The history of Cooch Behar, like that of Greece has its origin in mythology, but there is sufficient ground for contending that the earliest mythical narrations of Prâgjyotis or Kâmarupa are far more reliable as historical sources than those of classical Greece. For, while Grote in his History of Greece (1) assumed the inefficacy of the religious legend or the purpose of history, the main theory of Euhemerus, an Asiatic traveller, "represented", (2) in the words of Grote, "both gods and heroes as having been mere earth-born men, and deified or heroified after death as a recompense for services of striking exploits." It is also Lyall's conclusion (3) in his study of the subject that the divine myths of India did not form themselves upon the personification of natural phenomena, or by accidental linguistic coincidences, so much as by deifying authentic men.—An expressive illustration of this process may be studied in the author's treatment (4) in the present work of the song of Maynâmati.

As Khan Choudhuri Amanatulla Ahmed has observed in his introduction to this history of the State, research into the period of India's antiquity has been, as yet, insignificant. Progress in archaeological research, which is not only costly and laborious, but presupposes a scholar's knowledge of all other sources, has been particularly slow. Standing on one of the long ramparts of old Kâmatâpurâ, only fourteen miles from the present capital of the State, one may speculate on the fascination of the story which would be unfolded if this vast fortress had been excavated, and were as well-known as the Romano-British towns of Silchester or Dorchester. Instead, one has to resort to comparatively modern chronicles to secure what are little more than glimpses into the medieval civilisation of the Koch Country. Even so, these sources are more adequate than are extant in many parts of Eastern India, and especially is this true of the documentary

(1) History of Greece, Chapter XVI.
(2) Mythology of the Aryan Nations.
(3) Asiatic studies, Chapter II.
(4) Latter part of Chapter II and of foot note 24 this.
evidence relating to the ancestry of the present ruling dynasty of the State. There can be few States on this side of India where such evidence has survived, as it has in Cooch Behar, to indicate that the reigning house is traceable to the seventh century A.D. This testimony, which is to be found principally in the Tārikh Pheristā and Tārikh Assam, was furnished (5) to the Political Authorities during a recent revision of the accounts of States in the “Memoranda of the Indian States.”

It was but natural that Colonel His Highness Maharaja Sir Nripendra Narayan Bhum Bahadur, G. C. I. E., c. b., should have inspired the labours of Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed, for no Ruler had more profound regard for tradition in the fullest sense of the word, or could have done more to introduce and patronise the modern forms of learning in his State. As the Khan Choudhuri Sahib acknowledges, it was during the reign of His Highness Maharaja Sir Jitendra Narayan Bhum Bahadur, K. C. S. L., that the actual task was approached, assisted by the generous co-operation of the late Maharajkumar Victor Nityendra Narayan. The author continues, in his introduction, to express his indebtedness to other scholars and friends whose courtesy and erudition facilitated his enquiries.

The present translation which has been undertaken, at His Highness’ personal wish, by Mr. S. C. Ghosal, could not have been committed to more able hands. The form in which the original was cast, and the actual text, have been adhered to closely and literally. The few interpolations for which the Editor is responsible, have been denoted by the symbol “(Ed.)”.

It is satisfactory to record that arrangements have already been approved by His Highness for the preparation in English of Part II of the history of the State, from the end of the eighteenth century to the present day. That these plans will be implemented as timely as the nature of the work will permit, is to be gratefully ascribed to the personal suggestion and encouragement of Her Highness the Maharani Sahiba of Cooch Behar

—Haec olim meminisse juvabit.

L. G. W.,

Cooch Behar.

June, 1942.

(5) Letter No. 2469, dated the 26th February 1937, from the State Council to the Secretary to the Resident for the Eastern States, which quoted excerpts in Bengali from the two authorities.
Translator's Note.

