.

Báli (বালি)—A flat ring worn instead of Nolak.

BRACELETS AND RINGS.

Churi (চুড়ি)—Bracelets of various designs.

Bálá (বালী) or Kháru (খাড়ু)—Bangles of various designs.

Ángti (আংটি)—Rings of various designs.

Ananta (অনন্ত)—An ornamental bangle worn above the elbow.

Tár (তার)—A flat ornamental band for the arm.

Tábij (ভাবিজ), Báju (বাজু) or Hátpáttá (হাতপাট্টা),—are also ornaments for the arm.

FOR THE LEG.

Kháru (খাড়ু) or Mal (মল)—Anklet resembling a bangle.

Benki or Beki (বেঙ্কি বা বেকি)—A snake pattern anklet.

Chharrá (ছররা)—Ornamental wire anklets.

Ghunghur or Ghughur (গুঁঘুর বা ঘুঘুর)—A string of flat ornamental beads worn round the ankle. The beads are filled with small shot, and make a tinkling noise when walking.

Páopadma (পাপপদ্ম)—A lotus-shaped ornament worn over the instep.

FOR THE WAIST.

Got (গোট)—A chain for the waist.

Chandrahár (চন্দ্রহার)—A belt of five chains.

The above ornaments are made both of gold and silver, excepting those for the waist and leg. There is a prejudice among Hindus against wearing gold below the waist.

(b) The metal is procured from merchants at Silchar.

(c) The price of the metal varies in accordance with the market rate in Calcutta. The Kayas charge 8 annas to 12 annas in excess of the Calcutta rate per tola of gold and 2 to 3 annas per tola of silver.

(d) The price varies according to the workmanship and ornamentation required. For gold ornaments the charge is from Rs. 2 to Rs. 6 per tola, and for silver from 3 annas to 6 annas per tola.

(e) The vernacular names of the instruments used are :—Niái or Niháli (নিহাই বা নিহালি), Háturi (হাতুড়ি) of different sizes, Sáráís (সাড়ইস) of different sizes, Káith (কাইত) or Kátáli (কাতালা), Mus (মুস), Son (সোন), Hiair (হিয়াইর), Májni (মাজনী), Chimtá (চিমটা), Jhul (ঝুল), Játi (যাতি), Veshá (বেশা), Phuknal (ফুকনল), Tokná (টোকনা), Ákar (আকর), Kundá (কুন্দা), Dhalni (ঢালনি), Ret (রেৎ), Kuchi (কুচী), Páinjáti (পাইনযাতি), Dhuperkáth (ধুপের-কাঠ Kátá (কাটা), etc., etc.

(f) About 80 persons are employed in this work within the sadr subdivision. Of these, about 60 persons are of the Sudra caste (all foreigners), 15 are upcountry men and about 5 Manipuris.

(g) The ornaments are not offered for sale. They are made to order, the customer ordinarily supplying the gold or silver. But sometimes the workmen also supply the metal.

HAILAKANDI (DISTRICT CACHAR).

FOR MUSALMANS.

Hásli (হাসলি)—Solid silver necklace.

Kákan (কাকন)—Ornamented silver open-work bracelet.

Churi (চুড়ি)—Bangles.

Gunjibalu (গুঞ্জিবল)—A kind of silver ear-drop (used by both Hindus and Musalmans).

Tár (তার)—Silver armlet or bracelet.

Benki (বেংকি)—Silver open anklet.

FOR HINDUS.

Kalib (কলিব)—Necklace of ornamented gold beads.

Málá (মালা)—Necklace of plain gold beads.

Bolak (বালক) } —Different kinds of nose-rings (gold).
Nath (নথ) }

Jal Taranga Churi (জলতরঙ্গ চুড়ি)—Fluted bangles.

Chandrahár (চন্দ্রহার)—A chain worn round the waist.

Golmal (গোলমল)—Solid anklet.

Workmen procure metal from a Kaya in Hailakandi Bazar at Rs. 25 per tola of gold leaf No. 1, and Re. 0-12-3 per tola of pure silver (cháñdi).

The charge for workmanship is—For golden ornaments Rs. 3 per tola; and about 4 annas for silver.

The following are the instruments used in the trade :—Nihá (নিহা), Ákair (আকইর), Hátur (হাতুর), Meri (মেরি), Guti (গুটি), Merichimtá (মেরিচিম্‌টা), Lambáchimtá (লম্বা চিম্‌টা), Muráchimtá (মুড়া চিম্‌টা), Adhágari-chimtá (আধাগড়ি চিম্‌টা), Páinchimtá (পাইনচিম্‌টা), Káit (কাইত) or Gánj (গাঁজ), Jámburá (জাম্বুরা) or Siyair (সিওইর), Sárá (সারা), Kátáhaláni (কাটাহালানি), Játar (যাতর), Tesá (তেসা), Rek (রেক), Mus (মুস), Cheli Kátani (চেলিকাটনি), Tusanná (তুসনা), Nanna (ননা), Kundi (কুন্দি).

About 30 persons of Sudra class. They are not goldsmiths by caste.

KARIMGANJ SUBDIVISION (DISTRICT SYLHET).

In this subdivision about 200 people are employed in gold and silver work. About 100 are goldsmiths, Sonár by caste, and the rest are of the following castes: Sudras, including ordinary Sudras, blacksmiths and barbers; washermen, Namasudras (Changs), and Yugis (Náths). Usually only gold and silver jewellery are constructed by them. A very small number of them, some three or four, however, also make plates, jugs, etc., of silver and get 8 annas to Re. 1 as wages per tola.

The goldsmiths generally purchase gold and silver from Karimganj, Sylhet, Silchar, Dacca, and Calcutta. They also purchase old and broken ornaments of gold and silver from the residents of the locality.

For silver they pay at the rate of 4 to 12 annas per tola and for gold at the rate of Rs. 16 to Rs. 26 per tola.

They generally get 2 to 8 annas per tola for working in silver, and Rs. 2 to Rs. 6 per tola for gold.

The following are the instruments of the trade :—

Niyá or Nihá, Háhuri, Merhi or Meri, Gutimerhi, Barrachimtá, Murhá-chimtá, Láinchimtá, Dátor, Syair, Ghát, Hárhá or Sárá, Baishá, Nanná, Tukná, Kátná, Káit, Ákhai, Chungá, Mus, Ret, Bákchungi, Kundi, Kus, Brush, Muran, Shutá, Rek, Páinchipni, Kurum.

The following articles of gold and silver are made :—

GOLD ORNAMENTS.

- (1) Bálá—Bangles. Of various patterns.
- (2) Churi—Bracelet.
- (3) Ananta—A gold bangle worn on the arm above the elbow.
- (4) Báju—A kind of bracelet worn on the arm just above the elbow and below the Ananta.
- (5) Mohanmálá—A string of small oval-shaped gold beads.
- (6) Dáná—Same as above. Spherical beads.

- (7) Kanthi—A necklace of large oval-shaped hollow beads.
 (8) Gallárgutá—Same. Large spherical beads.
 (9) Darihár—A string of gold beads.
 (10) Chik
 (11) Shonámukhi } —Various designs.
 (12) Chain }
 (13) Kesli—A twisted wire necklace (gold).
 (14) Iúring—An earring.
 (15) Kánphul—A small flower-shaped ornament for the ear.
 (16) Jhumká—A pendant. Various patterns.
 (17) Kundal—A kind of pendant.
 (18) Nákpul—A very small flower-like ornament worn on the nose.
 (19) Báli—Nose ring.
 (20) Nolak }
 (21) Nath } —Nose ornaments.
 (22) Bolák }
 (23) Sithi—A tiara. T-shaped, one part encircling the forehead, the other part passes over the centre of the head. The whole is kept in place by strings.

SILVER WARES.

- (1) Mal—Anklets. Of various patterns.
 (2) Ghugur or Ghunghur—Ornaments worn on the ankles. Bells attached give a tinkling noise when the wearer walks.
 (3) Gujri—Ornaments worn on the ankles. In this case the ringing sound is produced by means of beads striking one against the other.
 (4) Beki or Benki—An anklet.
 (5) Churi—Bracelet.
 (6) Kabach—An amulet.
 (7) Háslí—A plain silver collar, crescent-shaped.
 (8) Túr—An ornament worn on the arm above the elbow. It is of plain design.
 (9) Báju—Same as number 4 (gold).
 (10) Shikal—Chain worn round the waist.
 (11) Chandrahár—A loose belt of chains worn round the waist and hanging down behind.
 (12) Ángti—Ring.

