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Expedition from, Burma, viâ the Irrawaddy and Bhamo, to South-Western China

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ludicrous manner to excel in pose and the elegance of his attitudes. All are dressed in their very best clothes, and the women don every particle of finery they can lay their hands on. Both sexes are literally covered with garlands, and it is altogether a very brave show and brilliant spectacle. As the men dance, the women and children in evident admiration sit gazing down on them from every house-top whence a good point of view can be obtained, and a more striking picture than is at this time presented can hardly be conceived. Meanwhile the priests, *i. e.* Brahmins, are not idle. They take off their upper garments, advance with a sidelong step, going through certain mummeries with incense and naked swords, and after gently chastising themselves with chains, taking very good care not to hit too hard, they are then supposed to be properly inspired, and stand like Delphic oracles, ready to answer any questions the gaping crowd may put to them.

X.—*Expedition from Burma, viâ the Irrawaddy and Bhamo, to South-Western China.* By Major E. B. Sladen, H.M. Political Resident, Burma.

Read June 26th, 1871.

THE Expedition which I had the honour to command left Mandalay by steamer on 13th January, 1868. One of our objects in proceeding by steamer was to test the navigability of the Irrawaddy for steam-traffic beyond or above the capital. Hitherto no steamer had ever ascended the river as far north as Bhamo, and the Burmese Government had publicly declared that no steamer could possibly do so at that time, or during certain seasons of the year, when the river was said to be at its lowest depth. Our steamer, however, the draught of which did not exceed 3' feet, reached Bhamo without difficulty of any kind in river navigation; and the result of our trip proves generally that the Irrawaddy is navigable for steamers of moderate draught at all seasons of the year, as far north as Bhamo, a distance of 900 miles from our starting-point at the Port of Rangoon, and 300 miles above the royal capital of Mandalay.

Throughout its whole course from Mandalay to Bhamo the river presents fresh scenes of ever-varying beauty; but the geographical interest of the journey culminates at the gorges or defiles which occur at two points in this portion of the Irrawaddy's mid-course through Upper Burma.

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The following brief remarks on the third,* or most southern, of these defiles, about 60 miles above Mandalay, are extracted from my rough note-book, and were jotted down, I remember, on the spot, as my boat glided down the river on our return journey from Bhamo.

"*September 19th*, 1868.—Passed Sempanago at 11 A.M., and immediately afterwards entered the third defile. It seems endless, and, as far as appearances go, is so shut in at each bend in its course as to deny the possibility of exit altogether. Looking north and south from Thee-ha-dau,† the view is strikingly beautiful. The water is smooth, placid, and without a ripple. The scenery is no longer that of a river, but bears all the characteristic aspects of a mountain-girt lake. Does it bear any resemblance to the lake-scenery of Europe, or to some of the views presented on the Rhine in certain portions of its course? I think it does; but, if so, there are also many wide diversities. Here, at least, palm-trees of every variety rise above the banks. The forest-trees, on either side, are either hidden by orchids, or their branches are borne down by a network of gigantic creepers. Graceful pagodas and Buddhistic remains seem full of an inspiration of their own, as they reveal themselves at each turn in prominent but yet modest profusion. Parrots flit across the scene with a screech, and monkeys form our escort on the banks. Dolphins occasionally pop up on the surface of the water, and turn themselves over with a lazy roll. Surely this is not Europe! We are in the tropics with a vengeance, and the thermometer in my boat stands at 90°," &c.

The second defile, which occurs only a few miles below Bhamo, is so graphically described by a traveller who passed through it in November last ‡ that I cannot help quoting a few extracts from his narrative. He says:—"About 11 o'clock we entered the second defile, which is about 15 miles in length. The scenery of this defile or gorge surpasses anything I have ever beheld. The river narrows in, whilst the banks on either side rise to a height of from 500 to 800 feet, and are covered with thick woods. The most striking part of the defile is a huge rock, which is called Monkey Castle, from the number of monkeys which hang about it. This is a vast perpendicular mass, rising apparently at least 800 feet above the glass-like river. It is impossible to describe our impressions of the grandeur of this wonderful defile. During the couple of hours we were passing through, there was a continual change: sometimes the stream took a winding course between the elevated

* The first occurs about 10 miles north of Bhamo.

† A village on the right bank, where coal is found.

‡ Mr. Talboys Wheeler, Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of British Burma.

and precipitous banks, with their towering forests; at other places we came upon a long vista of wood and stream. Here and there was a pagoda, or a village, or a few fishermen in a boat. On the whole, I do not remember any scene so calculated to please and astonish the eye—not by rude, wild precipices, but by glorious heights crowned with forests, and throwing their dark shade upon the smooth water.”

I have already mentioned Thee-ha-dau, a village within the third defile, where coal is found at several outcroppings not far from the river bank.

This place is otherwise famous for a large species of cat-fish which have been tamed by the Buddhist priests, who inhabit a monastery on a small island in mid-stream near which the tame fish are always to be found.

Dr. Anderson who accompanied the expedition as naturalist, has thus rather playfully described his first interview, or intercourse, with these tame fish.

He tells us, “that one of the chief interests attached to Thee-ha-dau are the remarkably tame fish, which come to be fed whenever they are called. We went (he says) provided with rice and plantains, and the boatmen who accompanied us immediately began calling out Tit, Tit, Tit. In a few moments we noticed a disturbance of the surface of the water, and after reiterated cries of Tit, Tit, Tit, the fish came to the bank and commenced devouring the rice and plantains we threw to them. In their eagerness to be fed they protruded their large uncouth heads, and even a great part of their backs, above water; and, with their capacious mouths wide open, waited patiently for the handfuls of food, which they swallowed without returning to the water. I stroked them down the head and back, and pulled their long feelers without giving offence. I put my clenched fist in their mouths, but on reflection desisted from this hazardous mode of investigation; for had one closed his mouth, I should certainly have had to follow him, *nolens volens*, into the water; and it is difficult to say what treatment I might have experienced there, with their appetites and their palates fresh from the memories of uncooked rice, and lusciously ripe plantains.”

The expedition reached the Burmese frontier town of Bhamo, from which it commenced its land journey across the Kachyen Hills, in a north-easterly direction, towards the Chinese frontier province of Yunnan.

Bhamo itself (called and pronounced on the spot Bhamāw) was, only a few years ago, the emporium of a large trade between Burma and south-western China. The cessation of that trade brought about by a Mahomedan rising in Yunnan on the one

side, and the almost simultaneous occupation of Pegu by the British on the other, affected the progress and prosperity of Bhamo to such an extent that, from having been a place of comparative importance, it had dwindled down into insignificance, and at the time of our arrival contained only 500 houses, and a mixed population of Burmese, Chinese, and Shan Burmese, which did not exceed in all 5000 souls.