This translation of the Bengali work "Kochbihārer Itibās" was undertaken by me as mentioned in the Editor's Foreword at the personal wish of His Highness Maharaja Jagādīspendrasāra Nārāyanā Bhuṣandur. The rulers of Cooch Behar were never indifferent to encourage composition of history of their country and we find earliest reference of such a history (though the original work is now lost) named Rājakhandayā by Kāvīsānta during the time of Maharaja Pran Nārāyan (middle of the 17th century). Portions of a Sanskrit work named Visvasinchacharitam by Sreenath have also been discovered. This work was also written during the time of Maharaja Pran Nārāyan. A more detailed history entitled Rājopākhyāna by Joynath Ghose was written with the encouragement of Maharaja Harendra Nārāyan, the concluding portion of this work being finished during the time of Maharaja Shibendra Nārāyan. Even the Maharani encouraged the composition of history of Cooch Behar and we find that under orders of Maharani Kamesvari Devi, consort of Maharaja Shibendra Nārāyan, Ripunjay Das wrote Mahāraj-Vansāvalī. Maharani Brindeswari Devi, another Maharani of Maharaja Shibendra Nārāyan is herself the authoress of Behārodsanta, a short history of her times.

Rājavansāvalī of Durgadas was composed when Maharaja Nripendra Nārāyan was only one year old.

All these histories were composed from traditions and facts actually seen by the writers during their time. The first attempt to compile a history in English on a comparative method based on authenticated books and papers was made by late Harendranarayan Chaudhuri in his work "The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement." This work was undertaken under the orders of Maharaja Nripendra Nārāyan. Informations on every important matter regarding Cooch Behar have been summarised in this valuable work along with the history of the State.
The historical portion of this work being however brief, need of a more detailed work was felt for a long time. The work of which the present is a translation was taken up to remove this want under inspiration of His Highness Maharaja Jitendra Narayan, after whose sad and untimely demise Her Highness Maharani Indira Devi as Regent of the State, during the minority of the present ruler was greatly interested in its publication and very graciously encouraged the present translation.

A Bengali work being however of limited circulation, the present English Edition was taken up to meet the demand of readers in different provinces and Native States in India for a knowledge of the history of Cooch Behar and its rulers traced as far back as the 7th century A.D.

The Bengali work ends with the installation of Maharaja Harendra Narayan. The present translator at the desire of His Highness Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur is engaged in the compilation of a second volume which will bring up the history up to date from the time of Maharaja Harendra Narayan. A full history of Cooch Behar from the earliest times down to the present day will be available on publication of this second volume.

Greatful acknowledgment is due to L.G. Wallis, Esq. I.C.S., Vice-President, State Council, Cooch Behar and Dewan Bahadur R. Subbaya Naidu Chief Minister, Cooch Behar for going through the manuscripts of the translation. Some portions of the translation have been omitted at their instance and some portions added by Mr. Wallis have been marked "Ed."

Cooch Behar,
June, 1942.

S. C. GHOSHAL.
AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION.

The function of the historian is not merely to satisfy the curiosity of those who would be acquainted with movements or incidents long passed. Rather does it seek to supplement that body of human experience which should guide the present and future action of mankind, to establish deductively the connection between events which have been lost to the memory of a people, and modern problems. (Ed.) In the Voltairian phrase, the present is born of the past, and the present gives birth to the future, and there is never change in that relationship. And according to Max Muller, the improvement of that people is impossible who are ignorant of their past history.

Research which has hitherto been conducted into the history of so-anciently civilised a country as India, may be said to be insignificant, though in recent years much labour has been devoted to the task. A special difficulty is presented by the narrative histories which were written before the introduction of the scientific historical method. This applies in marked degree to those "Kochbihar Rājvansāvalis", (or histories of the ruling dynasty of Cooch Behar,) which have been composed in earlier times. No clear idea of their basic sources can be derived from them. It can only be inferred that they depended largely on hearsay evidence. Their accounts display patent discrepancies. Moreover, these Vansāvali manuscripts are concerned with the ruling family and not with the conditions of the country. Later, certain short histories on more modern lines were written and printed except in one or two cases at the instance of the Durbar, but they have since become obsolete and are not readily accessible.