- (13) Chulerkát í—A hair-pin.
 (14) Khopárfhul—An ornamented silver flower attached to a hair-pin.
 (15) Chiruni—A comb.
 (16) Botám—Buttons.
 (17) Thál—A plate.
 (18) Bádi—A pot.
 (19) Jhári—A jug.
 (20) Pichkári—A syringe.
 (21) Átardán—A highly ornamented vase in which átar is kept and distributed.
 (22) Pándán—Silver pots in which pán and spices are kept and distributed.
 (23) Goláp pásh—A silver sprinkler. It is used only to sprinkle rose water.
 (24) Glass—Silver cup.

Besides all these articles of gold and silver, some of the goldsmiths of this subdivision construct the following ornaments of gold and silver for the Khasias, and sell them to those people :—

Usrong—Pendants of gold worn by Khasia men.

Lakartiang—Pendants of gold worn by women.

Lal Shuniad—A silver ornament of the shape of a cap worn on the head by Khasia women.

Shaishfar—A kind of earring of silver worn by Khasia women.

There are two or three Dacca goldsmiths, who can also construct gold and silver medals and silver caskets to order.

SUNAMGANJ (DISTRICT SYLHET).

GOLD.

1. Málá (মালী)—A string of beads forming a necklace,—the general term for necklace is (মালী) málá.
2. Chik (চিক)—Necklace of diamond-shaped segments hinged together.
3. Hár (হার)—Chain.
4. Bolák (বোলাক)—A nose ornament suspended by a ring. A thin round plate edged with diamond-shaped rays.
5. Báli (বালী) } Varieties of nose ornament.
6. Nolak (নোলক) }
7. Nákhul (নাকফুল)—A small gold flower worn in the nose.
8. Bájú (বাজু)—A bracelet formed of several diamond-shaped segments.
9. Churi (চুরি)—A wire bracelet of various designs.

10. Kabach (কবচ)—An amulet shaped like a tube about an inch in length, or a locket.
11. Ánguthi (আঙ্গুঠি)—A finger ring.
12. Jhamká (ঝমকা), or Jhumká (ঝুমকা)—Earring. Also called (কুণ্ডল) Kundal.

SILVER.

1. Hásli (হাসলি)—Solid necklace.
2. Báli (বালি)—Nose ring.
3. Gol kháru (গোলখাড়)—Anklet.
4. Beki kháru (বেকিখাড়)—Another form of anklet.
5. Mal (মল)—Anklet. A large form of churi (চুরি).
6. Páópátá (পাওপাতা) or Gujri (গুজরি)—An ornament worn on the foot worked in various designs. Held in place by strings.
7. Bála (বালী)—Bracelet.
8. Churi (চুরি)—Bracelet.
9. Kákan (কাকন)—Bracelet.
10. Ánguthi (আঙ্গুঠি)—Finger ring.
11. Kabach (কবচ)—Amulet.

Charges for work and materials.—Silver at 11 to 12 annas per tola. Gold at 23 to 25 rupees per tola. Silver work costs Re. 1, i.e., they charge wages at 4 to 5 annas per tola. Gold work costs 26 to 28 rupees, i.e., the rate of wages is Rs. 3 per tola.

INSTRUMENTS.

- Háturi (হাতুরি)—Hammer (iron).
- Nihái (নিহাই)—Anvil (iron).
- Gánj (গাজ)—Shears (iron).
- Chhipni (ছিপনি)—A perforated plate.
- Sárási (সাড়াসি)—Wrench (iron).
- Chimta (চিমটা)—Pincers (iron).
- Játi (জাতি)—Perforated plate for drawing wire.
- Mush (মশ)—Crucible made of iron or stone or earthenware.
- Rasun páthar (রাসুনপাথর)—Pumice-stone for polishing.
- Gául (গাঁউল)—An instrument for seizing and pulling the wire through the perforated plate.
- Thásá (ঠাসা)—A brass mould for making crystalline imitations of precious stones, e.g., diamonds.
- Ekai (একই)—A small anvil (iron).
- Chungá (চুণা)—Bamboo pipe.

Brush (ব্রশ)—Brush.

Sohágá (সোহাগা)—Borax.

Chulá (চুলা)—Furnace, etc.

At every establishment from two to four men are employed. They generally belong to the same caste of smiths, but on rare occasions to other castes who take to the trade as a means of their livelihood. In all about 250 people live on this profession in this subdivision.

SOUTH SYLHET.

The following articles of gold and silver are made in this subdivision with the instruments noted below :—

1. Málá—Made of gold or silver, worn round the neck.
2. Kabach—An amulet of gold or silver, worn on the arm.
3. Nákphul—Made of gold, worn on the nose.
4. Kankan or Kákan—A gold or silver bracelet.
5. Angti—Ring of gold or silver.
6. Báli—Nose ornament. Only in gold.
7. Háshli—Necklace of silver.
8. Chará—A silver belt.
9. Báju—Of gold or silver, worn on the arm.
10. Gol kháru—An anklet. Silver.
11. Beki kháru— Ditto.
12. Bolák—Gold nose ornament.
13. Kanthi—A gold necklace.
14. Kundal—Gold earrings.
15. Jhamká or Jhumká—Gold earrings with pendant.
16. Chick—A gold necklace.

(b) The workmen procure metal from the local bazar.

(c) They pay for gold Rs. 25 per tola and silver annas 12 per tola.

(d) The workmen get for gold work from Rs. 2-8 to Rs. 3 per tola and for silver work 2 to 5 annas per tola.

(e) Instruments—

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Nihái. | 10. Ret. |
| 2. Háturá. | 11. Compáss. |
| 3. Jámburá. | 12. Panel. |
| 4. Dálani. | 13. Nikti. |
| 5. Hátail. | 14. Mahiser Singer Dhálani. |
| 6. Tháshá. | 15. Shukarer romer kuch. |
| 7. Játal. | 16. Chungá. |
| 8. Dhálani. | 17. Chimtá. |
| 9. Ákai. | 18. Ghurán. |

(f) Only low castes engage in the craft.

HABIGANJ (DISTRICT SYLHET).

- (1) Kánbálá—An ear ornament set with precious stones. Gold. About 2 or 3 tolas gold is used to make Kanbálás.
 - (2) Jhumká A cluster of gold pendants interspersed with stones. It requires about 3 tolas of gold, besides stones.
 - (3) Tiká—A sort of tiara or coronet. It consists of several square gold plates, say 15 or 16, aggregating 7 or $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. From the middle of it there branches upwards a row of 7 square plates. The longer part encircles the brow, while the smaller passes over the head. The breadth of the plate is $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. It requires about 3 tolas of gold. Cf. the Sitipáti of Jorhat and elsewhere.
 - (4) Khupírphul—A gold or silver butterfly worn in the khupá or hair.
 - (5) Mákri—Gold earrings. In the middle of each is a star surrounded by smaller stars. It requires $1\frac{1}{2}$ tolas of gold.
 - (6) Bolák—A gold ornament hanging from the nose. It vibrates as the wearer walks. It requires about half a tola of gold.
 - (7) Nákhphul—Is a star set with small precious stones. Worn in the nose.
 - (8) Chik—A necklace of small gold square plates half an inch in breadth, strung together. It requires about 3 tolas.
 - (9) Pánch lahari—A necklace of 5 lahars. Each "*lahar*" consists of a string of gold beads. The lahars are of different lengths, so as to hang one below the other. It requires about 6 tolas of gold. Tin *lahar* or chúr *lahar* also are made.
 - (10) Chámpákali—Also a necklace. It is a chain of golden rosettes, resembling the buds of the champaka flower. It requires two tolas of gold.
 - (11) Dariá hár—A necklace. It requires 5 tolas of gold.
 - (12) Bálá
 - (13) Kúkan or Kankan
 - (14) Churi
- } Varieties of bracelet. These require 4, 10, and 5 tolas respectively.
- (15) Baju—Is worn on the right arm. It is of gold. A baju requires 4 tolas.
 - (16) Khalsi—A wristlet. It requires $2\frac{1}{2}$ tolas of gold.

- (17) Chandrahár—A belt. There are five chains or strings of beads. There are generally four bosses or circular plates like the buckle of a European belt. It requires 12 tolas. Chandrahár may be made of either gold or silver, usually of silver.
- (18) Surjahár—Is also worn round the waist. It is one broad chain of gold or silver. It requires 12 tolas.
- (19) Banka—Is a leg ornament of silver. It is worn by Hindu ladies only and it is $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches broad. It consists of silver plates, hooked or strung together. It requires 12 tolas of silver.
- (20) Gujri—Another leg ornament fringed with pendant beads, which jingle as the wearer moves. Made of silver.
- (21) Pájeb—Hindu ladies wear Pájeb of silver, whereas Muhammadan ladies of the highest class wear Pájeb of gold. It consists of a lotus-shaped plate, which lies on the instep. To it are attached strings of variegated beads. To the lotus are attached five rings which fit over the five toes, and so keep the ornament in place.

The workmen purchase their metal from local traders, who indent for it from Calcutta. One tola of gold is sold nowadays at Rs. 25, and of silver at annas 11 or 12.