Our own stay at Bhamo ought not to have exceeded a few days, during which preparations would have to be made for the land journey beyond; but the perversity of circumstance, and the anomalies of native governments or native officials, detained us in indolence and anxiety for nearly six weeks.

I must illustrate some of the difficulties of this period by a few random extracts from my rough notes, and official narrative of the expedition, since published by Government.

"On 22nd January, the day after our arrival at Bhamo, the two Tsitkays, or head men of the town and district, paid us a visit on board the steamer. They were courteous, but exceedingly reserved as regarded the subject of the expedition. They specially ignored the existence of all orders from the capital which directed that preparation should be made for our reception at Bhamo, or for our journey onwards, &c., &c.

"It was not very encouraging to us to be informed by these officers of the Burmese Government that the only routes eastward, across the Kachyen Hills, were effectually closed against transit of every kind—or to learn two days later, after notices had been sent to the hill chiefs, who held the only supposed practicable line *viâ* Ponlyne, that they refused to recognize the summons of the Burmese Tsitkays, and required written orders from the Governor himself before they consented to come to Bhamo, or enter into preliminaries relating to our journey across their hill territories. The old Governor had only recently been murdered and the advent of a new one, depending as it did on Burmese caprice, made it a matter of extreme uncertainty whether the written orders required by the hill chiefs could be forthcoming at any reasonable period during that cold season.

"There was further cause for discouragement, in the fact that, owing to certain differences which existed between the Burmese inhabitants and the Kachyen Hill tribes, which inhabited the hill country around, Kachyens were positively interdicted from entering Bhamo; and that thus the very people whom we had come to conciliate, and by whose friendly assistance alone it was possible to carry out the purposes of the expedition, had been induced by our connectionship with Burmese officials to look upon us as something akin to natural enemies.

"On 23rd January, I returned the official visit of the two Tsitkays, and at the same time was introduced to an old Chinese gentleman, who was specially allowed to exercise jurisdiction of some sort over his Chinese brethren located at Bhamo.

"The officials were courteous as ever, and received me with as great a display of dignified hospitality as the impromptu nature of the occasion admitted. But however impressive this may have been in one sense, the interview disclosed with powerful apparency that no effort was being spared by which to discourage and destroy, by plausible argument, every hope we might hitherto have entertained of reasonable success in the undertaking we were then committed to.

"The Kachyens were described as treacherous and intractable. They were represented as disinclined to allow transit of any kind to foreigners across their hills. Though nominally subject to Burma, they professed to be independent, and lived, it was said, in a state of indiscriminate feud amongst themselves, and by general depredation on the villages or property of their immediate neighbours.

"The country beyond the Kachyen Hills, as well as the whole Chinese frontier, through which our route lay, had lapsed into a state of dangerous disorganization, and was infested and preyed upon by large bands of marauders, who, having first submitted during a state of anarchy to being despoiled themselves, were now compelled in turn to obtain a livelihood by a reckless spoliation of others. The head Chinaman asked me with bitter significance, 'How do you expect to succeed in a project which kings have attempted and repeatedly failed in?'"

But it is needless here to enter into the history of our six weeks' detention on the Burmese frontier. The narrative would serve only as a comment on the fertility of native intrigue, by which the very Government which directly professed to assist our mission, indirectly sought to make that assistance nugatory by the semblance of difficulties within its own control, or arising in chief part out of its own creative design, or the resources of its too lively imagination.

For some reason or other, which I shall not at present try to account for, every attempt at exploration across the forbidden tract which lay between Burma and China had hitherto failed. This opposition appears to have been equally effective on both sides of the frontier, and as actively maintained by both the Burmese and Chinese Governments, for reasons for which they would doubtless find no difficulty in affording a satisfactory explanation.

I have it, on the authority of Don Abbona, a Catholic missionary priest, who was then in communication with his co-religionist associates in China, that Father Chauveau, now a bishop in Thibet, made three unsuccessful attempts to cross over from Yunnan to Momein. In these attempts he used considerable effort, and went so far as to avail himself of different disguises; but baffled everywhere he was compelled to desist, and relinquished all hope of reaching the Burmese frontier.

I have already said that our route, on commencing the land journey from Bhamo, took a north-easterly direction across the Kachyen Hills, an irregular transverse range of mountains, with an average breadth of 50 to 70 miles.

As seen from Bhamo, this great hill-range would appear to be only a continuation of the central Shan ranges which occur to the eastward of Mandalay. On examination, they turn out to be nothing more than secondary ranges, with an inclination E.N.E. and S.S.W., forming well-defined valleys, and determining the course of three of the principal affluents of the Irrawaddy in its mid-course through Burmese territory (the Moolay, Taping and Shwélee).

These subsidiary ranges terminate abruptly, on their eastern and southern extremity, within a few miles of the east bank of the Irrawaddy; and the intervening space between their abrupt termination and the river is composed of low undulating ground, subject to occasional inundation, and alternately covered with high grass, low jungle, and occasional clearances with rice-cultivation.

But at their north-east extremity these same subsidiary ranges (confused and chaotic as they are as regards direction and configuration within the belt or zone known in Burma as the Kachyen Hills) open out into long, well-defined parallel ranges, with richly fertile and naturally exceptional and picturesque valleys, within which lies, and which in themselves comprise, the country hitherto only vaguely known to us by name as the Northern Shan States.

Pursuing these same ranges to their north-east extremity, we found them terminate or rather merge into the great central ranges of Yunnan, which, as seen from Momein, we estimated to attain to an altitude of 15,000 feet, with a general north and south inclination, and forming, no doubt, the principal watershed between the basins of the Irrawaddy and Great Cambodia (Mékon) rivers.

It is important to bear in mind this peculiar configuration of the country which intervenes at this point between Bhamo and the Chinese frontier, for it solves in great measure the very

important problem of an overland trade-route which is to connect these two countries; and proves, moreover, I think, that the Burmese and Chinese populations and Governments, at a time when trade communication flourished in these parts, had both observed and availed themselves of the natural advantages of position and facilities for transit, which were presented to them by following either of these valleys,—which, by directness of course, general inclination and position, so invitingly held out the means of intercommunication and commercial intercourse between their respective countries.

It is further interesting, too, to note this configuration, because it discloses a geographical certainty, which nothing but exploration could possibly have solved.

