

Ethnography and Geography of the Sub-Himalayas.

Extract of a letter from B. H. Hodgson, Esq. to Capt. Cunningham, Tibet Mission.

I have now the pleasure to send you the specimen of the Khas language of the eastern Sub-Himalayas, from the Kali to the Tishta. It is, you see, a strangely mongrel tongue in these parts, and I suspect it is not less, but more, so in the western parts, or where you are. There are nevertheless traces of a primitive speech, though the present list of words,—a bad one, by the way—shows them ill. But it must be confessed that (me judge) *no* summary vocabulary *can* exhibit an adequate sample of any language whatever as to whose vocables there be room for doubts looking to proximate tongues. I prefer therefore in such investigations the ample style of research which my Essay on the Kóch, Bódó and Dhímál exhibits, and which I am preparing to send you a copy of, so soon as I can get one duly corrected, for the errors of the press are very many. But, though that be the true model, yet I suspect it will prove too weighty for general adoption, and therefore I am anxious that the more summary one sent you already, and which has now been applied to some 40 tongues, should meet with favour and be the means of enabling us to make a general comparison of all the Aborigines from Cape Comorin to the snows. I have sent copies to Newbold, Elliot of Madras, Jenkins of Assam, Ouseley, Sleeman, your namesake of Bhopál, &c. &c. And I have already got a few and am promised more fillings-up from the several aboriginal tongues within reach of my numerous correspondents. I hope you will not be behind hand but send me the Garhwali and upper Kanáveri, and any other dialects of your parts which are not of Sanscrit origin, whether the people speaking them dwell towards the snows, like the Garhwális, or towards the plains, like the Thárús and Boksars, or midway, like the Helots (Doms) of Kumaon. All and any such (which are clearly not Prákrits, or of the Indo-Germanic stock) will be welcome to me. I have now residing with me Doctor Hooker, an accomplished Botanist and master also of all the other branches of science at all allied to, or calculated to throw light on Botany. He will stay with me for the next 6 months. He is much taken with my skeleton of the physical geo-

graphy of Tibet and the Himálayan region, and he and I want you and other friends in the Norwest, to let us know what you think of this skeleton, and to help us to amend and fill it up before we commence a serious project we have on the tapis, viz. disposing all the plants and animals according to their territorial arrangement, and thus demonstrating its utility and value. Here is the outline:—

Lengthwise division of the Sub-Himálayas into basins—

1. Alpine basin of the Indus.
2. Alpine basin of the Ganges.
3. Alpine basin of the Karnáli.
4. Alpine basin of the Gandak.
5. Alpine basin of the Kósi.
6. Alpine basin of the Tishta.
7. Alpine basin of the Dihong.

I suppose this series of basins to be formed by the pre-eminent snowy peaks, and I have perfect proof that such is the fact in Nepal, where Dhoulagiri, Gosainthán and Kanchan form most precise deltizers of the very perfect deltic basins of that part of the mountains. I cannot however so well find deltizing peaks W. and E. of Nepal. I want you to help me in that search, and also to say if you think practical utility would be forwarded by additional basins? and if the physiognomy of the western hills requires or sanctions a separation of the basins of the Sutlege from the Indus, or of the Jamna from the Ganges? Remember however always that though it be interesting to show the *cause* of the series of Sub-Himálayan basins, yet the series may be good though the cause be bad. Therefore look for causative snowy peaks, but don't reject the deltic basins because you find them not, or not all of them, or even some peaks that seem to conflict with the theory. Next we have the transverse or breadthwise division of the Sub-Himálayas into the following series, primarily triple, but in whole quinary, thus:—

Breadthwise climatic division—

	<i>Miles.</i>																				
1. Northern region, or Cachár,	30																				
2. Central region,	30																				
3. Lower region,	30																				
<table style="display: inline-table; border: none; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: 2em; padding-right: 5px;">{</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">Subdivided into</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">Lower</td> <td style="padding-left: 10px;">}</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">hills,</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">1—10</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">Forest,</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">2—10</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">Tarai,</td> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">3—10</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	{	Subdivided into	Lower	}			hills,	1—10				Forest,	2—10				Tarai,	3—10			
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	Forest,	2—10																			
	Tarai,	3—10																			

Extent,..... *Elevation.*

- | | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| 1. 30 miles, | } Crest of snows to
verge of true
plains. | { 16 to 10,000 above sea.
10 to 3000 above sea.
3000 to 1000* above sea. |
| 2. 30 miles, | | |
| 3. 30 miles, | | |

Subdivisions of 3, each 10 miles in extent.

Such is the scheme for giving a convenient nomenclature to the topography of these mountains, based on their true physiognomy and climate. A better judge of its apparent value could not be than Dr. Hooker, and he feels as much confidence as I do, after much examination of maps compared with the results of my personal knowledge, that the apparent and the real values will prove, in this case, one. So that nomenclative convenience will go hand in hand with a solid and considerable accession to physical Geography.

