

ART. IX.—*On Tibeto-Burman Languages.* By Capt. C. J.
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THE term 'Tibeto-Burman' has latterly crept into use as a convenient designation of a very large family of languages which appear more or less to approximate to each other. They are those which Max Müller classes as Gangetic and Lohitic, names which, with all due reference to the learned Professor, really have little relevant meaning in this case.

Under no other head perhaps is so vast a number of dialects included. Max Müller gives forty-five, and this only includes the dialects known and recorded; whereas it is stated that, among the Nága tribes, different dialects exist in almost every separate village, which would increase the number *ad infinitum*. It may be as well to state, while referring to Prof. Max Müller's list,¹ that he has erroneously entered under the class 'Lohitic' a language called 'Tunglhu' in Tenasserim. By this is evidently meant the 'Toungthoo,' which however is a dialect of the Karen, which the Professor does not, and rightly so, class as Lohitic. Whether it is really necessary to preserve this long nomenclature is a question. Logan has concisely described the process of the manufacture of these multifarious dialects.

"Perpetual aggressions and frequent conquests, extirpations of villages, and migrations, mark the modern history of nearly all these Tibeto-Burman tribes, and of the different clans of the same tribe. Their normal condition and relations, while extremely favourable to the maintenance of a minute division of communities and dialects, are opposed to any long preservation of their peculiarities. We find the

¹ Science of Language, vol. i. p. 452.

same tribe separating into clans and villages permanently at war with each other. Kuki fleeing from Kuki, Singpho from Singpho, Abor from Abor. We can thus understand how, in such a country, and before the Aryans filled the plains, the lapse of a few centuries would transform a colony from a barbarous Sifan clan, descending the Himalaya by a single pass, into a dozen scattered tribes, speaking as many dialects, and no longer recognizing their common descent.”¹

“Within the mountainous parts of the limits of the modern kingdom of Népal there are thirteen distinct and strongly marked dialects spoken. They are extremely rude, owing to the people who speak them having crossed the snows before learning dawned on Tibet, and the physical features of their new home having tended to break up and enfeeble the common speech they brought with them. At present the several tribes or clans can hardly speak intelligibly to each other.”²

We shall have to contemplate a similar state of things in the country lying east of the Brahmapootra river, and along the chain of mountains that hem in the independent kingdom of Burma on the north and west.

The affinity between the Burman and Tibetan races has been sufficiently recognized not to require detailed proof. The connexion and relation of the minor tribes to the Burmese has been in some cases allowed, in others left an open question requiring further investigation.

Dr. Mason enumerates eleven Burmese tribes “of unquestionably common origin,” and adds several others whom he considers as doubtful. They are as under :

BURMESE.	DOUBTFUL.
1. Burmese.	Kakhyens or Kakoos.
2. Arracanese.	Kamis or Kemees.
3. Mugs.	Kyaus.
4. Kanyans.	Koons.
5. Toungooers.	Sak.
6. Tavoyers.	Mru.
7. Yaus or Yos.	Shendoos (or Kúkis).
8. Yebains or Zebaings.	
9. Pyus.	
10. Kados.	
11. Danus.	

¹ Journ. Ind. Arch. vol. ii. p. 82.

² Asiatic Researches, vol. xvi. p. 409.

We may very shortly dispose of several in this list. The term 'Mugs' is simply an epithet applied to the Arracanese by the people of Bengal, unknown to the Burmese language; the meaning of the word cannot even be ascertained, and to enter it as a tribal name in a scientific list is like including the 'Yankees' as one of the nations of America, distinct from the Americans. It is rendered still more absurd when Phayre derives it "probably from a tribe of Brahmins termed 'Magas,' said to have emigrated eastward from Bengal;" to which Mason adds, "Magas looks very much like Magos, the priest of the Medes." Was this meant in earnest? Next we have the 'Kanyans,' who are traditionally said to have been one of the tribes that were incorporated to form the 'Burman' nation; where they now exist, or what is their language, it would be a puzzle to ascertain. The same applies to the 'Pyus,' said to have been the tribe inhabiting the present district of Prome, but now as unknown there as the Trinobantes are in Middlesex. Toungoo or Toungnoo was one of the petty kingdoms founded by younger branches of the Burman royal family, as the head of the race grew weak, and though the main body of the population was Burmese, it was very mixed, and has no more claim to rank as a separate tribe than has that of any other Burman town.

The 'Tavoyers,' or people of Tavoy, might, in virtue of a very peculiar dialect, claim tribal rank; but they are only a colony of the Arracanese, as is stated in their traditions and confirmed by their language, which has since become corrupted by Shan or Siamese influence. But there is no reason for separating them either ethnologically or linguistically from their parent stock.