I can well remember during several years' residence at Mandalay, and more especially during our six weeks' detention at Bhamo, trying in vain to imagine to myself, even with the aid of abundant enquiry—trying in vain, I may say, to form any definite idea in my own mind of the conflicting accounts given to us of the Kachyen Hills and the country which lay beyond them. Doubts are now solved, and we hold the proofs of personal observation.

I must again have recourse to extracts from my rough notes and official narrative of the expedition as the readiest and shortest means at my disposal in attempting a brief description of the country we passed through, its inhabitants, and some of the incidents of our land journey as far as the Chinese walled city of Momein; but before I do so, let me say a word or two about the different races whose names repeatedly occur in my narrative, and of whom no succinct details have hitherto been published. I shall refer, first, to the Kachyens; secondly, to the Shans (of the Northern Shan States); and thirdly, to the Panthays, or Mahomedan Chinese of Yunnan.

The Kachyens of Burma are identical with the Singphos of India, or rather the Singphos of the hill-districts which intervene between Burma and Eastern Bengal on the north, including Assam. "Kachyen" is merely the Burmese name given to these hill-tribes; but wherever we came in contact with them, although broken up into a number of distinct tribal denominations, they always preserved the general term of Seng-Phaw, which they said applied to their race as a whole, and must be regarded by us as a clear indication of their identity with the Singphos, and probably also the Kakoo hill-tribes who range as far north as the borders of Assam.

Eastward, too, these Kachyens occupy most of the hill-tracts as far as Momein. In Burma they are spoken of as wild,

ferocious, and intractable; but this arises out of ill-treatment and the aggressive exactions of Burmese officials on the one hand, and retaliatory raids made by the hill-tribes on the other. In the Shan States, where the Kachyens are better understood, and live on terms of equality with their Shan neighbours, they are friendly and peaceably inclined, commit no excesses, and attend in numbers as sellers and buyers at markets, which are regularly held at several towns within the country known as the Northern Shan States.

Our own experience of these Kachyens is, that, under proper treatment, they proved themselves to be kind, tractable and intelligent, with a certain admixture of truth and treachery, which is inseparably connected with semi-barbarous nature all over the world. They are keen traders, work cheerfully for gain, and are hospitable to strangers. Their religion consists solely in the propitiation of good and evil spirits, by sacrifices, and observances too numerous to mention. It may be stated, however, that mountains, valleys, trees, lakes, and even the sun and moon, are under the influence of presiding deities, or nats, all of which exercise power over the destinies of mankind, and demand propitiation. Ghosts are invariably believed in: they are said to be the spirits of those only who have died a violent death; they assume monstrous shapes, and are always dreaded as messengers of evil.

The Shans generally have been variously described by different writers who have visited the Southern Shan States subject to Burma, or the Siamese Shan States bordering on Siam; but no European traveller, previous to our expedition of 1868, seems ever to have come into contact, in their own country, with the Northern Shan States, which lie within the province of Yunnan.

Within these states we found Shans proper, who occupy the Sanda and Nantin valleys, and Mynetha Shans, who are confined principally to the Hotha and Latha valleys. The latter have a distinct language of their own, and their dress and other characteristics proclaim a Chinese admixture, in a similar degree to the Burmese admixture so traceable in the Shan races bordering on Burma. The wonder is, that, hemmed in as the Shans are by such distinctly pronounced nationalities as the Burmese, the Siamese, and the Chinese, they should have preserved so many distinctive characteristics of race, or that they should not have merged entirely into one or other of the great nationalities by which they are everywhere surrounded.

The Panthays are Mahomedan Chinese, who, being formerly subject to the Chinese Government, have within recent years

risen in insurrection, and proclaimed their independence throughout the greater portion of Yunnan on the south, and the provinces of Shansi and Kansu on the north.

Their historical origin is somewhat indefinite; but most accounts of them, given by themselves, agree in the fact that originally they emigrated, or were sent over as a war contingent from Central Asia to assist some remote Chinese emperor in repelling a Chinese invasion. A return to their own country having been impracticable, the Central Asian contingent intermarried with the Chinese, and for centuries past have been scattered abroad through different provinces of China, where they have managed to preserve a Mahomedan religion and nationality, and become powerful enough, as at the present time, to establish in different parts of the country a separate Mahomedan government.

It was by the friendly and active aid of these Mahomedan Chinese that our expedition was enabled to reach the city of Momein, then in their possession; but, having cleared the way thus far, I shall now return to that expedition, and commence with a short description of our start from Bhamo on the 26th February, 1868.

The 26th February is a day to be remembered in the history of our expedition. On the 25th our baggage had been despatched by boat up the Taping River to the village of See-kaw, where mules were engaged to be in readiness to transport us across the Kachyen Hills as far as the Shan town of Manwyne.

The officials failed in their promise to supply us with porters or guides, although they knew the latter to be indispensable, as the first portion of our march lay through dense jungle, which was intersected at short intervals by branch roads, which led no one knew where, and a broad unfordable river would be encountered, and could only be crossed by pre-arrangement entered into with Burmese officials. However we got off at 10 A.M. with incomplete attendants and no guides. A Burmese petty official was caught by accident as we rode through the town, and persuaded into accompanying the party, after carefully stipulating that I would use my influence at the Burmese headquarters to screen him from after punishment for having given his aid to the British expedition.

It was owing to this aid that we were enabled to reach the village of Tahmeylon at 2 P.M., where we settled down at once into comfortable quarters in a deserted monastery (Phoongyee house), amongst model shrines carved in wood and inlaid with variegated looking-glass, a library of religious books, sacred alms-bowls, and complacent images of Gaudama in every variety of shape and profusion.

The baggage-boats which left Bhamo the previous evening, passed up the river during the afternoon towards our proposed halting-place at See-kaw, which we reached ourselves on the following morning (27th February), and found there our mules and mule-men, with a few Kachyen chiefs and their Pawmynes, or deputies, who were afraid to trust themselves further in the vicinity of their Burmese oppressors at Bhamo.

Four days were passed in arranging with mule-men at See-kaw. The mules belong generally to petty proprietors, each of whom considers himself an irresponsible agent, with whom separate agreements have to be made in all that relates to the hire of his particular property. But as soon as the hire had been effected, new difficulties commenced. The baggage was made over to the Kachyen chiefs, and passed in review by the several mule proprietors, who at once raised a clamour as to its apportionment into allotments. This clamour, in which we took no part, seemed likely to end in a breach of agreement, and caused repeated threats on the part of the mule proprietors to leave us without carriage altogether.