The workmen get about Rs. 3 per tola for their work in articles of gold and annas 3 or so per tola in silver articles.

The following instruments are used in making the ornaments :—

- (1) Nihai, (2) Háthurá, (3) Gaj, (4) Shán, (5) Sáráis or Sárási, (6) Játí, (7) Tholá, etc.

About 500 persons are employed in making ornaments. They are of the class known as Svarna Baniks (gold merchants). Muhammadans do not work at this trade.

Rich Muhammadan ladies wear gold ornaments only, whereas middle class ladies wear gold and silver both. The poorer classes are generally satisfied with silver articles. Hindu ladies do not wear any article of gold below the waist.

Hookáh, pándán, átardán, and gulábpásh, cups, etc., are not made here. In days gone by, the local goldsmiths could make them. These are now brought from Dacca or Calcutta. Fashionable ladies get their ornaments ready made from those places, as the workmen there are more skilful and endowed with greater artistic tastes.

SYLHET SADR.

The gold and silver ornaments made by the Sonárs for the Hindus and Muhammadans of this district are as follows :—

A.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE WAIST.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Chhikal. | 2. Gut hár. |
| 3. Chandrahár. | |

B.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE NECK.

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Telari. | 10. Chaudáná. |
| 2. Sátilari. | 11. Surjyahár. |
| 3. Chik. | 12. Chhelari. |
| 4. Gallárgutá. | 13. Dulari. |
| 5. Sunápuki. | 14. Daráhár or Dariáhár. |
| 6. Chámpákali. | 15. Chain hár. |
| 7. Háshli. | 16. Dhuk dhuki. |
| 8. Mohan málá. | 17. Málá. |
| 9. Kanthi. | 18. Máduli. |

C.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE FOREHEAD.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Shitipáti. | 2. Shitihár. |
| 3. Tiká. | |

D.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE HAIR.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Shishphul. | 3. P nkátá. |
| 2. Chiruni. | 4. Bhramar. |
| 5. Sharpa. | |

E.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE EAR.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1. Khutíálá. | 8. Kánphul. |
| 2. Jhumká. | 9. Mách. |
| 3. Khilá. | 10. Pátbáli. |
| 4. Taksalai. | 11. Mákri. |
| 5. Pipalpáth. | 12. Phul jhumká. |
| 6. Kán. | 13. Jhár earring. |
| 7. Kánbálá. | 14. Half earring. |
| 15. Chaudáni. | |

F.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE NOSE.

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Nákhphul. | 4. Báli. |
| 2. Bolák. | 5. Nath. |
| 3. Nolak. | 6. Beshar. |

G.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE HAND.

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 1. Bálá. | 4. Háthpáttá. |
| 2. Churi. | 5. Bájuband. |
| 3. Jashang. | 6. Kankan. |
| 7. Kháru. | |

H.—ORNAMENT FOR THE WRIST.

1. Ratanchur.

I.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE ARMS.

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. Bájú. | 2. Tábij. |
| 3. Ananta. | |

J.—ORNAMENTS FOR THE FEET.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Gol kháru. | 6. Ghugur. |
| 2. Beki. | 7. Tural. |
| 3. Pájeb. | 8. Charan padma. |
| 4. Chharrá or mal. | 9. Banka. |
| 5. Gujri. | 10. Árbeki. |
| 11. Árkhemtá. | |

All the silver and gold used by the local Sonárs is imported from Calcutta. The gold imported is of three qualities, and is purchased at the following rate per tola :—

I. Chinápát, or leaf gold, Rs. 24-13-0 to Rs. 24-14-0.

II. Bar gold, Rs. 24-2-0 to Rs. 24-3-6.

III. Guinea gold, Rs. 23-2-0 to Rs. 23-3-0.

Silver is procured for Rs. 71 or Rs. 72 per 100 tolas.

Most of the Sylhet Sonárs employ three or four workmen, besides taking part in the work themselves. Some of these workmen receive as much as Rs. 25 as wages. But the average wage works out from Rs. 12 to Rs. 14.

In the Manipuri shops most of the workmen are relatives and part owners of the shop. They do not, as a rule, employ regular workmen, but they engage a few apprentices, to whom they teach the work and only give food in lieu of wages.

All the goldsmiths in their gold work use an alloy (púin) of copper and silver. In silver work the alloy used is a metal called dastá (zinc). What proportion of alloy is used is uncertain, the question depends more or less on the honesty of every individual Sonár.

The instruments employed in the trade are noted in the subjoined list :—

1. Háthurá or goldsmith's hammer used for beating the metal into a thin plate, leaf or foil.—These hammers are of various sizes. A small hammer used by Manipuri goldsmiths is called "Khulai machá."

2. Nihái, or anvil on which métal is beaten and shaped.—A Nihái usually has a steel face. The Manipuri name for this instrument is " Lungpal."
3. An Ekai, or small anvil.—Besides the Nihái and Ekai, the Manipuris have two or three other peculiar-shaped anvils, for which they have no separate names.
4. Kátani, or chisel, used for cutting or paring gold and silver, called by the Manipuris Káti.
5. Chimtá, or pincers.—The Manipuri name is " Chegap."
6. Kalam, or iron style or graver used for engraving designs on metals.—These styles or gravers are of various sizes, the Manipuris call this instrument a " Paija."
7. Sáráisi, or Sáráis, heavy pincers, used for gripping and drawing out the gold and silver wires that are passed through the Jantri, called by the Manipuris " Kari Chegap."
8. Jantri, an iron plate with three rows of holes, all of different sizes.
9. Kitkitá, a brass mould, called " Thásá " by the Manipuris.
10. Káshalla, a great brass mould made in the shape of a cube, the Manipuri name is Khalni.
11. Mahishersingh, or buffalo-horn.
12. Ret, a file or rasp used for smoothing and polishing metals.
13. Nikti, or scales, called by Manipuris " Khan."
14. Pliers, used for seizing and bending small things, called by the Manipuris " Apisa Chegap."
15. BáknaI, or blow-pipe, called by Manipuris " Thangmoi Kamnanaba."
16. Beki Sáráis, pincers with bent clips called by Manipuris " Akhoiba Chegap."
17. Dhálani, or mould made of brick.
18. Chhinni, or small punch for cutting gold and silver threads, called by Manipuris " Achoba paija."
19. Compass, or dividers.
20. Sun, or pincers of a small delicate shape, used for taking up small particles of metal, called by Manipuris " Tumseth."
21. Lastly, there are earthen melting pots, or crucibles.

The wares of Sonárs are purchased by all sections of the public. The very poor, who cannot afford to pay a Sonár, get their rude ornaments of silver fashioned by the blacksmiths. The prices obtained by Sonárs vary considerably, and it is impossible to strike any average. The charge for making ornaments depends entirely on the amount of labour to be expended and on the delicacy of the work. The Dacca men who keep jewellery for sale have their own fancy prices, just as European firms have.

Where the metal is supplied to the Sonárs for fashioning into ornaments, an arrangement is entered into beforehand after estimating the amount of labour and time that will have to be expended. The Sonárs of Sylhet have the usual goldsmiths weights, *vis.*,—

1 dhán	=	$\frac{1}{8}$ grain Troy.
4 dháns	=	1 rati ($1\frac{1}{8}$ grain Troy).
8 ratis	=	1 máshá (15 " ")
12 máshás	=	1 tola (180 " ")
5 tolas	=	1 chhatak.

Ordinarily, it is never necessary to go below the rati; the rati, or seed of the *Abrus precatorius*, varies slightly, but the average weight is about as given above.

DHUBRI (DISTRICT GOALPARA).

(a) The following ornaments are made :—

GOLD.

1. Nath—Worn in the nose as a pendant.
2. Nákhul—Worn in the nose.
3. Onti—Worn in the ear.
4. Ángut—Ring.
5. Máduli—Elliptical in shape, worn round the neck, also on the arm.
6. Báju—Bracelet.

SILVER.

1. Kháru—Bracelet.
2. Háshli, or Hásha.—Necklace.
3. Chandrahár—A loose belt.
4. Mohan málá—Necklace.
5. Kankan—Bracelet.
6. Muthi kháru or churi—An ornamental bangle.
7. Báju—Worn on the arms.
8. Páer kháru—Anklet. Resembles the Bengali mal.
9. Nath—Worn in the nose as a pendant.
10. Ángut—Rings.

(b) Gold and silver are generally purchased from Kaya dealers. Price Rs. 26 to Rs. 28 per tola of gold and silver at annas 12 per tola.

(c) The wages are Rs. 3 and Rs. 4 per tola for gold ornaments and annas 2 to annas 4 per tola for silver ornaments.

(d) Instruments of the trade are—

Hátur—Hammer.

Nei, Chowki, or Ekoi—Sort of anvil.



Fig 1.
BARPETA NECKLACE.