The Yaus, Yebaings, Kados, and Danus, are recognized by the Burmans proper as being the wilder and more primitive branches of their race; but, unfortunately, we have no trustworthy specimens of their dialects from which to form conclusions. The dialects of the Yaus and Yebaings are certainly unintelligible to any Burmans, and the numerals of

the latter show no affinity to any of their neighbours. They are :

- | | |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| 1. tsoomeik. | 6. louk-kay. |
| 2. tsoo-toung. | 7. thai khan. |
| 3. baloungtha. | 8. loung moo. |
| 4. lah-bee. | 9. ngain koung. |
| 5. hgay houk. | 10. loung-teik. ¹ |

Mason says the Danus "speak the Burmese language in a rude nasal and guttural dialect."

In the absence of further information we can only conclude that these are some of the many petty clans of kindred race which the force of circumstances amalgamated into a political unit as the Burman nation, these retaining in a greater degree their primitive characteristics.

We are now reduced to the two great branches of the Myamma or Burmese race; the Burmans proper, and the Arracanese. Should these be so clearly and absolutely divided?

The traditions or histories of both nations give us the same account, that, on the death of the founder of the first Burman kingdom, his two sons disputed the succession to the throne, and one of them led a part of the people to the westward across the mountains, and established a separate kingdom in Arracan, driving out the savage occupants of the country. According to this there is no ethnological distinction originally between the Arracanese and the Burmans proper. What is the divergence in language?

The Burmans acknowledge that the oldest and purest form of their language has been preserved in Arracan. This is borne out by the evidence of the dialect itself, which retains the original pronunciation of words which are subject to permutation of the letters in Burmese, and which also uses many words in a sense now obsolete in Burma proper. The structure of the two dialects is however precisely the same, and their divergence is not more than exists between the English of Somersetshire and Middlesex.

The Arracanese and Burmese differ in two essential points; namely, that, in the former, words are pronounced phonetic-

¹ Collected by Capt. Forbes in the Shwegyeen District.

ally or nearly so, while, in the latter, several letters acquire in certain combinations entirely different values. Thus in all the Indo-Chinese languages the vowel 'a' being inherent in every consonant where no other form vowel is expressed, the combination 'k'k' would be pronounced truly in Arracanese 'kāk,' but in Burmese both the sound of the inherent vowel and of the final consonant would be entirely changed, and the above combination would be pronounced 'ket.' In the same way 'ap' is pronounced 'at';—'am,' 'an';—'et' 'eik';—and so in several other forms, whereas in Arracanese these retain their natural phonetic values.

Secondly the Arracanese uses many words and forms of expression which have either become obsolete in Burmese, or have acquired another meaning. To instance one striking case. The Arracanese and several of the Hill tribes use the word 'lá' for 'go,' while this in Burmese means 'to come,' and could not possibly signify 'go,' but we find that in Burmese this same root 'la,' with the heavy accent, means (to use Judson's definition), "to proceed from a starting place to some boundary," although it is never found in actual use in this sense. The Arracanese has thus retained the root in both its forms and senses as 'to come' and 'to go,' while the Burmese has rejected its application in the latter sense. The Arracanese dialect is also much more guttural and harsher in sound than the Burmese, which delights in softening and smoothing over any difficulties of pronunciation. This is especially remarkable in the letter *Q*, which is really an *r*, and so pronounced by the Arracanese, but is softened into a *y* by the Burmans. The following examples will afford the means of contrasting, by a few simple sentences, the peculiar features of the two dialects, and will show how little real difference there is between them. The upper line gives the Burmese, the middle the English translation, and the lower the Arracanese.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| 1. kyunop-do, or kyun-do. | |
| we | we |
| akyunop-ro, | akyuan-ro. |

The Burmese omits the inherent 'a' in 'kyu'n' which the

Arracanese fully gives. The plural affix is 'do' in the first and 'ro' in the second.

2. nga-do.
we
nga-ro.
3. nga-do netpan thwa leim mee.
we to-morrow go will.
nga-ro manet-ka ta mee lo.
4. ming bey go thwa mee lai.
you where go will? (Where are you going?)
mang zago lá hpo lai.

The Arracanese here gives the true sound of the inherent vowel in the form 'm'ng' which the Burmese converts into an 'i' 'ming.' Instead of the Burmese 'bey' 'what,' 'where,' the Arracanese has an old form 'za,' now obsolete in Burma. We find 'lā' 'go' for the Burmese 'thwa,' as mentioned above, and in place of the verbal affix 'mee' the Arracanese uses 'hpo.'

5. Ning nga yeik leim mee.
You I beat will.
Nang go nga that leim mee.

Here the word 'that' is employed by the Arracanese in the sense merely of 'to beat,' 'to strike,' but in Burmese it would mean only 'to kill,' used in such an expression as the above; yet in one case it is still retained in Burmese in the sense of 'to strike,' namely, with respect to the act of striking in boxing.