I was obliged to depend almost entirely at this time on the Kachyen chief, Ponlyne, and a Chinese interpreter, Moungh Shoay-yah, who had been specially made over to me by His Majesty the King of Burma. Both were occasionally drunk; but this was of no consequence, as drunkenness appeared to be the normal condition of all Kachyen chiefs when on duty, and was not regarded by them as in any way an interruption to ordinary business.

The expedition did not get away from See-kaw until 2 P.M. on 2nd March. Three Kachyen chiefs lead the way, the mules follow, and the police armed escort is told off to ammunition and cash-chest.

The route lay in a northerly direction, through paddy or grass fields, for a distance of three miles, as far as the small village of See-het; but here we turned abruptly to the right, and commenced to ascend a steep spur of the Kachyen Hills, leading to Ponlyne. We had headed our baggage, and a temporary halt took place.

The three Kachyen chiefs, who had preceded us from See-kaw, were here seated evidently in deep counsel, and much excited. As I came up, Ponlyne ran to meet me, and pointed out the road up the ascent, exclaiming at the same time "All right! go on; don't be afraid."

This was rather puzzling; for, hitherto, there had been no cause for apprehension of any sort.

But on we went. My pony was a good climber, and led the way. After ascending the hills some two miles, a shot was fired

some distance in our front. I waited until Dr. Anderson had joined me. A second shot; then four shots all at once, but no sound of a bullet. The Kachyens of our party were most of them drunk. They shouted like fiends, and urged us to fire off our guns, which we refused to do, but went on as if nothing had occurred.

One of these Kachyens was mounted on a mule, and became more dangerous at close quarters, as a friend, than any number of our supposed enemies at a distance in the bush. In his excitement he flourished a long sharp sword, in reckless disregard of every one but himself. He became a still more formidable animal when the sword was sheathed, and his matchlock brought into active operation. Drunkenness seemed only to steady his movements, for, though riding over a road particularly rough, and in many places a steep incline, the matchlock was, nevertheless, loaded and fired, with wonderful precision as regards time, but utter recklessness as regards direction. The man was both friendly and quarrelsome at the same time. A word out of place would have turned him at once into a foe, and the only way of keeping him in good humour with himself, and with us, was to praise his dexterity, and promise to renew his exhausted powder-flask as soon as we arrived at the village we were journeying to.

I shall now read from my diary our first day's experiences on the far-famed Kachyen Hills at Ponlyne.

"March 3rd, 1868.—Reached this place late last night. The Pawmyne conducted us to a native house, which had been specially set apart for our accommodation. None of our baggage had arrived; but there was a novelty about the scene and occasion which atoned in some measure for the absence, after a long march, of either bed or supper.

"We stroll out and watch Kachyen women pounding paddy by moonlight. An old lady of the party beckoned to me to follow her, and I was conducted, with a thrill of ambiguity as to results, to a house at a little distance, where I found the Ponlyne chief himself, surrounded by his family. It was a novel and interesting picture. The chief made me share his own carpet; the rest seated themselves on blocks of wood or pieces of bamboo, and certain members of the family attended us with relays of Kachyen beer and Chinese shamshoo.

"This morning we are informed that a portion of our baggage, including ammunition and cash-chest, has been looted by the Kachyen chief of Tahlon. As the day wears on matters improve. We find that the mule-men, who were supposed to be missing, have merely herded together for the night at their own pet halting-places.

"The Jemmadar, with the escort, arrived at 1 P.M. The Ponlyne chief has sent his own son to release our ammunition and cash-chest, which are being unaccountably detained by the chief of Tahlon. When they arrive, we shall have lost nothing of consequence, though things looked awkward at first, and the expedition was in danger of coming to an abrupt termination after its first march.

"The chief's wife has paid us a visit in great state, attended by her family and a number of female companions. She brings presents of geese, boiled rice, eggs, and Kachyen beer (called Sheroo). She is a fine, intelligent, matronly-looking woman, and the 'get-up,' though a little *outré* at first sight, is by no means unbecoming. The head-dress consists of a black cotton scarf, with silk-embroidered ends, which is wound round the head as a turban and made to ascend a foot in height, in the shape of an inverted pyramid. The upper garment is a loose black velvet jacket, studded here and there with large silver embossments, which encircle the neck from behind and are continued in lines down the front and round the skirt. The lower garment is a single dark-blue cotton cloth, about a yard and a half in length, which passes once round the body from the waist to the knees, and is fastened in front with a simple tuck. It is edged at one end with a red woollen border, a foot in depth; and this decorative part of the garment is allowed by all Kachyen women to dangle on one side, with an effect which to Kachyen comprehensions is doubtless very captivating.

"During the day we heard sounds of Kachyen music, and, going in search, arrive at a house on the outskirts of the village in which men, women, and children are dancing vigorously to a rattling accompaniment of gongs and sticks, beaten by themselves. They do not object to our presence, and Anderson and I enter the house and join in the dance, which is a measured side-step with side-movement, crab-fashion. We go round in our proper places, and are enjoying a certain wild novelty in the arrangements, when suddenly the male dancers become wilder than ever, and rush madly out of the house like demons; we remain inside with the women. The scene of excitement has given place to wailing and lamentation; two of the women retire, and we see them crying piteously over the corpse of a child, which has been carefully concealed in a side apartment. The dance was a death-dance, and we, too, have joined in it, and thus helped, according to Kachyen belief, to drive from its late tenement the hovering spirit of the poor dead child. We sit down mournfully, and our female hosts hand round Kachyen beer in conical cups of plantain-leaf, which have been ingeniously improvised for our special benefit."

We did not leave Ponlyne village until the 5th of March. On the 4th the chief informed me that the nats, or spirits of good and evil, looked unfavourably on us, and required propitiation. This merely implied a demand for rupees. We accordingly accompanied the chief to his house, where we found all in readiness for a special ceremonial. The spirits of good and evil were about to be consulted through a Kachyen medium, or priest, who had separated himself for this purpose from his companions, and occupied a dark corner at the extreme end of the building. Here he crouched down and began to work himself into a fury of attitudinizing, stroked his head and face with both hands, tore his hair, sighed, moaned, groaned, and, finally, his legs, from the knees downward, were made to quiver, with a reverberation which repeated itself on the bamboo flooring with a sharp castanet-like sound, which was kept up incessantly during the remainder of the ceremony. We knew at once that the man was at last possessed, and beyond all self-control. His utterances, henceforth, were believed to be those of demons and nats, in a fury of anger, which promised even violence.

The chief whispered and asked for my propitiation. I put down 15 rupees, which were offered up on a platter made of plantain-leaves; but in a moment platter and rupees had been scornfully kicked to a distance. The chief approached with reverence and begged that the offering might not be rejected. No reply, but more groans and further evidences of dissatisfaction. I am appealed to and add five rupees, which was all that was wanted. The offering now finds favour and is accepted. Benedictions follow, and all that is good is prognosticated in our future travels.

