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brought this upon him. Because he took the meat he brought bad luck upon him.

A. J. N. TREMEARNE.

MANIPURI PROVERBS.

THE following twenty proverbs in use among the Manipuris have been collected by Mr. H. J. Wince, Headmaster of the Johnstone School, Imphal. An exact translation and the nearest English equivalent or an explanation follow each proverb.

J. SHAKESPEAR.

1. Cheiren chaphubu kainaba yeibra?
Are the Cheiren pots beaten to break them? (*i.e.* Spare the rod and spoil the child. Cheiren is a place in Manipur where the best pottery can be obtained, and pots are beaten to shape them, not formed on wheels as in England).
2. Nungshit sittana una lengbra?
Without the breeze blowing can the leaves tremble? (*i.e.* There is no smoke without there being a fire).
3. Leppa challaga phamba challi.
Phamba challaga hipa challi.
After providing standing room [he] wants sitting room; after sitting room he desires sleeping room, (*i.e.* The more he gets the more he wants).
4. Huinan macha challaga leiton leki.
If you show much affection for a pup he will lick the tip of your tongue, (*i.e.* Give him an inch, he'll take an ell. The Manipuris do not love dogs, but regard them as causes of defilement. This proverb is used when a mean or low man is encouraged and does not know where to draw the line).
5. Khong chotlaga chin chotli.
If you wet your feet (or legs) you wet your mouth. (The staple food of the Manipuris is fish, and to get it they have to get into water with their traps or nets.)

6. Hi ani tonglaga karāng segai.
When going in two boats, [one leg in each], you tear the fork
[of the leg], (*i.e.* Between two stools one comes to the
ground).
7. Nung anigi marakta hā onba.
You become a yam when placed between two stones, (*i.e.*
When a man acts as a go-between for two enemies he
is in danger of becoming unfriendly to both).
8. Tingkhangbu tingkhanghanba.
To get out one thorn [that has pierced you] by inserting
another [into the flesh], (*i.e.* Set a thief to catch a thief).
9. Ngaprum makhunda ngaprum thajinba.¹
To set one eel into the hole of another eel, (*i.e.* Set a thief to
catch a thief).
10. Uchi kallaktuna yum mei thāba.
Setting [one's] house on fire to spite a rat, (*i.e.* To cut off one's
nose to spite one's face).
11. Sabina mama noknaba.
A young mole laughing at its mother, (*i.e.* The pot calling the
kettle black).
12. Haudong tuminleiba chapu ngammi.
A quiet cat can [slyly] come and eat what the [rice] pot con-
tains, (*i.e.* Still waters run deep).
13. Sendāng nganna tābana machangchai.
The early sparrow gets the best rice to eat, (*i.e.* The early bird
catches the fattest worm).
14. Khumdrabadi yārabani.
If you do not reply, you are agreeable, (*i.e.* Silence gives con-
sent).
15. Una mahei yāllaga maru luki.
A tree that bears much fruit droops its head, (*i.e.* A big or

¹ This is found also in Primrose's list of Meithei proverbs, *Grammar*, pp. 91
et seq. T. C. II.

very clever person is always humble, but it is not so with foolish people, who are very proud).²

16. Huibu dolai tonghallaga thigang uraga chongthei.

A dog, when made to ride a palanquin, jumps down on seeing a dung-heap, (*i.e.* What's bred in the bones will come out in the flesh. Among the Manipuris riding a *palky* is considered a great honour, as only certain people are permitted to do it).

17. Lamboibada samjet pibagum.

Like giving an ascetic a comb, (*i.e.* Casting pearls before swine. Hindu ascetics in Manipur shave their heads, so that a comb is thrown away on them).

18. Sal asibagi manakta leplaga prachit³ phangi.

When [found] standing near a dead cow you receive penance. (Hindus do not kill, but worship, the cow, so that, if they are found near others killing a cow, they are included among the company of evil-doers.)

19. Pena semlingeida Samuran yauba.

While tuning the *pena* (an instrument like a fiddle), I might have reached Samuran. (Samuran is a village in the south of Manipur near Wangoi, and the idea here is a protest against waste of time in profitless preliminaries.)

20. Khutta paiba itāūgi yāda hukpa eigi.

What I hold in my hands is my friend's, what I hold in my teeth mine, (*i.e.* A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush).

² Or, alternatively, a tree that bears much fruit has deep roots. T. C. II.

³ *Prachit* = *prajas chhitta*, a purificatory penance. The proverb means that you cannot touch pitch without being defiled, and also includes the idea that birds of a feather flock together. T. C. II.