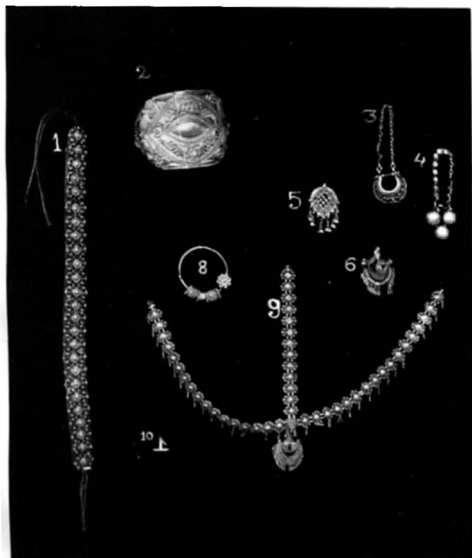


Fig. 2.
GOLD GOALPARA JEWELLERY.

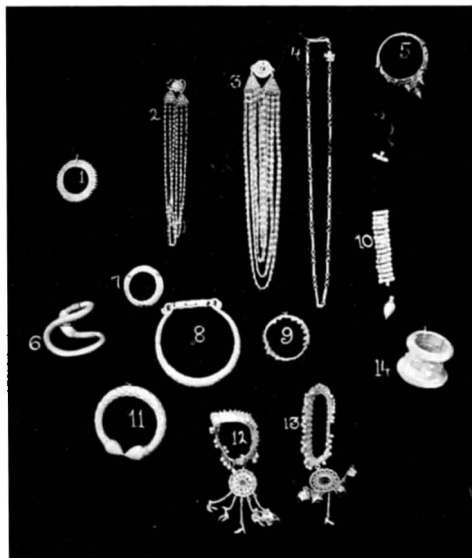


Fig 3.
SILVER GOALPARA JEWELLERY.

Kátani—Scissors for cutting silver and gold leaf.

Sharáshi—Tongs for seizing heated metals or for holding the crucible.

Kitkirá and Kashellá—Anvils of various shapes.

Játi—For drawing gold or silver wire.

Ukhá—File.

Mush—Crucible.

(e) The people who engage in the trade in Goalpara Sadr are generally of the Rájbansi, Madáshi, Baniá, or Kátani caste.

(f) The ornaments are purchased by Rájbansi, Madási, Joldhá, Kátani, Noluá, Badiar, Hári, Mech, Rábhá, and Musulmans alike.

EXPLANATION OF PHOTOS SHOWING GOLD AND SILVER WARE OF GOALPARA (PLATE I, FIGS. 2 AND 3).

GOLD.

- Fig. 1. Chik, or necklace.
 „ 2. Bájú, or bracelet.
 „ 3. Thek, or earring. The chain is worn round the ear.
 „ 4. Kadam, or earring.
 „ 5. Pát, worn on the upper part of the ear.
 „ 6. Bolák, worn in the nose.
 „ 8. Nath, or nose ring.
 „ 9. Shitipáti—tiara. The central chain is placed on the middle of the head; the lower chain is taken round the forehead, the ends resting on the ears.
 „ 10. Nákpul, worn on the nose.

SILVER.

- Fig. 1. Kankan—
 „ 7. Panchi—
 „ 14. Khuli, or bahu— } Various bracelets.
 „ 2. Chandrahár—Necklace.
 „ 3. Chandra hár—
 „ 4. Got— } Belt.
 „ 5. Tár—
 „ 10. Kátábaju— } Worn on the arm
 „ 8. Hásuli—Necklace.
 „ 6. Bák kháru—
 „ 11. Bharir kháru— } Anklet.
 „ 9. Arbeki kháru—
 „ 12. Páijáp—
 „ 13. Pátámal } Worn on the foot.

(b) The workmen procure their metal from the Kayas.

(c) The price of silver per tola is from 11 to 12 annas and of gold (China leaf No. 100) is Rs. 24-6 now. The price paid is according to the rates prevailing in the market.

(d) The wages obtained by the workmen are for silver from 1 to 6 annas per tola, according to the nature of the work, and for gold from 8 annas to Rs. 4 per tola.

(e) The following instruments are in use :—

Nihári, háturi, keichi, son, topua háturi, jamburá, jati sárás, kalam, afar, dháluá, shabal, ret, doba, pachir kalam, chari, sakua majua-sárás, kás-khalini, kitkiri, compass, and hatina.

(f) In Goalpara town there are 19 shops of local goldsmiths. About 40 people are employed; about 100 to 150 men are employed in the interior. There is no particular caste for the goldsmith's calling. Muhammadans, Kalitás, Nadiyáls, Rájbanis, Baniás carry on the profession.

(g) All classes of people purchase the wares, or more correctly speaking, order them to be made.

The gold and silver wares in this district are not of very superior workmanship, and do not call for any detailed notice.

BARPETA (DISTRICT KAMRUP).

GOLD.

1. Sitipáti—A sort of tiara (*cf.* similar article under Jorhat). Charge for workmanship Rs. 2-8 per tola.
2. Jankár Chakeli—Ornament for the ear, worn at the top of the ear. A pin with a rosette. The thin end is inserted in a hole in the ear. Takes 10 to 12 annas of gold. Wages Re. 1-4 per tola.
3. Hijeri or jijeri—Links used to unite parts. Takes 8 to 12 annas (*i.e.*, $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ tola). Wages Re. 1-4 per tola.
4. Kánor soná—An ear pendant. Takes $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 tolas. Wages Rs. 3 per tola.
5. Nákpul—A nose ornament. Takes 6 to 8 annas of gold. Wages Re. 1 per tola.
6. Galkanthi or Galpatá—A necklace of 9 to 11 stars, each about half an inch in diameter. Each star has two eyelets, by which it is strung. The stars are kept equi-distant by inserting a minor piece called puti (পুতি). Takes $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 tolas of gold. Wages Rs. 3 per tola.
7. Jon Mádli—A crescent-shaped pendant suspended from a necklace. Ornamental work on the face. The necklace itself consists of alternate gold beads and putis (পুতি). Takes 3 to 4 tolas of gold. Wages Re. 1-8 per tola.

8. Keselurá Hár.—A necklace of five chains $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 inch apart; about 22 inches long; united by five pieces of fine wire. Takes 6 to 10 tolas. Wages Rs. 3 per tola.
9. Cheek Hár—Known as the Barpeta necklace. Takes 5 to 10 tolas. Wages Rs. 4 per tola.
10. Báju—Worn on the arm. Takes $1\frac{1}{2}$ tolas of gold. Wages Rs. 2 per tola.
11. Muthi (see "silver Muthi")—Takes 12 to 16 tolas. Wages Rs. 2. per tola.

SILVER.

12. Muthi—Bracelet of hinged segments. Takes 16 to 20 tolas. Wages 4 annas per tola.
13. Bálá—Bracelet of hinged segments. Smaller than above. Takes 8 to 10 tolas.
14. Chandra Hár—A belt of small circular plates joined with rings. Takes 8 tolas. Wages 4 annas per tola.
15. Mal kháru—Thick circular kháru worn on the leg. Common all over Assam—3 inches in diameter. Takes 10 to 12 tolas. Wages 4 annas per tola.
16. Beki kháru.—Similar to Mal kháru.

INSTRUMENTS.

- Háturi (হাতুরি)—Hammer.
 Sárá chimta (সারা চিমটা)—Pincers.
 Gáj (গাজ)—Scissors.
 Bháti (ভাতি)—Bellows.
 Niyeri (নিয়েরী)—Anvil.
 Chhená (চেনা)—Chisel.

KAMRUP SADR.

(a) The following are ornaments made in this district :—

1. Keru, ear ornament—An ornament made of gold or amber. Shape cylindrical, thicker at the front end, and tapering slightly toward the other end. About an inch in length. The front end is set with rubies, diamonds, or other valuable stones. Worn in a hole in the lower lobe of the ear. Becoming obsolete with the respectable classes of the Assamese nowadays, although formerly worn by the rajás, nobles, and others.
2. Lokápara, ear pendant.—This ornament is made of gold and enamel and set with stones. Two pairs of miniature fan-tailed pigeons of gold make one earring; one pair is placed in front and the other pair

at the back. Rubies, emeralds, or diamonds are set in the pigeons. The whole earring is suspended by a hook to a piece of gold wire which passes through the lower lobe of the ear. It is worn only at weddings.

