

same Bannerji family still runs it. (*Makaibari Archives*). Captain Samler's pioneering work in tea was never given any recognition. According to official records therefore, in 1841, after he shifted to Darjeeling, for the record, it was Campbell who successfully experimented with tea cultivation in his *Beechwood Estate* just below the present Municipality Building of Darjeeling Town. So the Darjeeling hills proved to be ideally suited for growing tea on a commercial scale.

Once this was proved, Britishers swarmed the hills to start tea plantations. But with no previous experience, they had to rely on information obtained hearsay and it was a pure learn-as-you-earn industry or go-broke-as-you-work business. The Brits were unable to recruit local labor, the Sikkim Rajah had forbidden his subjects to work for the Gora, and at any rate the Lepchas were far too independent to bother about jobs – their needs were few, their wants even fewer and they could easily live off the land. Tea plantations in Darjeeling desperately needed labor *in large numbers*.

To do this the British forcibly rounded up “natives” from the Chotta Nagpur hilly regions of the Deccan Plateau and brought them to Darjeeling to work as bonded labor on the tea plantations. The logic was that they came from the same altitudes, about 4000 feet above sea level, so presumably they could adapt, they were docile and they were hard workers. But these Chotta Nagpur folk simply couldn't cope with the cold and damp of the Darjeeling hills so when nightfall came they ran away – all of them, and too far away from home. they settled in the jungles of the Darjeeling Terai where their descendents still live today. Some of these were the *Mundas and the Uraons* enumerated in “*The Final Report on the Darjeeling Tract Settlement*” by the Settlement Officer in 1898. A great deal more settled in the Dooars areas – the further away from the *Goras* the better.

In the second half of the 1800's, fed up of being forcibly rounded up as labor.

two brave lads, Birsa Munda and his younger brother, led an unsuccessful “*Santhal Uprising*” against the British. But with only bows and arrows, just