And now my feeble state, the consequence of a severe attack of illness, warns me to pause for the present, though your very interesting letter tempts me to dilate on some of the numerous topics thereof. I can only say at present that I congratulate you on your discoveries.

NOTE.—The Khas are undoubtedly one of the aboriginal tribes of these mountains, however much the traces of their origin may be obscured by intermixture with the Arian Hindus. And accordingly we find the Khas, like the Kirántis, mentioned in the Puráns and in classical authors as barbarian tenants of the Sub-Himalayas. The Khas, however, welcomed the Hindu immigrants into these mountains at a very early period, and soon became so intermixed with the Bráhmanical and Kshatriya tribes (the genuine Arians) that all physical or lingual traces of their aboriginal lineage are now much weakened or obliterated. And as they have become, since the predominance of the Gorkhali dynasty in Nepal, the dominant race in a Hindu kingdom, they are themselves very anxious that those few traces should remain unnoticed. But no one practised in Ethnological researches can fail to discern the aboriginal and Mongolian origin of the Khas in their forms and faces: nor does their language, how much Prákritized soever want some vestiges of that origin, though the following list of words is not happy in the exhibition of them. All Khas gentlemen in Nepal parade a Rajpút origin, and it is no doubt true that by the father's side very

* Assumed plain level. But it varies from 1200 to 250 between N. W. and S. E. extremes. We must take the plain level and correct for it. The elevations, as limits, of course refer to organic life in Zoology and Botany.

many of them are descended from Bráhmans or Kshatriyas of the plains. But their mixed lineage is undoubted, and it is therefore the more remarkable that the rank and privileges of the 2d order of Hinduism have been conceded to them under a strict Hindu regime—a striking proof that Bráhmanism is not the unalterable institute which some Europeans of note have represented it to be. Capt. C. supposes he has discovered many traces of the aboriginal Khas in the Nor-west.

KHAS LANGUAGE.

Arrow,	Kánd,	Leaf,	Pát,	H.
Bird,	Chara,	*H. Light,	Jóti,	S.
Blood,	Rakat,	S. Lightning,	Bajar,	S.
Boat,	Dúngá,	Man,	Mánis, Lóguya,	
Brass,	Pítal,	H. Milk,	Dúdo,	H.
Brick,	Inth,	H. Moon,	Chánd, Jún,	
Brother,	Dájú, elder,	B. Mother,	Amma,	
Buffalo,	Bhainsa,	H. Mountain,	Dánd,	
Camel,	Unth,	H. Mouth,	Múkh,	H.
Cat,	Biráló,	Name,	Náon,	H.
Cloud,	Mégh,	S. Night,	Ráti,	H.
Copper,	Támbo,	H. Nose,	Náka,	H.
Cotton,	Kapás,	H. Oil,	Tél,	H.
Cow,	Gai,	H. Rain,	Barkhá,	S.
Daughter,	Chóri	River,	Khóla,	
Day,	Din,	H. Road,	Bátó,	
Dog,	Kúkar,	Salt,	Nún,	H.
Ear,	Kán,	H. Sheep,	Bhéra,	H.
Earth,	Prithivi, Mái, S.	H. Shoe,	Panai,	
Elephant,	Háthi,	H. Silver,	Chándi,	H.
Eye,	Ankha	H. Sister,	Bahini, Didai,	
Father,	Bábá,	Sky,	Sarg,	S.
Fire,	Ágó,	H. Son,	Chóra,	
Fish,	Máchha,	H. Snake,	Sáp,	S. H.
Flower,	Phúl,	H. Snow,	Hyún,	S. H.
Foot,	Góra,	H. Star,	Tára,	H.
Fort,	Garh,	H. Stone,	Dhúngá,	
Fruit,	Phal,	Sun,	Súraj,	H.
Goat,	Bóká, (mas.)	Thunder,	Garan gúran,	
Gold,	Sún,	H. Tiger,	Bág,	H.
Grass,	Ghás,	H. Tooth,	Dánt,	H.
Hair,	Raon,	Town,	Sahar, Pers.	
Hand,	Háth,	H. Tree,	Rúkh,	
Head,	Tau, Tou, Tou ko,	Tribe,	Thar,	
Honey,	Moho,	Village,	Gaon,	H.
Horse,	Ghóra,	H. Water, ..	Páni,	H.
House,	Ghar,	H. Wife,	Jói,	
Husband,	Pói,	Wind,	Batás,	H.
Iron,	Phalám,	Woman,	Swásni,	
King,	Rájah,	H. Wood,	Káth,	S.
Lead,	Sísá,	H. Wool,	Raon,	

* NOTE.—H. postfixed indicates a Hindi or Urdu origin. S. a Sanscrit one.