3. Unti—ear pendant—Made of gold. A piece of flattened gold, broad and curved into a crescent. The horns are pointed and drawn together till there is just sufficient space to admit the lower lobe of the ear. Held in place by a wire.
4. Dáná—Chains of gold of different designs.
5. Málá Mani—Sets of gold beads or gold and coral beads threaded together, with a central bead of rudrak (or elæcarpus ganitrus) set in gold.
6. Tarjani angathi—Gold ring set with valuable stones worn on the forefinger. Gold rings, plain or set with stones, are also worn by men on the third and little fingers.
7. Kati sutra—Belt made of silver of different designs. It may be one chain or a set of two or three chains.
8. Gám kháru—Wristlet. Made of gold or of silver. As the name implies, it is the wristlet worn by the Gams or head men of the hill people, such as Miris, Mishimis, Akas, Daflas, Nagas, etc. Gold Gám khárus as worn by the Assamese people on marriage days are set with stones, such as rubies, emeralds, and diamonds.

The above ornaments are worn by men only.

(b) The following articles of gold and silver are made in the district for women :—

1. Keru or Thuriá (ear ornaments)—A cylinder generally of gold about 1 to 1½ inches long by ½ to ¾ inch in diameter. A rosette about ¾ inch across set with rubies, and other valuable stones is attached to the lower end. Stones are set at the other end also. It is worn in the lobe of the ear.
2. Soná, earrings.—The soná is only made in gold. Worn by women in place of keru or thuriá. It is made of plain gold leaf, or of gold filigree work.
3. Galpatá, Necklace—Made either of gold or silver. This often consists of coins strung on two threads. Between the coins occur gold, silver, or coral beads. When made with plain gold or silver, the pieces, about ½ inch in length and breadth, are set with stones, such as rubies and emeralds.

4. *Thopá mani*—A pendant worn at the throat. A drum-shaped or crescent-shaped pendant $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length by $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in breadth, both plain or set with stones on the face. Flanked with beads of gold or coral.
 5. *Biri*, a pendant—A set of 15 or 16 drum-shaped filigree pendants strung on a thread passing through rings attached at the upper side in the middle. Interspersed with gold and coral beads.
 6. *Dugdugi*—A heart-shaped ornament of various sizes from 1 inch to 2 inches in length and 1 inch to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in width in the middle. It is made of gold and set with valuable stones mostly rubies and at the centre a diamond or emerald. At the upper end there is a ring attached to it, by means of which it is threaded together with gold or gold and coral beads to form a set. A minor pendant of gold or emerald or ruby is attached.
 7. *Angathi*—Rings.—It is the custom of well-to-do women to wear ten rings on every finger. They are made of different designs, some plain and some set with stones. Coins, whether old or new, both gold and silver, are freely used to make the face of the ring.
 8. *Chipátmani*.—A gold bead necklace. The beads are in the shape of the *Hilikhá* fruit threaded alternately with gold or coral beads. Two strings make a set.
 9. *Málá mani*—Another form of necklace made of gold beads and gold and coral beads of the size of large peas, threaded together with a gold-capped *rudrakh* or a large golden bead set with stones for the centre-piece.
 10. *Kháru*—Bracelet—Made of either gold or silver worn on the wrists. Gold ones are sometimes set with precious stones.
 11. *Balayás*—Bangles—Made of both gold and silver.
 12. *Báju*—Armlet—An oval-shaped gold ornament worn on the arms.
 13. *Kati sutra*—Waist chain made of silver, rarely of gold, similar to No. 7 in (a).
 14. *Bhari kháru*—Anklets of silver.
 15. *Ujati*—Rings worn on the toe made of silver, with ornamental facings.
 16. *Batá*—Raised plate of silver.
 17. *Báti*—Bowl made of silver.
 18. *Temá*—Silver box for betel-nut.
 19. *Temi*—Small silver boxes for lime taken with betel-nut.
- (c) The workmen procure their metals from the local shopkeepers (chiefly Marwaris), who import the same from Calcutta.

(d) The price of the metal varies. Gold averages Rs. 25 per tola and silver annas 12 per tola.

(e) The usual charge for making gold and silver ornaments is Rs. 2 per tola weight of gold and 2 to 4 annas per tola of silver, but when gold ornaments are set with valuable stones, the charge is made according to the size and number of the stones. For filigree the charge is generally double that of ordinary work.

(f) The following instruments are used by goldsmiths :—

1. Niyari (নিয়ারি)—Anvil.
2. Háturi (হাতুড়ী)—Hammer.
3. Máthani (মাথনি)—Small hammer, to polish articles of gold and silver.
4. Rekhani (রেখনি)—Tweezers for setting stones and fitting gold leaf round them.
5. Dheká (দেকা)—An anvil with a raised point at one side.
6. Kitkitá (কিকিটা)—Perforated iron plate for drawing wire.
7. Saráh (সরাহ)—Tongs.
8. Chorohá (চোরোহা)—Red mould.
9. Kúchi (কীচি)—Scissors.

GOLAGHAT (DISTRICT SIBSAGAR).

(a) The following articles of gold and silver are made in this subdivision :—

SILVER.

- Bálá (বালা)—A sort of bracelet.
 Churi (চুরি)— Ditto.
 Kháru (খাড়ু)— Ditto.
 Máni (মনি)—String of beads.
 Kánphul (কানফুল)—Flower to be worn in the ear.
 Nákful (নাকফুল)—Nose ornament worn on the side of the nose.
 Mákri (মাকড়ি)—Nose ornament worn on the top of the nose.
 Ángathi (আঙঠি)—Ring worn on the finger.
 Biri (বিরি)—A pendant or string of pendants forming a necklace.
 Kardhani (করধনি)—A sort of chain worn round the waist.

GOLD.

- Thuriá (থুরিয়া)—An ear ornament.
 Biri (বিরি)—A necklace of pendants.
 Mani (মনি)—String of beads.
 Gejerá (গেজেরা)—Necklace of large beads.
 Galpatá (গলপটা)—Necklace of flat segments.

- Dugđugi (दुग्दुग्नि)—A large elaborate necklace.
- Chipatmani (चिपातमनि)—Bead necklace, each bead shaped like the fruit of the hilikhá (*Terminalia citra*).
- Kháru (खाडु)—A sort of bracelet.
- Bálá (बाला)— Ditto.
- Churi (चुरि)— Ditto.
- Kánphul (कानफूल)—Flower worn on the ear.
- Nákhpul (नाकफूल)—Nose ornament worn in the side of the nose.
- Mákri (माकुरि)—Nose ornament worn in the dividing cartilage of the nose.
- Ángathi (आङ्गुठि)—Ring worn on the fingers.
- Kariá (करिया)—Earring.
- Gámkháru (गामखाडु)—A sort of bracelet worn by males.
- (b) The workmen of this subdivision generally purchase their metals from Kayas of Golaghat.
- (c) They pay Rs. 25-4 for a tola of gold, annas 12 or 14 for a tola of silver.
- (d) The workmen get the following prices for their work, *viz.*, 1 anna per tola of silver and Rs. 2 per tola of gold.
- (e) The following are the instruments used in the trade :—
- Niyári (निरारी)—Anvil.
- Háturi (हातुरी)—Hammer.
- Saráh (सैराह)—Tongs.
- Birimothá (बिबीमथा)—Mould for making beads.
- Fali (फली)—Perforated piece of iron by which wire is drawn.
- Káti (काटी)—Shears.
- Ghatani (घटनी)—An iron implement for stirring liquid metals.
- Dhálná (ढालना)—Crucible.
- Cháná (चाना)—Chisel for cutting metal.
- Kechi (केचि)—Scissors.
- Lep (लेप)—Pincers (of iron).
- Reti (रेति)—File.
- Peleich (पलेहैहै)—A sort of tongs.
- Compass (compass)—Divider.
- Máthani (माथनी)—Small hammer.
- Thihá (थिह)—Fine iron wire for stringing beads.
- Kasti (कास्ती)—Touchstone.
- Rahan (रहन)—Hone for polishing.
- Kuchi (कुची)—Brush of hog's bristles.
- Báharchunga (बाहबछुङ्गा)—Blow-pipe.
- Bháti (भाँटी)—Goatskin bellows.

(f) Eighty-four people are employed in making gold and silver articles in this subdivision. They are of different classes, *vis.*, Britiyál Kalitá, Koch, Keot, Chutiá, Ahom, and Dom.

JORHAT (DISTRICT SIBSAGAR).

(a) The statement appended hereto contains the names of articles of gold and silver wares with a brief description and the prices at which they generally sell.

Except those that are worn on the hands and waist, they are principally made of gold.

(b) The workmen procure their metal from the local Kayás, and they occasionally order it by post from Calcutta.

(c) The local price of silver is annas 12 to annas 13 per tola and the price of gold from Rs. 20 to 25.

(d) There are no hard-and-fast rules about the charges made by the workmen. It generally depends on the nicety of the work. For plain silver work the charge is annas 2 to annas 4 per tola, and it may go up to annas 10 per tola.

For gold work, the lowest rate is Rs. 2 per tola and the highest Rs. 10.