These examples display the chief points of divergence between the two dialects, and show that the Arracanese has preserved the older and purer form of the language, while the Burmese has been greatly subject to phonetic decay or corruption. This is, doubtless, in some degree owing to the different social and political history of the two countries. Arracan has been much more isolated, and the people have preserved their race purity to a greater extent. Their intercourse has chiefly been with the distinct and alien Hindu race, whose influence, though in some things great, has little affected their language or their blood. Burma, on the con-

trary, has been subject to long and frequent periods of domination by nations of kindred origin, the Shans, and the Mons, and to close intercourse with them and also with the Chinese, throughout her history. The Burmans have received a vast amount of foreign and yet kindred element into their nation, which has amalgamated with and been insensibly affected by it; while the Arracanese and their Hindu neighbours have remained in contact, but, like oil and water, without fusion.

We have thus reduced Mason's list of eleven Burmese tribes to six ascertained varieties of dialect, and it is probable that for a general classification of languages, which does not deal with mere provincialisms, the term 'Burmese' should be made to include the Arracanese, Kados, and Danoos. The Yau and Yebaing, as far as we know of them, must still be kept distinct.

There remain the 'doubtful' tribes, all of whom, except the Kakhyens, inhabit the mountainous country lying between Bengal and Burma, generally known as the Arracan range, whence these tribes are known as the 'Arracan Hill Tribes.' Logan often terms them 'Yoma tribes,' but 'Yoma' is simply a Burmese word meaning *any* mountain range, and therefore a misnomer if applied thus specifically. Of late years our knowledge of these tribes, and others in similar positions in the North-East part of Bengal, has much increased, and their mutual relationship and connexion with the Tibeto-Burman family more clearly established. Of all these tribes the Burmese (including their Arracanese brethren) alone have any literature, or possess any probable traditions of their origin and early history. According to Burmese traditions, the founders of their race and nation came from the West, from the valley of the Ganges, into their present seats, which they found occupied previously by the wilder tribes who are now confined to the mountain tracts. They even claim a Rajpoot origin for the people, while the royal family pretend to trace their descent from the sacred Solar and Lunar dynasties of Hindustan. This myth has generally been ascribed to national vanity and arrogance, and com-

pletely ignored. Sir A. Phayre is quite opposed to the theory, and says: "The supposed immigration of any of the royal races of Gangetic India to the Irrawaddy in the sixth century B.C., or even later, will appear very improbable. I see no reason for doubting that they (the Burman tribes) found their way into the valley of the Irrawaddy by what is now the track of the Chinese caravans from Yunnan, which track debouches at Bamo on the river."¹ That is to say, Sir A. Phayre places the original domicile of the Burman race in the South-Western provinces of China. Whether he would now deliberately uphold this opinion is doubtful, and, with all respect for so great an authority, it appears utterly without foundation. There seems no reason why we should peremptorily reject the Burman tradition in so far as it traces their migratory route from the Gangetic valley. Their Rajpoot origin is of course an invention of courtly historians of a date after the introduction of Buddhism; but, in the absence of any clear evidence to the contrary, it appears more reasonable to follow the lines of ancient tradition as far as they agree with probabilities. What little evidence on the subject we can collect seems also to support this idea.

The Burmans represent themselves as the last comers in the country, and state that when they penetrated into Arracan, they found the country occupied by savage monsters termed by them Beloos, whom they expelled; an evidently figurative account of the wilder tribes whom they found in prior possession of the soil. Sir A. Phayre and other authorities consider it as most probable that such actually was the case. We should then have, after the first wave of the Mon-Annam immigration, an irruption of a number of petty savage tribes, whose representatives and descendants at the present day occupy the Hill tracts, in much the same state as their forefathers were.

The Hill tribes of Arracan are, according to the Administration Reports, the Khyengs, the Kamis or Kumis, the

¹ History of the Burman Race, Journ. Asiat. Soc. Bengal.

Mrus, the Sak, the Kyaus or Chyaus, the Anoos, the Tounghthas, the Shendoos or Kukis, and two or three other petty tribes, of which only a few families exist; but it is probable that a better acquaintance with them would show that these are only clannish divisions of some other tribe.

These tribes, if we allow the evidence of language, of manners, and of physical characteristics, are closely allied to the Nága tribes of Eastern Bengal, and to the Abors and Mishmis of Assám. It is generally believed that these or kindred races of Turanian origin occupied the valley of Gangetic India before the advancing Aryan invaders drove them from the plains to their present mountain fastnesses. All these tribes doubtless formed the first wave of the later Turanian emigration from the Central Asian plateau, the Bhotian and Burman races being their successors. To them also would seem to belong those whom Hodgson calls the "broken tribes" of Nepál, the Chepang, Vayu and Kusunda. These latter tribes afford an important and curious link in the chain of evidence, which thus stretches from the Arracan Hills far away to the westward, to the Kali and Gunduk rivers in West Nepál.