We got off from Ponlyne on the 5th March. The route lay along the valley of the Taping. Every now and then the view was glorious. On either side hills towered up into mountains, and range after range succeed each other, apparently in endless continuity, till lost in the blue distance.

The village of Ponlyne is about 2320 feet above sea-level. The immediate descent from Ponlyne to the bed of the Nam-bouk River was steep and difficult for a distance of three miles; but the next four miles was occupied in crossing a succession of lofty spurs which abut into the valleys from the main ranges. The Taping River is constantly in sight; at times we descend almost to its bed, and anon it is roaring 2000 feet below us. It is, in this part of its course through the hills, a broad mountain-torrent, or rather a continuation of rapids, down which the water rushes with unceasing roar, and with a force which nothing could withstand, if we except prodigious boulders of granite, which lie occasionally across its bed, or hang suspended on its

immediate banks, with an inclination that suggests an inevitable downfall.

We encamped for the night in jungle, and started the next morning for Ponsee, which is ever memorable to us as the scene of our weary detention—I may almost say imprisonment—for a period of more than two months. I shall not attempt to describe the troubles, the discomforts, the vexatious annoyances to which we were subjected during the whole period of this detention. We were cut off from communication on all sides. Our means of advance or return were taken away, by the preconcerted withdrawal of our mules. The enmity and resentment of the hill-tribes around us had been roused and encouraged by the most villanous reports of our objects and mission. Armed attacks were often threatened, but as often avoided. Time alone was our friend, by affording proof that in all our actions and intercourse with these new races they were gradually made to feel the genuine honesty of our intentions, and the friendly policy of the British Government.

I will here pass over ten days of inaction and quote from my diary of 17th March:—"Difficulties increase. The chiefs come early and pass several hours in small talk. The demand for old-mule hire has risen from 20 to 25 rupees per head. I offer 500, if carriage is procured as far as Manwyne. The chiefs reply—'You cannot go to Manwyne. The roads are held by armed men, who have been sent to oppose you. Lee Sheetahee (a well-known brigand chief) holds the pass at Mauphoo, and he has sent orders to all the Shan chiefs, and warned them not to allow you free transit,' " &c. &c.

But whilst engaged in conversation with the chiefs a shot was fired from a house in the village above us, and one bullet whizzed over our tent, whilst another struck a camp-cot inside, on which some of our party happened to be sitting. It was not until a second shot was fired that the Ponlyne chief got up and vociferated like a madman. Five minutes afterwards he informed me of his intention to return forthwith to Ponlyne, and take leave for ever of Ponsee and its dangerous uncertainties.

The shots hurt nobody, and were traced to nobody. They were probably designed by Ponlyne himself to intimidate us, and aid his own pecuniary negotiation. The *ruse* was without effect. I promised to abide faithfully by my engagements, but by this time it was becoming apparent to all that we would never submit to wrongful extortion.

Three weeks more must be allowed to pass without record. I shall now state what took place on the 7th April, at a time when there seemed to be a chance of our release from Ponsee bondage :

—“This has been an eventful day—in promise big—in effect, an abortion. Tents struck, and baggage arranged for an early start. The chief and his Pawmynes appear by turns; but the porters only begin to assemble at 8 A.M. The chiefs are divided amongst themselves; both parties are intent only on ‘loot,’ and vie with each other for the lion’s share. Either party seizes at the most promising packages, regardless altogether of their size or weight. My small japanned tin cases bring on a crisis. The chief’s men have got them, and the Pawmyne, who heads the opposite party, is savagely drunk. The small circumference of our encampment is filled with armed Kachyens. The Pawmyne makes a dash at my gold sword, which is carried by a Burmese. Williams is standing near, and recovers it with a wrench which was irresistible. Pawmyne is at bay for a moment, but rushes away excitedly, and suddenly reappears, with his slow-match in a blaze. He is within three paces of me; but before I could move he has primed and fired his piece into the air, with a loud report. There is consternation for a moment, but no immediate movement. All would have been quiet again had not one of our party unfortunately fired off his revolver, with unmeaning effort. There is now tumult and confusion. The Kachyens fly in all directions, as if panic-stricken. The chief is quiet, and justly appreciates what is going on. He excuses his Pawmyne, calls back his people, and after a time order is restored. But we did not get off, and although our departure was fixed for the next morning, it was not until late in the day that the Pawmyne appeared, and said that, owing to the chief having withdrawn his support, they could not assist us further, and that we might make up our minds to stay for ever, as far as they were concerned, at our present halting-place, in the vicinity of Ponsee.”

Another month passed in inactivity; and it was now evident that our stay in Kachyen-land had given rise to friendly attachments which the people clung to, as a means of continuing our detention rather than aiding our departure. Chiefs and people came in crowds from distant villages. Women and children were in the habit of daily visiting our camp with presents of rice, tobacco, vegetables, and beer, for which they obtained more than an equivalent in looking-glasses, beads, or other finery, which was immediately converted into a means of female decoration. The time spent in observing and conversing with these interesting groups was well repaid by the insight afforded into their domestic relations, and the opportunity it gave them of realising our friendly treatment, and the faithfulness of our intentions, as evinced by our close intercourse with them.

It was not until after the first week of May that the Panthay Governor of Momein had been able, as the result of our com-

munications with him, to drive the brigand chief Lee Sheetahee from his stronghold at Mauphoo, and despatch certain of the Shan chiefs, or their deputies, to us at Ponsee, with the means of a further advance from that place, through the Shan States to Momein.

On leaving Ponsee, a gradual descent of 4 miles brought us to the foot of the large spurs, which slope down in irregular projections, between the main ranges of the Taping Valley. We reach, in fact, the minor undulations which merge, so to speak, into the Valley of Sanda, and the eye roams over a comparatively narrow expanse of plain, stretching away in a north-easterly straight line into space, but bounded laterally by two lofty parallel ranges of mountains from 3000 to 7000 feet in height, with an average intervening area of 4 miles. This, in short, is the Valley of Sanda, which, with its prolongation to Nantin, contains the three Northern Shan States of Manwyne, Sanda, and Mynetee (Maungtee). Throughout it is richly cultivated, and presents an endless succession of villages, which either skirt the bases of the high land on either side, or nestle within clustering bamboos on the margin of the Taping. The Taping itself—no longer a mountain torrent—has now become a broad placid stream, with occasionally well-defined banks, and anon shelving reaches of shingle or sandbank, as it winds its mid-valley course through the plain.