(e) The instruments they use are the following :—

1. Háturi (হাতুড়ী)—Hammer.
2. Niyári (নিয়াৰী)—Iron block or anvil.
3. Naranee (নৰনী)—A small sharp cutter.
4. Reti (ৰেটি)—Small file.
5. Lep (লেপ)—Tongs.
6. Máthuni (মাথুনি)—Fine hammers made of bell metal or brass.
7. Rekháni (ৰেখানী)—Tweezer.
8. Sách (সাঁচ)—Mould.
9. Mahi (মহি)—Earthen crucible.
10. Bháti (ভাটি)—Goatskin bellows.

(f) About 1 per cent. of the population are engaged in this business and any class of people may do it; but generally it is restricted to the Kalitás of Charigaon, Titabar and Tarájan, the Britiyáls and to a less extent the Chutiás.

(g) The following ornaments are made in Jorhat :—

1. Thuriá (থুৰীয়া).—Ear pieces $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter from $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches to 2 inches long. The largest are generally worn by Doms and people of low caste. Some are set with rubies. Price Rs. 80 to Rs. 120 the pair.

The following are varieties of Thuriá :

- (a) Kársipi Minákará (কার্সিপি মিনাকরা)—Embossed gold with blue, green or red and white enamel.
- (b) Minákara (মিনাকরা)—Enamelled gold. Price Rs. 70 to 90.
- (c) Nejpata (নেজপটা) { These are set with stones on the portion
behind the ear and sometimes at the back
- (d) Talpatá (তালপটা) { in which case they are called Talpatá. Price
Rs. 30 to Rs. 50.
- (e) Sách (সাঁচ)—These are plain Thuriás with stones only in the front. Price Rs. 15 to 25.
- (f) Jángphái (জাংফাই)—Amber mounted with gold. Prices range from Rs. 24 to Rs. 120.
- (g) Lángkeru (লংকরু)—These are small Thuriá-shaped ornaments, with only five stones in the front, worn by males occasionally or by children. Price Rs. 5 to Rs. 12.
2. Mani—or necklace—
- (a) Kotmani (কটমনি)—This has a biri (a drum-shaped hollow gold pendant about 2 to 3 inches long, the middle portion being an inch in diameter) suspended to a string of 12 corals interspersed with 4 gold beads and a cluster of small glass beads of different colours. Price Rs. 25 to Rs. 70.
- (b) Báná (বানা)—Almost the same as the above, with the difference that instead of a biri, a crescent-shaped gold ornament is suspended to the string, with corals, etc. The crescent-shaped thing has small gold pendants at the lower edge. The ends of the crescent are often shaped like the mouth of an alligator (hangar) and the crescent is always set with stones. Price Rs. 80 to Rs. 150.
- (c) Gejerá (গেজেরা)—Same as a báná, but the crescent in the former is flat, and in this case it is hollow like a pod and filled with lac; both may or may not be enamelled. Price Rs. 80 to Rs. 150.
- (d) Dharia biri (ধারিয়া বیری)—Strings of biris, from 9 to 11, each biri is 1 to 1½ inches long and decorated with stones on the front and enamel at the back. Price Rs. 40 to Rs. 500.
- (e) Olomá (ওলোমা)—These are strings of small coral and gold beads alternately generally in three strings. Price Rs. 20 to Rs. 40.
- (f) Lep biri (লেপ বیری)—Strings of biris generally from 9 to 13 in number and flat at the back. Price Rs. 500 to Rs. 600.
- (g) Cháki or Galpatá (চার্কি অথবা গলপটা)—They are square or oblong segments of gold set with stones strung together, so as to lie flat on the neck. Price Rs. 50 to Rs. 150.

3. Worn on the forehead—

Kapáli (कपालि) —Similar to but smaller than the “Chúki,” but having a crescent-shaped pendant in the middle and a flat projecting limb attached in the middle in such a way that when worn it lies on the parting of the hair. Price Rs. 100 to Rs. 150.

4. Worn on the hand—

- (a) Kháru or bracelets (खरु) —Of solid gold or silver inlaid with gold, in which case they are called Son Khatoá Kháru. When made of gold, they are sometimes set with stones at the edges ; often enamelled in blue ; length 2 to 2½ inches. They are in two pieces and hinged. Price, silver Rs. 20 to Rs. 40, including Son Khatoá, and gold Rs. 250 to Rs. 1,000.
- (b) Patiá kháru (पटिआखरु) —The same as the above in one piece quite plain. Price, silver Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 and gold Rs. 200 to Rs. 300.
- (c) Bálá (बाला) —Only worn by females except on the occasion of a marriage, when the bridegroom wears them. Simple in make. Price, silver Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 and gold Rs. 150 to Rs. 300.
- (d) Bájú (बाजू) —Segments strung or hinged together. Each segment set with stones and enamelled ; worn on the arm. Sometimes the segments are made in the shape of a rose leaf. Price Rs. 20 to Rs. 50.

5. Rings—

- (a) Chamchow (चमचु) —Like a signet ring. In place of a seal, a rosette set with rubies. Price Rs. 20 to Rs. 40.
- (b) Sen (सेन) —A bird set with stones. Price Rs. 20 to Rs. 30.
- (c) Pohári (पोहारी) —A square piece of gold set with stones generally worn by Doms. Price Rs. 10 to Rs. 25.
- (d) Tarjani (तरजनि) —A rosette with stones. Price Rs. 10 to Rs. 25.
- (e) Tarjani (तरजनि) —A small ring only for men set with stones. Price Rs. 10 to Rs. 15.
- (f) Páni Paruá (पानि पारुआ) —Same as the above, but the portion set with stones is rounded and not pointed as in the other two. Price Rs. 10 to Rs. 15.

6. Worn round the waist—

- (a) Kardhani (कर्धनि) —Generally made of silver and rarely of gold. Six parallel chains. Price, silver Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 and gold Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000.
- (b) Chandrahár (चन्द्रहार) —Fine gold or silver wire plaited. Price, silver Rs. 10 and gold Rs. 50 to Rs. 100.

7. Miscellaneous (for men only)—

Lokápára (লোকপাৰা)—Pigeon earrings; four pigeons, two on each ear in the form of a pendant set with stones; worn by a bridegroom in the ear. Price Rs. 80 to Rs. 150.

Makar Kundal (মকৰ কুণ্ডল)—Same as above, with alligators instead of pigeons. Price Rs. 100 to Rs. 200.

LAKHIMPUR DISTRICT.

There are no indigenous Assamese of Dibrugarh carrying on the profession of a gold or silversmith. There are about 20 Jorhat men who have settled in the town of Dibrugarh and its suburbs, and make gold and silver ornaments for the Assamese. A few upcountry Sonaris, of Muzzafferpur, Arrah, and Chapra, 100 or thereabouts in number residing in tea gardens, railway stations, outlying stations, and Dibrugarh town make only silver ornaments for the coolies employed in tea gardens and other concerns. The greater number of these Sonaris are found in Dumduma Bazar, where there are 30 or 35 of them. In other stations not more than three or four reside in one place. Also about 10 Nepalese, who have settled themselves in villages here, occasionally do gold and silver work and make ornaments for coolies, their principal occupation being cultivation.

The following is a list of gold and silver ornaments—

I. ORNAMENTS FOR THE HEAD.

Kapáli (কাপালি)—This ornament is in the form of an inverted "T." Square plates of gold, the face set with stones round a large centre stone. 16 to 20 such segments are strung together on two fine threads. In the centre another row of 8 to 10 similar plates is attached, representing the perpendicular leg of the letter "T." The horizontal row crosses the forehead. The perpendicular passes over the head and keeps the whole in place. The charge for such an ornament is Rs. 200. (Elsewhere called a "Sitipáti," see under other districts *passim*).

Phul (ফুল)—A butterfly of silver or gold. Price, silver Rs. 3 and gold Rs. 30.

2. EAR ORNAMENTS.

Thuriá (থুরিয়া)—For a description of the Thuria see under Jorhat and in paragraph 6 of the monograph. The charge at Dibrugarh for a pair of Thuriás is Rs. 100 to Rs. 120.

Lokápára (লোকপাৰা)—Described under Jorhat. Price at Dibrugarh Rs. 80 to Rs. 100. See also Kamrup sadr.

3. ORNAMENTS FOR THE NOSE.

Nákphul (নাকফুল)—Nose ring. Value Rs. 3.

4. ORNAMENTS FOR THE NECK.

Cháki (চাকি)—Value Rs. 60 to Rs. 80.

Galpatá (গলপতা)—Golden coins of the Assam Rajas strung together in the form of a necklace. Value Rs. 50 to Rs. 60.

Phutimani (ফুতিমানি)—A necklace of golden and coral beads strung together with a biri (বিরি) or hanging locket studded with stones. Value Rs. 50 to Rs. 60.

Gezerá (গেজরা)—A necklace of gold and coral beads and having a hanging crescent-shaped locket studded with stones on the front but either plain or enamelled on the back. Value Rs. 120.

