

A  
CONCISE HISTORY  
OF  
THE DARJEELING DISTRICT  
SINCE 1835  
WITH  
A COMPLETE ITINERARY OF  
TOURS  
IN SIKKIM AND THE DISTRICT

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being taken by the stiff and quick growing Criptomeria. Wild Cherries grow abundantly about and below Darjeeling. The Barberry is indigenous to the district, the fruit is fully equal to its English forbear, while the wood is green and is used for dying purposes. The 'stink-wood' is yellow in colour and very durable. Then we come to the tea and coffee plants both of which are exotics. The latter was first planted out in Kurseong where even now a few plants exist. Raspberries cover five varieties, while the Strawberry is full flavoured but slightly tartar than the English variety. Apples, Pears and Plums being exotic will not thrive and ripen. Peaches bear luxuriantly, but the fruit is bitter and fit only for making jam. A wild grape is found on the lower eastern slopes.

### Fauna.

The following is a list of the Fauna to be found in this district: Antelope (rare) Bear (black, sloth and sun) Bison, Boar, Cats (civet, jungle and tiger), Deer (barking, hog and spotted), Elephant, Fox, Gaur, Gayal (or Methin, the wild cattle of Bhutan and Burma) Goat (goral and serrow), Hare, Jackal, Leopard (ordinary and black), Lynx (rare), Mongoose, Ounce (Snowleopard), Panther, Porcupine, Rhino (rare), Sambar, Squirrel (flying and ordinary), Tiger, Wild-dog, Wolf; and Snakes, of which there are 47 varieties the chief being the Python,\* which often tapers 28 feet, the Adder, Karait, Cobrat [the King Cobra (Hamadryas elaps) which measures 14 feet and more, a pretty green variety with pink hoods, and the black, all of which are exceedingly aggressive attacking at sight] and the Russell's Viper.

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\*These comparatively dwarf into insignificance when compared to the Secury, a water-snake of Brazil, which measures 45 and more in length.

† *Fixed fangs*—Cobras, the Hamadryas elaps, all hooded snakes and all Australian serpents, therefore, strike downwards and forwards, while the poison causes the blood to coagulate. *Folding fangs*—The Daboia and Karait of India, all vipers, rattlesnakes, and the great bulk of African snakes have fangs which curve and lie along the upper jaw when at rest: while they strike horizontally and laterally; the poison causes the blood to become watery.