In 1903, 'The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement' was published, and contained a short history of Cooch Behar. It was some years after the publication of this work, however, that Colonel His late Highness Sir Nripendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, G. C. I. E., C. B. expressed the desire that an authentic and detailed history of the State should be published. In this connection the writer of the present work submitted a short note

(1) "Those exasperating alchemists of fact and fiction". (Ed.)
containing inter alia a list of authorities. (2) Thereafter His Highness proceeded to England and alas, to his demise (1911). His late Highness Maharaja Rajrajendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, his eldest son, died (1913) but a short time after his installation. It therefore fell to His late Highness Maharaja Sir Jitendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur, K. C. S. I., the second son of His Highness Sir Nripendra Narayan, to fulfil the wish of his father, and he entrusted (3) his younger brother the late Maharajkumar Victor Nityendra Narayan and the writer with the work, and he himself engaged in collecting material. (4) At a later stage responsibility for the compilation was specifically assigned to the author, (5) but to his profound regret no opportunity was afforded of placing all the newly-found evidence before His Highness, for in 1912 this Ruler who had so encouraged learning and education, departed untimely from this world, and his eldest son His Highness Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur (then a minor) succeeded to the Gaddi of Cooch Behar.

(2) Extract from a letter dated, Darjeeling, the 8th August, 1909, from the Secretary to H. H. the Maharaja Bhup Bahadur to the author.—

"Thanks for your letter of the 1st August . . . . . . The materials you have given me are very interesting and I trust we will be able to make use of them in the second edition of our History."

Also letters on the subject, dated 5th August 1909 and 30th June 1911, from Rai Calcut, Das Dutt Bahadur, S. I., C. I. E., Dewan to the author.

(3) Letter No. 1829, dated the 11st March 1920, from the State Council to the Member, State Council in charge of the Education Department of the State.

(4) Letter dated the 5th April 1923, to the author, from the Secretary ( later Financial Secretary ) to His Highness.

(5) Extract from an address delivered by the President, ( the late ) Maharajkumar Victor Nityendra Narayan, at the third annual meeting of the Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha in 1925 B. S. ( 1918 ).

"I am glad to announce that His Highness has sanctioned the publication of an authenticated History of the State. The task of collecting all materials . . . . . . has been left in the capable hands of our able Secretary Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed. I ask all members for their cordial help. . . . . . . "

Extract from a letter No. 1865, dated the 4th March, 1930, from the Registrar, Regency Council, Cooch Behar, to the Revenue Officer of the State.—

"With reference to your letter No. 2082, dated the 18th February, 1930, I am directed to inform you that the Regency Council are pleased, as recommended by you, to accord their sanction to the grant of a sum of Rs. 3,500 (three thousand, and five hundred ) for the printing and publication of a comprehensive History of Cooch Behar State compiled by Khan Chowdhuri Amanatulla Ahmed."
INTRODUCTION.

The author's primary reason for undertaking so responsible a task was his natural zeal to execute the orders of his Ruler. He had also in mind the words of Bankimchandra—"We require a history of Bengal; otherwise there is no hope for Bengal. Who will write it? You will write it. I will write it. Everyone will write it. Whoever is a Bengali must write it."

Some years previously (1910) the writer had prepared a bibliography of all old manuscripts preserved in the State Library in Cooch Behar. At the beginning of the 19th century the capital of Cooch Behar was a centre of literary culture and Maharaja Harendranarayan was the inspiration of this enlightenment. Under his orders, a large number of books were written and translated and he himself was an author, but as the second half of the century advanced, the introduction of Western education accelerated and accentuated a tendency of disregard for Eastern ideas and culture. This deteriorative influence was specially marked in Cooch Behar; and it is to be regretted that many ancient relics preserved in the Palace were conveyed to English research workers to be preserved outside the State for ever. Fortunately, there remain in the State Library many manuscripts in Bengali, Assamese and some in Urdu and Persian.

In assembling his material for this history, the writer has searched old documents in the various offices of the State. Thus, in the Mahafezkhana of the Malcutchery there are more than two thousand records of settlement cases of the first Settlement. These cases concerned lands occupied by persons claiming to have acquired them by gift from former Rulers. The Waqqas (Amlanâmas) and Srinudus filed by the parties in these cases were, by practice, not returned. Many an item of significance has been revealed in these documents; for example, in the deed granted by Maharaja Prannarayan on the 18th Falgun 135 Rajsaka (1645 A. D.) or in that granted by Maharaja Modnarayan on the 5th Magh 166 Rajsaka (1676 A. D.). (The latter deed was written on cloth and was sealed with the 'Sinharâji'.)