Our arrival at Manwyne was a disappointment. The mulemen, with our baggage, on reaching the town, had thrown down their loads in reckless confusion on a portion of the dry bed of the river, at a great distance from habitation of any kind. Here we were immediately surrounded by hundreds of Shans and Chinese, who seemed unable to satiate their curiosity. The human or inhuman blockade was most effectually maintained. When at length the officials had cleared a road for us, and had been induced, after considerable entreaty, to provide us with quarters within a religious building adjoining the town, the curiosity nuisance had in no way abated. Neither priests nor officials had power to check it. There was absolutely no relief,—in eating, drinking, reading, writing, washing, dressing and undressing, it was in vain to attempt privacy. The glaring curiosity of these unsatisfied gazers was a positive affliction, forgotten happily for a time, though by no means terminated, even in sleep.

On the 13th May I visited the Dowager-Chief (called Saubwagadaw) of Manwyne. A very friendly conversation ensued, after which tea was handed round in true Chinese style. We seemed to have dropped from the Kachyen Hills, not into the Shan States only, but into veritable China, of which, in reality,

Manwyne forms a portion, for it is within the Province of Yunnan.

The Dowager-Chief's "haw," or palace, was situated within the town, and like all other haws, is built on the Chinese plan of a succession of quadrangular courtyards in a straight line, four or five deep, which lead into each other by a communication of arched doorways, with an exterior wall surrounding the whole. The inmost recesses are devoted to the family exclusively. The penultimate forms a reception-room for guests, the antepenultimate may be used as a caravanserai for strangers, stables, barracks, or accommodation for attendants.

The visit to the Dowager-Chief was an event which produced a decided improvement in our social relations with the Manwyne population. The return of civilities and mutual courtesy between ourselves and their chief, seemed to place us on a footing of familiarity, and the curiosity of our friends was more endurable, now that it was accompanied by evident signs of regard and friendship.

The 14th May was the day fixed for the march from Manwyne, and early on that day more than 3000 men, women, and children were present on the outskirts of the town to witness our departure. Our camp was crowded to excess with all the *élite* and fashion of a mixed Shan, Chinese, and Kachyen community. The population, generally, was well dressed, and the Shan women in particular were scrupulously neat and cleanly in their attire. Men wore loose jackets and trousers of dark blue cloth; but the women indulged in a variety of gaudy dress colouring. Their jackets were either white or pale green, slashed with pink at the sleeves and collars. The skirt was dark blue, with a variegated silk embroidery a foot in depth and worn as a flounce. Fanciful leggings and pointed slippers, with an innumerable array of silver ornaments, necklets, earrings, bracelets, and chatelaines, of various kinds, completed a costume novel in its way, but, on the whole, very rich, and singularly effective. We were escorted by several Shan officials, who led the way, mounted on ponies with huge red cloth saddles and padded coverlets, which raised them at least a foot above their animals' backs.

The whole day's march from Manwyne to Sanda disclosed fresh scenes of pleasurable interest. The monotonous grandeur of an apparently interminable valley, with its sublime ridges rising on either side of us 5000 feet, and running in straight parallels into space, was in itself a source of infinite admiration.

But to this estimate of its interest I must add that the whole valley area teemed with life, or with a population which had laid out every available acre into one vast garden of wealth and

fertility. Half-way between Manwyne and Sanda we passed through the Chinese town, or rather bazaar, of Karahokha, which consists merely of one broad street, flanked on either side by Chinese shops. On market days the whole intervening space is covered with a succession of bazaar stalls, in which butchers, bakers, druggists, and sundry Jacks-of-all-trades do a very thriving business. The gin shops or gin stalls probably do the largest trade of all. Five Chinese cash, or one-hundredth part of a rupee (about one-quarter of a farthing) is sufficient to purchase a small teacupful of a spirit which approaches in taste and potency to bad Scotch whisky. This is drunk freely, and probably, according to our ideas, to excess. But, somehow or other, no interruption is caused thereby to trade, and Shans and Kachyens thrive and are prosperous in spite of strong drinks and unlicensed distilleries.

After leaving Karahokha the route lay northerly, and brought us to the foot of one of the many spurs which abut into the valley from the counterslope of the western range. The soil is red, and the prolongation and connectionship of these spurs with the eastern range is often traceable at certain corresponding points, where the red soil crops up simultaneously on both sides in unmistakable relationship.

The town of Sanda lies at the foot of one of these red spur projections. It is the chief town of the Sanda Shan State, and contains, perhaps, 800 houses, with a population amounting to about 6000 souls. The houses at present represent ruins. The monasteries are mere bamboo erections, of temporary construction. There are neither temples, nor pagodas, nor minarets to proclaim the approach to a provincial capital. The remains of an old defensive loopholed brick wall may still be traced round a portion of the suburbs, but within its enclosure there is little save ruin and dilapidation. In 1863 Sanda was subjected to an irruption of Mahomedan Chinese. The town was first gutted by Panthay soldiery, and then handed over a prey to any number of Kachyen adherents, who professed at the time to favour the Panthay cause. Hence its present condition.

On 15th May, we paid our official visit to the Sanda Saubwa, or chief, at his palace. The approach to the palace is somewhat imposing, and consists of a triple archway, with one principal and two side entrances, the architecture throughout being essentially Chinese.

We passed through two courtyards, which communicated with each other through roofed archways, and were received in the vestibule of a penultimate building, furnished with high-backed chairs, a very high table, and Chinese paintings. The

open space in front of the vestibule was filled with respectable visitors, who had been invited to attend and note our interview with the Shan chief of Sanda.

The chief received us in a most friendly manner, but was at first exceedingly nervous, and apparently unable to address us in person. He subsequently warmed up as the conversation advanced, and we left him with a favourable impression of his intelligence, and a belief in the friendly regard he entertained in the success of our mission.

The next morning a deputation arrived from the chief with presents, and I was especially asked to adopt the chief's grandson, a young lad of eight, who was next heir to the Saubwaship.

The chief himself followed up this deputation by a return visit in person; and it is difficult to convey a correct impression of the earnest manner in which I was importuned to adopt the young grandson. I accepted the charge willingly. The chief was pleased, and the interview passed off with becoming cordiality.

Leaving Sanda, the road led through paddy-fields for two miles athwart the valley, where it crossed a spur, and once more resumed a north-easterly mid-valley course in the direction of Mynela (Muangla).

The River Taping is crossed at the ford of Nammon, which represents at this season a vast expanse of shingly desert, and is in reality the dry bed of the Taping and Takaw rivers, at the point of their apparent confluence.

