THE MUNDAS
AND THEIR COUNTRY

BY
SARAT CHANDRA ROY, M.A., B.L.

With an Introduction
BY
E. A. GAIT Esq., I.C.S., C.I.E.
Census Commissioner for India.

All rights reserved.

1912.

THE KUNTALINE PRESS.
61 & 62, Bowbazar Street, Calcutta.
PRINTED BY P. C. DASS.
PUBLISHED BY JOGENDRA NATH SARKAR AT THE CITY BOOK SOCIETY, 64, COLLEGE STREET, CALCUTTA.

To be had of—
MESSRS. THACKER SPINK & CO., CALCUTTA; THE CITY BOOK SOCIETY, CALCUTTA; THE AUTHOR, RANCHI.
PREFACE.

The object of this book is to supply the want of a history and ethnography of one of the most interesting of Chōtā Nāgpūr tribes. A history of the Mūndās is practically a history of the district they inhabit. Unfortunately, however, it is only from the beginning of British rule that we have perfectly reliable materials for a history of the people and their country. Of the importance of that history, Colonel Dalton in his Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal writes,—

"It cannot but be of moment to Indian statesmen and administrators to have, when dealing with such a people, a clear understanding of the nature of our relations with them, since they and the officers of the British Government first met, to possess an account sufficiently in detail of the circumstances under which they have been found so frequently in an attitude of hostility to a Government that certainly has no prejudices against them, but on the contrary is inclined to treat them with favour bordering on partiality."

If the political history of the Mūndās and their country is of such interest to the statesman and the administrator, the ethnography of the people is of no less interest to the anthropologist and the sociologist.

I am painfully conscious that the present account is exceedingly imperfect. The greater portion of this book originally appeared as magazine articles written in
the intervals of business. This will partly account for some of the many defects which will doubtless be noticed in the book. If, however, the information conveyed in these pages is found to be of any practical use and serves to attract more competent workers to the field, it will not have been written in vain.

My most grateful acknowledgements are due to Mr. E. A. Gait, r.c.s., c.i.e., not only for the Introduction he has so kindly written for the book but also for having kindly looked through the book as it was passing through the press and made several valuable suggestions for its improvement.

To the Rev. Father J. Hoffmann, an acknowledged authority on the Mūndās, I am indebted for much valuable advice and for the trouble he very kindly took in revising the proof-sheets of the chapters on Ethnography (chap. VI) and Land Tenures (App. III). My sincere thanks are due to Mr. T. S. Macpherson, m.a., i.c.s., for some valuable suggestions, and to Mr. J. Reid, i.c.s., late Settlement Officer of Chōtā Nāgpūr, for having kindly supplied me with the statistics for my Chapter on Land Tenures. I am under great obligations to Mr. H. J. McIntosh, i.c.s., Commissioner of the Chotā Nāgpūr Division, Mr. D. H. Kingsford, i.c.s., Judicial Commissioner of Chōtā Nāgpūr, and Mr. W. B. Thomson, i.c.s., Deputy Commissioner of Rānchi (on leave), for having kindly permitted me access to
several old records in their respective offices. To the Rev. Dr. A. Nottrott, D.D., of the Chôtá Nágpûr German Mission, the Rev. Father Van Hoeck, S.J., of the Chotâ Nâgpûr Catholic Mission, and the Rev. H. Whitley, B.A., of the Ranchi Anglican Mission, I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness for several items of information regarding their respective Missions. I am further indebted to these three Reverend gentlemen as also to some Indian friends for most of the illustrations of the book.

Ranchi;  

The 14th March 1912.  

S. C. R.
CONTENTS.

Introduction ... ... ... i
Chap. I., The Origin of the Köl Tribes ... 1
Chap. II., The Traditional History of the Mundas ... ... 42
Chap. III., The Early History of the Mundas ... ... 114
Chap. IV., The Mediæval Period of Mundari History ... 150
Chap. V., The Modern History of the Mundas ... ... 182
Chap. VI., The Ethnography of the Mundas ... ... 354
App. I., Munda Cosmogony and Legendary History ... ... i
App. II., The Legend of Lutkum Haram and Lutkum Buria ... xviii
App. III., The Land Tenures of the Ranchi District ... ... xxviii
App. IV., Epochs and Dates ... ... xxxviii