One of the oldest documents preserved in the Mahafezkhana of the Cooch Behar State Council is an order (Ajna-patra of Maharaja Prannarayan dated the 23rd Bhaadra 137 Rajsaka (1646 A. D.). There are some letters written by the Dewaraja and the Dharmaraja, the oldest of which is dated 246 Rajsaka (1755 A. D.). These letters were written in Bengali from 'Killâ Tasisâme' (Tasisudan) and Punakh.

† "Upakhâti", "Krâtyogasatra", "Sundarâkânda Râmâyana" of Maharaja Haritendranarayan have been edited with introduction and notes by S. C. Ghoshal and published by the Cooch Behar Sahitya Samiti (Ed.).
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In some the address is superscribed in doggerel Sanskrit, e.g.—*Śrastik<br>Behar Kāmataev : udāyagirādvājāvaya mahāsaṃpada māyagala<br>airinir brana prakhyāta prithivipati svee sree Beharer Maharaj Būmāsamāre<br>panchāmnvāt sv.* (8)

The manuscripts of the songs to the deity Kali composed by<br>Maharajas Harendranarayan and Shibendranarayan (7) are also in the<br>Mahāśeṣkhana.

The Assamese manuscripts in the office of the Commissioner of the<br>Assam Valley in Gauhati have been studied, (8) and such portions as bear<br>on the history of Cooch Behar have been extracted. The assistance rendered<br>to the writer in this behalf by the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti is<br>gratefully acknowledged. (9)

In the Anglo-Oriental Library (Khudabaksh Library) at Patna,<br>previously unpublished accounts relevant to the history of Cooch Behar<br>were discovered in old documents. The records preserved in the Record<br>Office of the Government of India in Calcutta, the Imperial Library<br>and the Library of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, and in the Punjab<br>and the Jaipur State, have been studied.

By courtesy of the Governments of Assam and Bengal, certain<br>rare documents have been received on loan. The Government of Bengal<br>not only extended the favour of furnishing copies of old and important<br>documents, but accorded facilities to Maharajkumar Victor Nityendra<br>Narayan and the author to search the records. (10) The Maharajkumar<br>Sahib collected plaster-casts of coins in the British Museum and took<br>copies of old papers in the India Office Library in London. Through<br>the courtesy of the British Ambassador in Nepal copies of inscriptions<br>preserved in that country were available.

(8) Captain Turner after his visit to Bhutan in 1873 has recorded that correspondence<br>between the Bhutiyaś and Bengali was carried on in the Bengali language—Embassy to Tibet,<br>page 69.

(7) The songs of Maharaja Harendranarayan and Maharaja Shibendranarayan have<br>been edited with notes and introduction by Mr. S. C. Ghoshal, M.A., B.L., and published by<br>the Cooch Behar Sahitya Sabha.

(8) All these manuscripts are in the custody of the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti.

(9) Letter No. 36'5-G, dated the 24th July, 1914, from the Second Secretary to the<br>Chief Commissioner of Assam, to the Commissioner, Assam Valley Division,<br>Prospectus of the Kāmarupa Anusandhan Samiti, page 4, 1914.

(10) Letter D. O. No. 873 R. R., dated the 18th November, 1919, from Mr. D. Gladding,<br>Secretary to the Government of Bengal, to Maharajkumar Victor Nityendra Narayan of<br>Cooch Behar.
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Numerous coins of the present ruling dynasty of Cooch Behar and of other Rulers, have been examined, and previously accepted readings of some Narayani coins, have perforce been amended. The new historical questions thus arising, are discussed in Chapter XIX.

The author visited many places (besides historical sites within the State of Cooch Behar)—Gauhati, Beltala, Hajô and Rângâmâtî in Assam, Mahâsthândragh (in the district of Bogra), Ghodâghât (in the district of Dînajpur) and the Duars (in the district of Jalpaiguri) in Bengal.

The ruins of the old fort of Kâmaṭâpur within the State of Cooch Behar, have been given the special attention they have aroused as far back as 1808 when Government deputed Dr. Buchanan Hamilton to inspect them. Selected portions from his memorandum were subsequently printed in the work “Eastern India.” Brajachandra Mazumdar, the Headmaster of the local Middle Vernacular School, resided in this fort for ten years and in 1306 B. S. printed the manuscript “Gosanimangal,” the appendix to which contains his personal observations on the ruins. In 1900 Babu Harendra Narayan Chandhuri recorded their condition at that time in his book “The Cooch Behar State and its Land Revenue Settlement.” In 1921, in response to a request from the Government Archaeological Department addressed to the State Authorities, the writer drafted a note on the ruins. This, unfortunately, was founded on superficial external evidence, but perhaps had this value that the writer has himself observed changes at various places in the Garh during fifty years.