The town of Mynela (Muangla) lies on the left bank of the Taping, at the base of a central spur, which seems to divide for a time the main valley longitudinally into two separate gorges, without causing any material deviation in the direction of the Sanda Valley itself, or the general parallelism of its high flanking ridges. As we approach Mynela (Muangla) from the west and south, the Taping is lost in an amphitheatre of hills which form a noble background to that ancient metropolis. It has entered the western of the two gorges into which the valley is here divided, and its source is traced to the village of Koo-yoon, 30 miles north, whilst the Takaw keeps to the eastern gorge and marks our route as far as Momein.

On entering the town of Mynela (Muangla), at 3 P.M. on 16th (May), we were conducted by the officials to a temple, which had been specially put into repair for our accommodation. It was a marvel as regards laborious structure and interior decoration, which seem to have been carried out with lavish expenditure, and represent brutes, heroes, and demigods, of extravagantly grotesque form and proportions.

Mynela (Muangla) is a larger, and, to all appearance, a more

important town than Sanda. It contains 1200 houses, which, like those of Sanda, are built of sun-dried brick, with no upper story. With the exception of a Chinese bazaar held in the centre of the town, no attempt has been made to lay out the place into roads or streets. The various roadways leading through the town are mere connecting lanes, flanked alternately by the backs of houses on the one side, and by walled enclosures with small covered gateways leading into petty courtyards, on the other. The general aspect of these Shan towns, as compared with the neat and cleanly appearance of the inhabitants, is disappointing, and is evidence of anything but thrift or wholesome domestic economy.

Each state is governed by an hereditary independent chief of its own, who is assisted by as many ministers as he may appoint, and by village *tamons*, or subordinate magistrates, selected by the several village communities.

A delay of a few days at Mynela became unavoidable, owing to the fact that the road in our advance was still reported to be infested with brigands, and the necessity therefore of our communicating with Momein before attempting the pass at Mauphoo.

Our communications in this respect were successful, and we were joined on the 21st by three Panthay officers with a strong military escort, which was to conduct us onwards from Mynela through Nantin to Momein.

We set out, accordingly, on the morning of the 23rd, and a march of two miles brought us to the left bank of the Takaw. Here we found our Panthay advance-guard halted. They said that a strong party of Dacoits were ahead, and intended to dispute the pass into the Mauphoo defile. The chief of Hotha, joined us at this contingency, and his information coincided with that of the Panthay advance-guard as to the almost certainty ahead of armed opposition. This announcement at the time was thoroughly embarrassing. To have turned our backs on an uncertainty, without any positive assurances of real danger, would have ruined our prestige and destroyed all hope of further progress. To have remained where we were would have argued weakness, and invited the very attack which I was anxious to avoid.

An advance was, therefore, inevitable; but it was not until our police escort had been drawn up in line and fired a very respectable volley (to try their muskets and reload) that the Panthay officers seemed disposed to move. They now exclaimed, "With fifty muskets like those, *which all go off* when required, we would march to Peking even, in spite of all the opposition in the world." The march was resumed; but the Dacoits withdrew,—alarmed, no doubt, at the sound of our volley. They

left evidences, however, of their vicinity and of their cowardly revenge by cutting down and leaving in our pathway a poor traveller, who was gashed to death for the sake of a string of Chinese cash (value 2 rs.), of which, he had life enough left to tell us, he had just been dispossessed.

The valley had now narrowed very considerably, and as we approached its north-eastern extremity the only outlet consisted of a dark gorge or defile, through which the Takaw rushed with the roar and velocity of a mountain torrent. The sides of the gorge were precipitous rock, more or less scarped, which rose at intervals to a height of several hundred feet. No roadway was practicable through the gorge itself, and it therefore became necessary to ascend the western range parallel with the gorge, and proceed along it for seven or eight miles until a descent could be made into the Nantin Valley, which is, in reality, a continuation only or prolongation of the Sanda Valley.

The far-famed stronghold of Mauphoo is situated on this highland above the gorge; and, as we approached, the picturesque appearance of its natural scenery was considerably enlivened by the addition of a numerous array of gay banners, with which a Panthay garrison had embellished its battlements.

The march from Mauphoo to Nantin will ever associate itself in our minds by the gratifying marks of hospitality with which the Mahomedan Chinese (Panthays) welcomed us within the limits of their own possessions.

Strong guards had been stationed at appointed intervals along the route, and the nature of the ground was such as to enable them to be seen in the distance in all the gaiety with which full sunshine, variegated costumes, long silver lances, painted matchlocks, and large flags of multiform design and colouring, could possibly invest them. On our approach the guards severally beat gongs, fired muskets, waved flags, and otherwise, after their own fashion, evinced signs of greeting and salutation which would have done credit to the civilization and resources of any state in Asia.

The descent from Mauphoo brought us again to the bank of the Takaw River, at a point where it enters the gorge above-mentioned, and through which it has eaten for itself a way from the Nantin into the Sanda Valley.

The average width of the Nantin Valley did not exceed 3 miles, and its well-defined terraces, or gradations of terraces, at corresponding heights on either side, were evidences of a lacustrine period, during which a gradual outlet was being worked through the Mauphoo gorge. Here, too, we found the Takaw spanned by one of those veritable Chinese iron suspension-

bridges, the first of a series, which assured us that we had passed within the confines of the Celestial empire.

We reached Nantin the same day, as it was getting dark, and were conducted to the ruins of a Chinese temple, specially prepared for us. Shortly afterwards the Panthay Governor paid us a visit, accompanied by a nephew of the Governor of Momein and the Panthay "cazee," or magistrate, a man of unmistakable Mahomedan or Mussulman bearing, and with perfectly Mahomedan beard and raiment.

I returned the Governor's visit the next day. A salute was fired as we entered the palace, and the centre gates of the several archways were thrown open for our use, as a mark of special distinction, awarded only to chiefs of the highest rank.

There had been one slight hitch in our relations with the Governor, owing to my refusal to open out the contents of our packing-cases for the inspection of his customs officers. The matter was not pressed; but it caused unpleasantness until my interview with the Governor at his own palace. I then ascertained the real cause of the Governor's curiosity to learn the contents of our packing-cases. Amongst the many injurious reports which had preceded our arrival at Nantin, was one which invested us with supernatural powers of offensive action. Some of our boxes were said to contain magical weapons, which could of themselves subdue whole cities; others had concealed in them live dragons, which might be let loose, with terrible effect, against whole populations.