Dhariábiri (ধরিয়াবিরি)—This is a set of amulets or pendants made of gold, either plain or studded with stones, strung together with coral beads interspersed. It forms a necklace. Value Rs. 150 to Rs. 200, according to size of the amulets.

Dugdugi (দুগুগী)—A necklace. Gold plates as in the Kapáli, each set with rubies, strung on five parallel delicate gold chains. Fastened with a buckle and a screw. A locket or pendant in the middle. A very handsome ornament, costing as much as Rs. 500.

5. ORNAMENTS FOR THE HANDS.

Muthi kháru (মুঠিখারু)—This is like the Bengal choori, but much heavier. Studded with stones. Value Rs. 400 to Rs. 500.

Bálá (বালা)—Gauntlet. Value Rs. 200 to Rs. 300.

Ángathi (আঙাঠি)—Rings with or without stones. Value Rs. 20 to Rs. 30.

6. ORNAMENTS FOR THE WAIST.

Kardhani (কর্দহানী)—This is made of five or six chains of delicate silver threads interwoven. Value Rs. 10 to Rs. 15.

(b) The workmen buy their metal at the Kaya's shop at Dibrugarh.

(c) Gold per tola Rs. 24 to Rs. 25, and silver annas 12 to annas 14, according to the fall or rise in the price.

(d) Wages of the workmen—Gold per tola if of plain work Re. 1-8 to Rs. 3, gold per tola when stones are added Rs. 10 to Rs. 15. Silver per tola annas 4 to annas 8.

(e) Names of the instruments used are given below :—

Niyári (নিয়াঁরী)—Anvil.

Háturi (হাতুরী)—Hammer.

- Saráh (সরাহ)—Forceps.
 Chiári (চিয়ারী)—Pincers.
 Káti (কাটি)—Scissors.
 Fali (ফালি)—A perforated iron plate for drawing wire.
 Akowá (আকোয়া)—
 Gatamahá Goá Akowá (গতামহল গোয়া আকোয়া)—
 Mahá Goá Akowá (মহল গোয়া আকোয়া)—
 Káti Akowá (কাটি আকোয়া)—
 Birimaká Akowá (বিবি মাকা আকোয়া)—
- } Moulds of various sorts.
- Dháka (ধাকা)—
 Feti chátuli (ফেতি চাতুলি)—
 Ákuri (আকুরি)—
 Gotáli mariyá (গোতালি মরিয়্য)—
- } Variouly-shaped blocks on which the ornament is hammered.
- Kákon (কাকোন)—Small forceps.
 Narani (নারনি)—
 Darjakará Narani (দরজা করা নারনি)—
 Máná Narani (মানা নারনি)—
 Resani (রসনি)—
- } Pliers or tweezers used in fixing stones.
- Gunadhará resani (গুণাধরা রেসনি)—
 Dumur resani (দুমুর রেসনি)—
 Fulkatá resani (ফুলকতা রেসনি)—
 Aghaiyá resani (অঘৈয়া রেসনি)—
 Tinsukiá resani (তিনিচুকিয়া রেসনি)—
 Básani resani (বাসনি রেসনি)—
 Upaná resani (উপনা রেসনি)—
- } Chisels used in engraving.
- Bar máthani (বড় মাঠনি)—
 Saru mathani (সক মাঠনি)—
 Majaliyá mathani (মজালিয়া মাঠনি)—
 Charah (চরাই)—
- } Hammers, big or small.
- Mani sajúkholani (মনি সজুকোলনি)—A piece of buffalo horn with holes for moulding beads in gold.
 Ghuti (ঘুটি)—Instrument used for boring beads.
 Kit kitiá (কিটুকিটিয়া)—A perforated plate for drawing wire.
 Marapá (মরাপা)—A polisher.
 Salpatá (সালপতা)—Enamelling.
 Sán (সান)—The same as marapá, but it is somewhat smaller.
 Minákarághar (মিনাকরাঘর)—See paragraph 4 of monograph.

Besides the above, which are pure Assamese work, Nepalis and Sonaris make a number of wares of foreign design. They need not here be described, as they are nearly identical with articles described in the Bengali districts of the province.

MANIPUR (NATIVE STATE).

ARTICLES MADE OF GOLD.

NECKLACE.

1. Kiyang likphang.
2. Likphang tairen mapansaba.
3. Sanapung ngangoi.
4. Sanapung haiyai thangbi.
5. Sanarik pumdarik.
6. Khang sarik.
7. Marei.
8. Bokul parengsabi.
9. Liksoi chengumthinbi.
10. Sanarik heikru sabi.

BRACELETS.

1. Sana khuji mayek.
2. Fora saba mayek.
3. Samjok ngumba mayek.
4. Sen saba mayek.
5. Lairen tangkhai mayek.
6. Rahu saba mayek.

RINGS.

1. Khudop parei.
2. Khudop mamai thambal saba.
3. Khudop uttari saba.

OTHER ARTICLES OF GOLD.

1. Khongji ananba—
 2. Khongji marei saba—
 3. Khongji tin saba—
- } Anklets.
4. Kwagok khunu saba—Pán case.
 5. Kaosel—Spittoon.
 6. Khudeisel—Towel rack.
 7. Kwagok leichil saba—Pán case.
 8. Kwagok rahu saba—Pán case.
 9. Chaithasel—Jug.

10. Khujai—Lota.
11. Pukham—Tháli or dish.
12. Tengot—Cup.
13. Thambal saba hidakfu—Hookah.
14. Poompha saba hidakfu—Hookah.
15. Lolei saba hidakfu—Hookah.
16. Gokhur saba hidakfu—Earring.
17. Chomai—Head ornament for women.
18. Sana nayil—Earring.
19. Kumdar nayil—Earring.
20. Sana chingchup—Pipe for smoking.

ARTICLES MADE OF SILVER.

1. Khang sarik.—(Necklace).
2. Khongji ananba—
3. Khongji marei saba—
4. Khongji tin saba—
5. Khuji mayek—
6. Khuji fora saba mayek—
7. Khuji samjok ngamba mayek —
8. Khuji sensaba mayek—
9. Khuji lairen tangkhai—
10. Kwagok khunu saba—Pán case.
11. Kaosel—Spittoon.
12. Khudeisel—Towel stand.
13. Kwogok leichil saba—Pán case.
14. Chaithasel—Big cup used when bathing.
15. Khujai—Lota.
- * 16. Pukham—Tháli or plate.
17. Tengot—Cup.
18. Hidakfoo thambal saba—Hookah.
19. Pumpha—Hookah.
20. Chomai—Earring.
21. Chinchup—Hookah pipe.

LIST OF INSTRUMENTS.

1. Khutlai mathak makha	...	...	...	2
2. Thamjet malba	...	...	...	1
3. Cheidem khutlai	...	...	...	3
4. Yotkoi pung laknaba	...	...	...	2

* Nos. 11-21 used by Royal family and high officials of the State.

5. Kori chegap	...	...	...	...	1
6. Senadang pung laknaba	...	...	...	...	2
7. Kati	...	...	...	...	3
8. Yotpi luthumba	...	...	...	...	1
9. Yotpi thambalsaba	...	...	...	...	3
10. Yotkoi kangsaba	...	...	...	...	1
11. Yotkoi hangkut hantha	...	...	...	...	1
12. Jayantri chegap nganuchin saba	...	...	...	...	2
13. Yotkol lutumba	...	...	...	...	1
14. Yotkol thamjet saba	...	...	...	...	1
15. Yotkoi khadang saba	...	...	...	...	1
16. Yotkoi thangong saba	...	...	...	...	1
17. Liklak larei temnaba	...	...	...	...	1
18. Senadam lutumba chai tengot hutnaba	...	...	...	...	1
19. Senadam khong sangba lutumba	...	...	...	...	1

KHASI AND JAINTIA HILLS DISTRICT.

