

specimens, so that it is necessity which forces me to adopt the above plan, and here there are thousands of specimens which any collection in Europe would be proud to have. To shew the nature of the coal, I have enclosed specimens, which probably you will think worthy of being sent to the Coal Committee, Calcutta, in order that they may see that it is not true bituminous coal. The rocks illustrative of the district I shall afterwards furnish. I have made a small collection of coins; I send some that appear most interesting; probably you will transmit them to Secretary Torrens, for examination; their history, where found, &c. I shall afterwards send.

*On the Literature and Origin of certain Hill Tribes in Sikkim. By A. CAMPBELL, Esq. Superintendent of Darjeeling.*

Ilam Sing, Dewan of the Sikkim Raja, who is a Limboo, informs me, that the original country of his tribe is the province of Chung in Thibet, a short distance to the south of Lassa, and that the word "Chong," used by the Lepchas to designate this tribe, is a corruption of the provincial name. He also informs me that in his youth, fifty years ago, he used to see Limboos reading *pothis* in a character, which he believes was peculiar to his tribe, and that he was told by some of the patriarchs, that this character was one which had been compounded from many others, by a sage of the tribe, who had lived at a very remote unknown period. There are now no traces of the existence of a written character peculiar to the Limboos on this side of the snows, and as there is scarcely any intercourse between the southern members of the tribe and their northern progeners, and as those who essay writing in Nipal and Sikkim choose the Nagri character, it is probable that the language of the Limboos will not again be known as a written one on the southern side of the Himalaya.

Regarding the "Murmis," the same intelligent old gentleman tells me, that their Thibetan origin is well established, and known to all well-informed persons, who take an interest in tracing the peculiarities and affinities of the Cis and Trans-Himalayan tribes. Although I have mixed with many Murmis, I have not met with any who could give

me particulars of their Thibetan origin, all being satisfied with the knowledge of their tribe having at some remote period migrated across the snows from Bhote, and with asserting that they had preserved their language (Thibetan) and religion (Bhuddism) unchanged since their arrival. The Murmis are by the Lepchas and the Bhootiahs of Nipal and Sikkim, called "Nishung," which my informant says, arises from their being composed of two families, or divisions; one having migrated from the province of "Nimo" in Thibet, and the other from the district of "Shung" in the same country. Hence the general appellation "Nishung." The Dewan says, that the "Murmis" are a numerous tribe in their original country, through which he has passed *en route* from Sikkim to Lassa, by a road running parallel with the one from Digarchi to that city, but considerably to the eastward of it. He believes that the Murmis on this side of the snow are less changed in habits than any of the other Thibetan ones with which we are acquainted. Of the "Magars" he says, "They are unquestionably a people of this side of the snows, and the original country is Sikkim, from which they were first driven west by the Lepchas across the Mechi and Konki rivers, and thence further west by the Limboos beyond the Arun and Doodkooshi. While in Sikkim they were not Hindoos; they ate fowls, pigs, and everything except the cow, from which I believe they abstained. They had no priests, or *puja* of any kind. Now, however, they have the Brahmins, and are, I believe, reckoned very good Hindoos in Nipal."

As to the "Gurungs," said the Dewan in reply to my questions anent them, "we people of Thibetan origin have nothing to do with them, they belong especially to the central and western parts of the Nipal mountains, and have always, I believe, been less or more followers of Hindooism." The locale of the Gurungs is correctly enough stated here; whether their Thibetan origin can be disproved I know not, but *Mr. Hodgson* probably can settle the question.