Absurd as these reports were, it was impossible to treat them with ridicule, or ignore the mischief they were calculated to do us, amongst a people more than ordinarily suspicious in their estimate of foreign intercourse. I was now convinced that the Governor's curiosity to inspect our boxes was genuine, and did not originate in a desire to be obtrusive.

The cases were open, I said, to inspection; but by this time the Governor had got over his doubts, and no further allusion was made to our caged dragons, or the boxed-up infernal machines which were to have worked ruin and extermination on all who opposed us.

One more march and we shall have reached Momein.

On leaving Nantin the configuration of the valley had somewhat changed, and the eastern main range no longer continued to be a single continuous range, such as that which characterized its direction along the line of the Sanda Valley. There now appeared to be a ramification of irregular spurs, all tending in a northerly direction, and yet so closely allied to each other as to form a connected series of undulations; or, in other words, a

broad expanse of uneven table-land, at some elevation above the circumadjacent valleys.

The ascent to this table-land is commenced half-way between Nantin and Momein; and, as soon as the highland is reached, it slopes away again in a gradual series of descents as far as Momein, which is itself situated within the fork of two valleys: that on the west being a sinuous prolongation of the Nantin Valley on the one side; whilst that on the east is another small valley, between the Momein mid-valley ridges above-mentioned and the main eastern range (Deebay), which has again entered an appearance, and is here the chief watershed between the Tahaw and Shwélee affluents of the Irrawaddy.

The approach to Momein is very grand and beautiful. We had been descending for some time the eastern side of the central ridges already described, and the road, after passing down a series of grassy undulations, led round the south of a tumulus-shaped hill, 1000 feet in height, crowned on its summit by a Chinese tower-pagoda. At this point Momein itself and its battlemented walls are suddenly brought into view, in a hollow basin, enclosed on all sides by hills, which slope down, apparently at different elevations, almost to its very walls.

But the most effective scene of the whole, as it then appeared to us (with senses by this time somewhat deadened to the attractions of mountain scenery), was that which presented itself in the foreground, half-way between our position at the foot of Pagoda Hill and the southern face of the city wall.

The Governor had thought fit to come out in full state to welcome us to his capital, and his guards and retinue formed a temporary encampment, which was intended to display at once the wealth and resources of the Mahomedan Chinese Government. The encampment was marked out by a long line of flags in infinite variety of shape and colouring. On coming near them, I halted to make preparations for meeting so formidable an array of our expectant friends. We were a very rough and dirty-looking group of foreign adventurers. A march of 23 miles over dusty hills and across muddy ravines had not added to personal appearances, or to that dignity of demeanour which might anxiously be looked for in the pioneers of trade and the representatives of Western civilization. As we drew near, guns were fired, gongs beaten, and bands played. Standard bearers—some two hundred in number—lined both sides of the road through which we were to advance, and in front of them were ranged Panthay officers of all grades and in full uniform. Our appearance, as we filed through this martial gathering, must have been as novel to the Panthays, by reason of its unaffected

simplicity, as their display seemed out of order to us, on account of its extent and comparative magnificence.

The reception was undoubtedly flattering and courteous to excess, and, as such, produced feelings of gratification in those who had come almost as strangers to an unknown and unrecognised Government, and who, after several months of obstruction and annoyance, suddenly found themselves amongst powerful friends and raised to the position of well-favoured guests.

But we are now at Momein, and, so far as progress is concerned, our journey has come to an end. We were guests of the Panthay Government for a period of seven weeks. Much of interest remains to be told of our return journey to Bhamo, through another beautiful Shan valley, and across two more unexplored routes over the Kachyen mountains.

We reached Mandalay, on our return, on the 20th September, after an absence of more than nine months, during which, there and back, our journey had not extended over a distance of perhaps more than 1000 miles. This of itself, perhaps, affords proof that the hitherto forbidden tract which separates Burma from China was not explored without trials and difficulties of no common or ordinary nature.

It is satisfactory, however, to know that all those difficulties were traced to one source, and arose out of the indirect action of *one* powerful native Government. Had this action been favourable, or had this native Government simply acted up to its professions and promises, the expedition would have performed its work in fewer weeks than, under existing circumstances, it took months for successful accomplishment.

If the route between Bhamo and Momein is not now open, other causes must be taken into account as being in opposition, without detracting in any way from the merit due to the successful accomplishment of all the duties with which the expedition was entrusted.

The expedition itself reached a point in China as far as, and beyond that to which the discretionary powers with which it was invested permitted. Agreements to facilitate trade were made with every person or chief who had any semblance of authority in the region the expedition traversed. The Panthay rulers came under a formal engagement, and the Kachyen Hill-chiefs bound themselves by a solemn oath, sworn to after their own savage ceremonial, to protect and afford safe-conduct to traders and travellers who might have occasion to cross the hill ranges between Bhamo and the Northern Shan States.

My firm conviction is that, despite all obstacles and all retarding influences of whatever nature, the prospective results

of our expedition will reveal themselves in time by a vast increase to the trade of this country, by free commercial overland intercourse between Burma and China, and by a tardy but cordial recognition of our services by the country at large.

XI.—*On the Geographical Positions of the Tribes which formed the Empire of the Yncas, with an Appendix on the name "Aymara."* By CLEMENTS R. MARKHAM, C.B., Secretary R.G.S.

Read 10th July, 1871.

THE study of the nature and degree of the civilization attained by the aboriginal Americans is especially important, because that civilization was self-developed. The three American empires of the Yncas, the Chibchas, and the Aztecs, were based upon the progress made in the arts of civilization by the tribes which composed them, and on the united efforts of those tribes, after they had been welded into great nations. But the tendency of the united empires was to obliterate all the special characteristics of the component tribes, and to make it a task of extreme difficulty to classify or distinguish them. This difficulty is increased by the want of system in the early writings, from which alone we can now hope to derive our information. Yet it is only by resolving the American civilizations into their elements; by extracting from all reliable sources the names, localities, and characteristics of the component tribes; and by classifying them with as near an approach to accuracy as is now possible, that the inquirer can obtain a knowledge of the early history of the American races, or any idea of their origin. Without such classification there is no sure foundation on which he can base any conclusion, and little to which he can apply his science for any useful purpose.

In the present paper I propose to submit an attempt at the geographical classification of the tribes which eventually combined to form the empire of the Yncas; and I hope, on a future occasion, to work out a similar arrangement as regards the tribes in the region of Chibcha civilization.

But it is above all things essential to sift the authorities upon whom it is necessary to rely, to ascertain with great care the amount of credibility that should be allowed to each, and to attend strictly and closely to the conclusions derived from such considerations.

I now proceed to state the canons of criticism by which I