

Northern Messenger

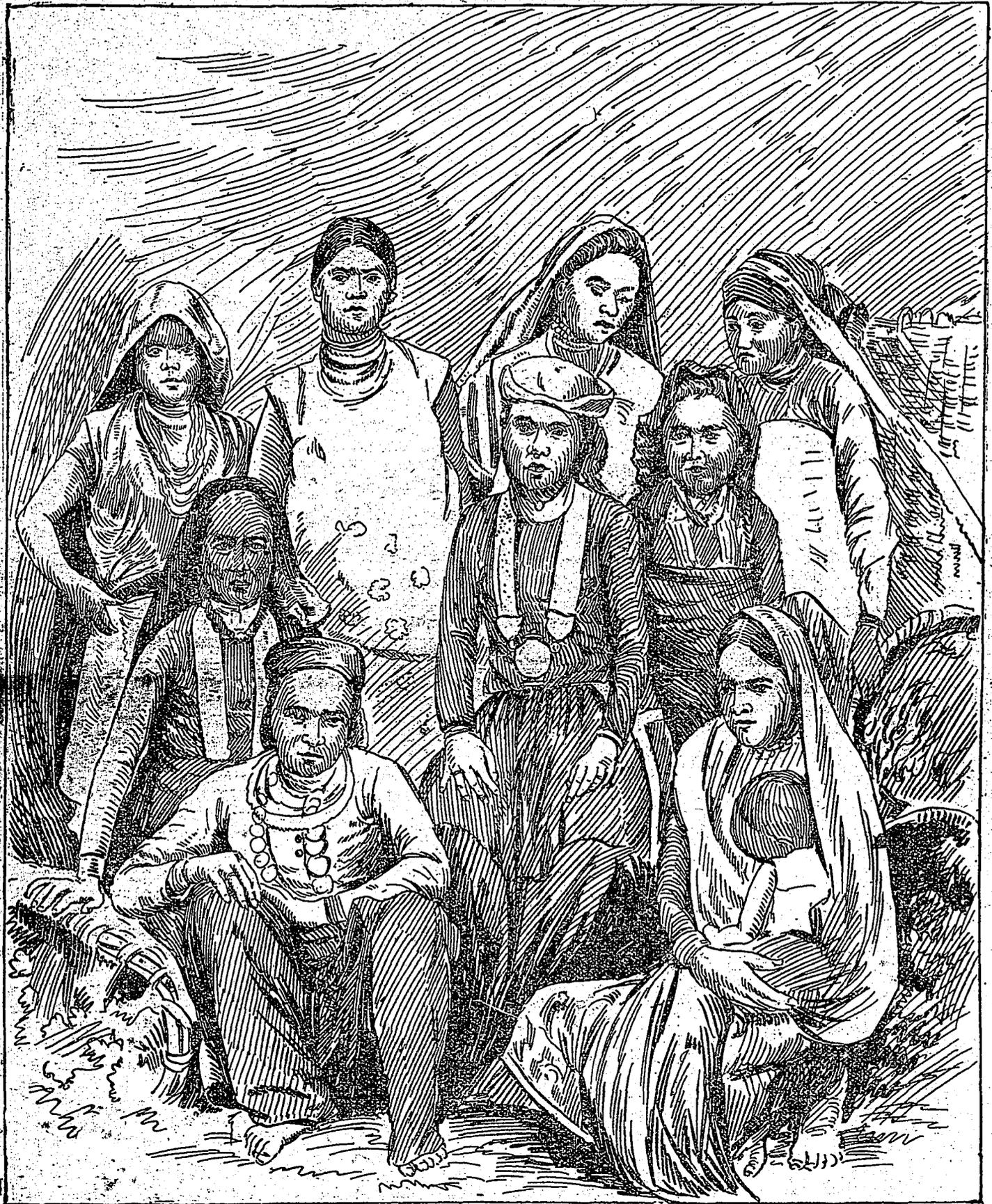
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NATIVE INDIAN WOMEN.

Tea Growing in India.

(R. Blechenden, Commissioner, in 'Frank Leslie's Magazine'.)

The modern development of the natural resources of India was made possible by the introduction of the railway into that country, remote districts having been linked together, and it is this alone which has made it feasible to carry to millions who would otherwise be starving, even to death the wheat grown in the fields of California and the

great West—the newest part of a land undiscovered at the time when the ancient civilization of India was in its zenith. Apart from steam, the one thing which has been the most potent factor in the leaven of commercial activity now working in India was the discovery that the tea plant grew wild in Assam. Its cultivation, first tried in a tentative way, proved so satisfactory that capital was readily forthcoming to develop such a promising source of wealth. It was soon seen that more labor was required than could be obtained in the thinly

peopled jungle country, where only rich virgin soil was available.

The development of the railway system, which now reaches from end to end of the country, and covers more than twenty thousand miles of road, has made it possible to obtain labor from the 'congested' districts, thus solving the great problem of over-population, as the demand existing at one end of the line is filled by the supply at many places through which it passes. This demand for labor is not confined to the mainland, but is equally urgent in Ceylon, where the great