North,	Uttar,	} S. H.	Square,	Chár pátya,	
South,	Dakhin,		Straight,	Sojó,	
East,	Púrba,		Sweet,	Mithó,	H.
West,	Paschim,		Then,	Tailé,	
1.	Ek,		There,	Utá,	
2.	Dwi,		S. Thick,	Móóó,	H.
3.	Tin,		Thin,	Dúbló,	H.
4.	Chár,		Wet,	Bhíjyo, Chísó,	
5.	Pánch,		When,	Jailé,	
6.	Chah,		Red,	Ráto,	S.
7.	Sát,	Yellow,	Pahelo,	H.	
8.	Ath,	Blue,	Niló,	S.	
9.	Nou,	H. Green,	Haryo,	H.	
10.	Das,	Black,	Kálo,	H.	
11.	Egáro,	White,	Shétó,	S.	
12.	Bárah,	Right,	Dainé,	H.	
20.	Bis,	Left,	Dévré		
30.	Tis,	I,	Man,	H.	
40.	Chálsa,	Of me,	Méro,		
50.	Pachás,	To me,	Ma lai,		
100.	Sai,	Me,	Ma lai,		
1000.	Hajár,	Pers. By me,	Mai lé,		
1st.	Pahila,	We,	Hámi hérú,		
2nd.	Dúará,	Of us,	Hami hérú ko,		
3rd.	Tisra,	H. To us,	Hami* hérú lai,		
4th.	Choutha,	Us,	Hámi lai,		
10th.	Dasón,	By us,	Hámi* lé,		
After,	Pachi,	H. Thou,	Ton Tan,	H.	
Bad,	Naniko, Ghin lágdo,	Of thee,	Téro,		
Before,	Aghi,	H. To thee,	Ton lai,		
Beneath,	Tala, Múni,	Thee,	Ton lai,		
Broad,	Choura,	H. By thee,	Tain lé,		
Cold,	Chísó,	Ye,	Timi hérú,		
Crooked,	Bángó,	Of you,	Timi hérú ko,		
Dry,	Sákyo,	H. To you,	Timi hérú lai,		
Good,	Niko,	You,	Timi hérú lai,		
Hard,	Sáró,	By you,	Timi hérú lé,		
Heavy,	Garúng,	He,	U,	H.	
Here,	Itá,	Of him,	Uakó,		
High,	Algo,	To him,	Ualai,		
Hot,	Tato,	Him,	Ualai,		
Large,	Thúló,	By him,	Ualé,		
Light,	Halúng,	They,	Uni hérú,		
Long,	Lámo,	H. Those,	Tini hérú,		
New,	Naya,	H. Of them,	Uni hérú ko,		
Now,	Ailé,	To them,	Uni hérú lai,		
Old,	Púrán,	H. Them,	Uni hérú lai,		
Quick,	Chándohinya,	Chito, By them,	Uni hérú lé,		
Raw,	Káchó,	H. Who,	Ján, Jó,	H.	
Ripe,	Pákó,	H. Of whom,	Jas ko,		
Rough,	Khasro,	To whom,	Jas lai,		
Round,	Dallo,	By whom,	Jas lé,		
Slow,	Dhílo,	H. What,	Jyá,		
Small,	Sánú,	Of what,	Jyá ko,		
Smooth,	Masino,† Chillo,	To what,	Jya lai,		
Soft,	Kawala,	By what,	Jyá lé,		

* Pluralizing sign hérú omissible.

† Corruption of Mahin.

This,	Yó,	H.	To Hear,.....	Súnú,	H.
Of this,.....	Yés ko,		„ Eat,	Khánú,	H.
To this,.....	Yés lá,		„ Carry away, ..	Léjánú,	H.
By this,.....	Yés lé,		„ Raise,.....	Uchánú,	
That,.....	Tyó,		„ Cook,.....	Pakounú,	H.
To speak,.....	Kúfa garnú,		„ Open,.....	Ughérnú,	H.
„ Bring,	Lé ánú,	H.	„ Weigh,	Jókhnú,	H.
„ Die,	Marnú,	H.	„ Bind,	Bándhnú,	H.
„ See,	Hérnú,		„ Cut,	Kátínú,	H.
„ Drink,	Pyúnú,	H.	„ Tear,.....	Chyátnú,	
„ Sit,	Bónú,	H.	„ Wipe,	Póchhnú,	H.
„ Give,.....	Dínú,	H.	„ Call,	Dákú,	
„ Be,.....	Honú,	H.	„ Blow,.....	Phúknú,	H.
„ Come,	Aunú,	H.	„ Fall,	Khasnú,	
„ Go,.....	Jánú,	H.	„ Make,	Banounú,	H.
„ Stand,	Ubhínú,		„ Clean,	Májhnú,	H.