The reader should be informed that difficulty was experienced in deciphering the inscription on the door of the Temple of Kamatesvari within the Garh. This inscription is placed at an inaccessible height, and the reading given in this work was prior to that taken by the Public Works Department of the State, and requires minor emendation.

In Chapters I—VI of this History of Cooch Behar, the ancient history of the country is reviewed. In the Chapters V and VI the prevailing conditions in the country have been described. After this, the history of Cooch Behar under the Rulers of the Haihaya dynasty begins, to end in Chapter XII. The subject-matter of the succeeding seven Chapters is supplementary to the contents of Chapters VII—XII.—
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CHAPTER XIII—Some branches of the Cooch Behar ruling family.—

This has reference to the branches of the ruling family which gained special recognition outside the State of Cooch Behar.

CHAPTER XIV—The Mahomedan connection.—

A chronological précis of the conquest or rather part-occupation of the country effected by contemporary Mahomedan rulers or governors.

CHAPTER XV—Narayani coins.—

A numismatic study of the coins issued by the ‘Narayan’ rulers of Cooch Behar.

CHAPTER XVI—The Nazir and Gosvami.—

The quarrel which began at the end of the 18th century between Chhatra Nazir Khagendranarayan Kumar and Rajguru Sarbananda Gosvami.

CHAPTER XVII—Bhutan Duars.—

Bhutan history and the history of the separation from the State of Cooch Behar of the territory known as the ‘Duar’ situated between the present State of Cooch Behar and Bhutan.

CHAPTER XVIII.—The Cooch Behar Treaty.—

The relations between the Ruler of Cooch Behar and the East India Company, and the terms of the treaty.

CHAPTER XIX.—Various chronological discussions.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY AND APPENDICES.

The works known as the Rājvansāvalī and in particular those with special relevance to the history of Cooch Behar, have been described briefly in the Bibliography appended to this work. For the convenience of the reader a list of other works from which material has been derived, is given. References to Urdu and Persian works, which could not be inserted in their proper places in the text, because of printing difficulties, are included separately in the Appendices. The maps annexed, are roughly drawn and based on both old and contemporary sources of information. Illustrations of certain temples, inscribed figures, coins, and photographs of two cannon, have been introduced at suitable places in the text.

The genealogical table has been prepared mainly from the Rājapāthāvyāna and the colophon of “Banaparva” translated by Paramānanda Tarkālakāra (1797 A. D.) importing such additions and alterations proved necessary after discussion and consultation with Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Kt., M. A., C. I. E., formerly Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, and Professor Padmanath Vidyabinode Tattvasarasvati, M. A., formerly of the Cotton College Guhati. Maharajkumar Victor Nityendra Narayan and the Members of the Regency Council supported these emendations after full consideration.

Sir Edward Gait was of opinion that his work ‘The History of Assam’ would constitute a mere guide to historians, and as he wrote to the author in February 1924, could not be free from errors. Sir Edward’s remarks may be taken to apply equally to this present undertaking.

The author cannot adequately express his obligation to Maharajkumar Victor Nityendra Narayan for his never-failing practical assistance. Sir Jadunath Sarkar and Professor Padmanath Vidyabinode have shown great and rare favours by their advice, the latter especially by carefully going through this work when the manuscript was ready. Much help has been contributed by men of letters in the State and by literary societies in several places beyond. To those specialists also who advised in deciphering doubtful passages, to Sjt. Akhil Chandra Bharatibhusan of Cooch Behar who kindly corrected the proofs, to all these coadjutors the writer expresses his sincere gratitude.
—And also, to Her Highness the Maharani Sahiba of Cooch Behar, who as Regent of the State of Cooch Behar was pleased to read this work and to commend it. (11)

Cooch Behar:

The 24th Chaitra 1842 B. S.

AMANATULLA AHMED.

(11). Letter No. 262, dated the 8th June, 1935, from the Private Secretary to Her Highness the Maharani Regent, to the author.