The following gold and silver ornaments are common in these hills. The number opposite each denotes its number in the illustration (plate II):—

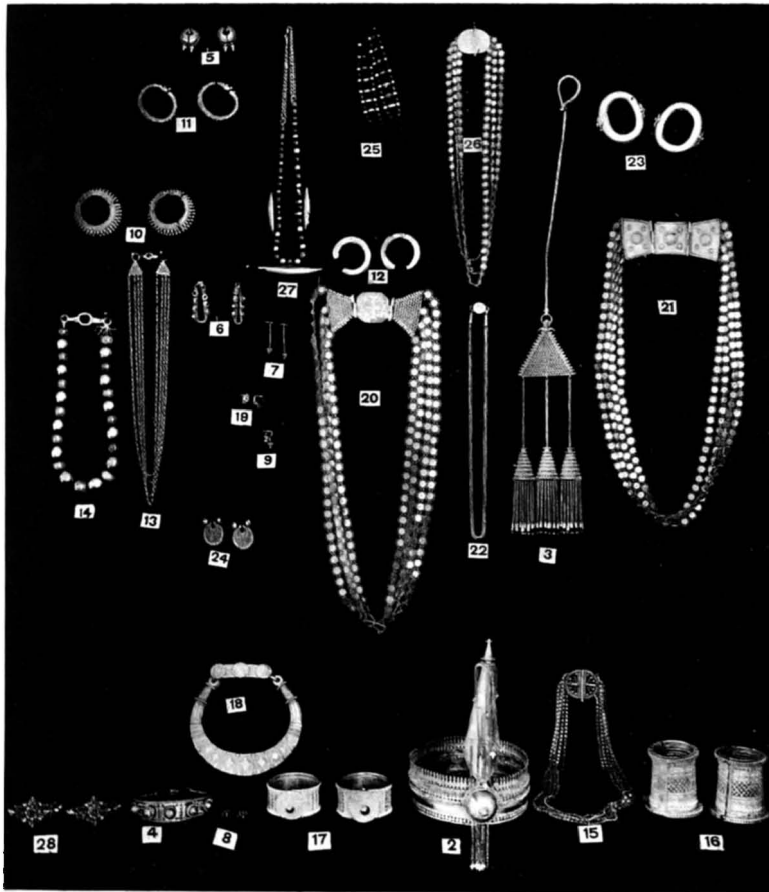
GOLD.

- U Kunopad ksiar (4).—A necklace of solid gold.
 U Mynjli (27).—A necklace of gold beads and corals. Three crescents in place of three of the beads.
 U Kynjri ksiar (13).—A gold chain worn round the neck.
 U Paila suhpieng ksiar (14).—A string of gold beads.
 U Shan-ryndang (25).— Ditto.
 Ki 'Siar Niangbyrnai (5).—Ear pendants (a pair).
 Ki Kynjri Wahdong ksiar (6).—Ear ornaments (a pair).
 Ki Lyngkyrneng ksiar (7).— Ditto.
 Ki Khaila ksiar (8).—Earrings (a pair).
 Ki Shohshkor ksiar (9).— Ditto.
 Ki 'Siar Shrong (24).—Ear pendants (a pair). Worn by men only.
 Syngkha Shreng-Sohphan ksiar (10).—A bracelet
 Khadu ksiar (11).— Ditto.
 Syngkha ksiar (28).— Ditto.
 Sahti ksiar (9).—A ring.

SILVER.

- U Kynjri rupa (15).—A silver necklace of four or more strings.
 U Kynjri Lyngk iap (26).— Ditto ditto.
 U Rupa-tylli (18).—A silver collar.

KHASI JEWELLERY.



ing instruments are used in the trade :—

anvil—U ryniang.

round and pointed anvils of various shapes—Reng.

several sizes—Tyrnem.

wire gauges—Phar.

called Knap and wire cutters called Kaid.

stone moulds called Ka Ther.

all crucibles called “ Mapthap-kpieng.”

punches for engraving or ornamenting jewellery called
“liar.”

If there are about 40 to 50 working jewellers. They are
simple name U Bania.

The purchasers of the wares are Khasias, Syntengs, Bhois, and
and before, jewellers do not stock their manufactures, but
rely on the services of traders, who supply the material.

“Nar” is Khasi for iron, but all the punches are made of brass.

U Kynjri-tabah (20).—Silver chains worn across the shoulders by men.

M Kynjri Syngkai (21).—Silver waistbelt for men.

U Kynjri Saipan (22).— Ditto.

Ka Pansngiat (1)→ } A crown (sometimes made of gold). No. 2
U 'Tiew-lasubon (2)→ } is the peak. As the crown is worn, the peak
is at the back.

U 'Sai Khyllong. (3).—A head ornament.

Ka khady rupa (12).—Bracelet of solid silver (sometimes made of gold). In Synteng.
1. Horu myn-
jli.
2. Muin.
3. Mon mala.
4. K h a n g -
dang.

Ka Mahu (16).—Bracelet worn just below the elbow (sometimes made of gold).

Ka Tad (17).—Bracelet worn on the arm (sometimes made of gold).

Ka Khadu Khir (23).—Bracelet worn by men only.

Gold and coral bead necklaces are also manufactured. The gold is generally fashioned into plain round balls, or an elongated tube, slightly oval, a coral bead being placed between each gold ball or tube. The balls are hollow, but filled with lac. These necklaces are called Kpieng ksiar, they usually consist of 13 to 14 balls, and vary in price from Rs. 60 to Rs. 120.

Silver necklaces, called Kpieng rupa, are usually made of round octangular silver beads, or tubes with a little ornamentation interspersed with coral or glass beads. These vary in price from Rs. 15 to Rs. 40.

Both the gold and silver necklaces fasten with an ornamented oval-shape clasp, otherwise a plain hook. This ornament is much like the English brooch, having in the centre a piece of cornelian, in some half of the wing of the Indian beetle called *Catoxdutha gigantea* (green with yellow spots). This ornament runs from Rs. 20 to Rs. 30.

Rings, called Sah-kti—The most common form in which these are made, is a hoop formed of three gold wires called by English jewellers "gold twist keepers." Some are set with common moss-agate or cornelian stone. Plain gold rings are now manufactured to order on occasion of marriages among the Christian community. Gold rings range in price from Rs. 15 to Rs. 30.

Silver rings, usually made quite plain, varying in price from 4 annas to 8 annas.

Silver chains, plain pattern, used by women, called Kynjri rupa, range in price from Rs. 30 to Rs. 50, and silver chains, called Kynjri tympong, worn by males round their loins, are usually manufactured for Rs. 8 to Rs. 10, and chains attached to chimati lime box from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10.

The jewellery manufactured of gold is obtained in square shape solid bars called "Ksiar tylli" and leaf gold called "Ksiar sla." Ordinary jewellery is made out of the bar gold, but for articles made to order, leaf gold is preferred and used. Jewellers do not make up and keep in store articles for sale. The usual custom is for traders to order so many sets of various articles, supply the jeweller with the metal, and on completion of the order to take them away for sale throughout the hills. The gold is purchased from various traders in Shillong and Calcutta. Silver jewellery is generally manufactured out of coins melted down.

The price of the metal all depends on the class of work ordered. For making rings, the charge is from 8 annas to Rs. 2. Plain wire gold earrings Re. 1 a pair. Ornamented earrings Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 a pair. The price of bar gold runs from Rs. 20 to Rs. 26 a tola, leaf gold, Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 a tola.

JOWAI (KHASI AND JAINTIA HILLS DISTRICT).

The following is a list of gold and silver ornaments commonly worn :—
Earrings (gold=sah-shkor) of 4 kinds, *vis.*—

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Karlla laharuim— | } These are worn by adult women. |
| 2. Karlla jongpynar— | |
| 3. Sah-shkor— | } These are worn by girls. |
| 4. Sah-shkor lakadom— | |

They are of different patterns made up according to the quality of the gold. Pure gold Rs. 26 a tola down to Rs. 20.

A gold earring or pin called Longkyrneng is just a long pin with ornate top, value ranging between Rs. 15 to Rs. 30. Manufacturing charge is a separate item, varying from Re. 1 to Rs. 10 a pair.

Silver earrings, called Kyrlla Bhoi, worn by women and children, vary in price from 8 annas to Rs. 10.

Gold bracelets, called Khadu, are made plain and ornamental. These vary in price from Rs. 250 to Rs. 500. Some are hollow, filled in with a composition of lac, others are solid, the hollow kinds are most in vogue.

Silver bangles, called Syngkha, from 2 to 2½ inches wide, semi-oval in shape, are made to the value of Rs. 30 to Rs. 40. The common silver bangle, as worn by the middle classes, is just a simple plain round solid article, the value of which is between Rs. 40 to Rs. 50.

A silver cone-shaped cup, called Shyriid-rupa, an ornamented article costing Rs. 50 to Rs. 100, is worn by both males and females and is used for keeping pan leaves.

The following instruments are used in the trade :—

1. Square anvil—U rnyiang.
2. Ten round and pointed anvils of various shapes—Reng.
3. Five hammers of sizes—Tyrnem.
4. Seven wire guages—Phar.
5. Pincers, called Knap and wire cutters called Kaid.
6. Six brass moulds called Ka Ther.
7. Very small crucibles called “ Mapthap-kpieng.”
8. Various punches for engraving or ornamenting jewellery called “ Nar-liar.”

In Jowai itself there are about 40 to 50 working jewellers. They are known by the simple name U Bania.

The principal purchasers of the wares are Khasias, Syntengs, Bhois, and Wars. As stated before, jewellers do not stock their manufactures, but only make to order of traders, who supply the material.

N.B.—“ Nar ” is Khasi for iron, but all the punches are made of brass.

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