Hodgson has clearly shown the connexion of the Chepangs with the Tibetan and Lhopa races, and has traced the affinities in these dialects in a pretty full vocabulary of the Chepang language. But by far the greater number of coincident words are derived from roots common to all or nearly all the cognate dialects of Tibet, Nepál and High Asia. Thus variations of the simple roots for such words as eye, fire, day, moon, dog, fish, sun, road, and several others which he gives, are common to a dozen other dialects besides the Chepang and Tibetan or Lhópa, and are found in Nepál, in Sifan, in Burma, in Siam, and do not prove a closer affinity between the Chepangs and the Lhopas, than between the former and the Néwars, the Manyak or the Burmans.

But when we compare the widely sundered languages of the Chepangs and of the Hill Tribes of Arracan, we are at

once struck by the identity sometimes of roots, often of actual words, which are not to be found in any of the cognate Tibeto-Himalayan or Sifanese dialects. In some cases the root is common to others of these languages, but the particular form in the Chepang is only found in the Khyeng, the Kumi, or the Karen.

Some examples are given below for comparison, there are many other words in which a common root may be found in other dialects :

	CHEPANG.	ARRACAN TRIBES.	
1. Arm	Krût	Makuht	Khyeng.
2. Bird	Mo-wá	Ta-wá	Mru.
		Wá-si	Sak.
3. Blood	Wi	Wí	Mru.
4. Child	Cho	So	Khyen.
5. Dawn	Wágo	Awá	Khyen.
6. Fowl	Wá	Ta-wá	Mru.
7. Hog	Piak	Ta-pak	Mru.
8. Hand	Kút-pa	Kuth	Khyen.
		A-kú	Kumi.
		Rut	Mru.
		Ta-ku	Sak.
9. Hair	Min	Kú-mi	Sak.
10. Insect, ant	Pling	Mling	Khyen.
		Ba-lin	Kumi.
		Pa-lin	Kumi.
11. Milk	Guú-tí	Sui-twi	Khyen.
		Nuh-tié	Karen.
12. Ox	Shya	Sharh	Khyen.
		Tsi-yá	Mru.
13. Monkey	Yúkh	Ta-yút	Mru.
14. Night	Yá	A-yán	Khyen.
15. Woman	Mirù	Mru (=man)	Mru.
16. To Give	Bui-sa	Na-pú	Kami.
Sa = verb affix.		Pei	Kumi.
17. To take	Li-sa	La	Kami.
		Lo	Kumi.

In 2, 6, 7, 13, it will be seen that the syllable 'ta' is the nominal prefix in Mru. In 9 'ku' in Sak means 'head,' 'ku-mi' is therefore 'head-hair.' In 11 the first root in each dialect signifies 'breast,' the second 'water,' milk is therefore literally 'breast-water.'

This resemblance between dialects separated by so great a

distance geographically, and by centuries of time, is surely in itself sufficient to prove the affinity of the tribes speaking them. Hodgson has conjectured that these 'broken tribes' between the Kali and Gunduk rivers may have been separated from their kindred and driven westward. We may also suppose that at an early period the whole sub-Himalayan region was occupied by tribes allied to the Chepangs and Arracan mountaineers, who were cut asunder and driven out of central Nepál by the incursion of the Newar races at present possessing the country, some 1000 to 1300 years ago, which is the date Hodgson assigns to this event.

Many years have elapsed since Mr. Hodgson, by his researches, indicated "that the sub-Himálayan races are all closely affiliated, and are all of northern origin;" it would only be quoting from his well-known papers to enter further on this subject. We have linked the Western Hill Tribes of Burma with the widely sundered Chepangs and Kusundas of Nepál, but a vast gap exists between the Gunduk river in Nepál and the eastern bank of the Brahmapútra, where we meet the next representatives of this race.

Here, in the vast tract of mountainous country stretching from the Gáro Hills along the southern part of Asám, and bordering on Munipur and Burma, is the home of those multifold tribes and clans, of which the greater proportion is classed together under the term 'Nágá.' Here also are the Gáros, Khásias, Kacharis, Kukis, Singphos, and several other tribes whose mutual relation to each other does not yet seem quite determined. When we compare their vocabularies with each other, they exhibit singular affinities, and all that we know of them confirms the supposition that they form but one great race, of which the tribes in the Arracan Mountains of Burma are but the branches. One of the best authorities on the Nágá races, Captain J. Butler, affirms: "Our late explorations have clearly ascertained that the great Nágá race does undoubtedly cross over the main watershed dividing the waters which flow north into the Brahmapútra, from those flowing south into the Iráwadí; and they have also

furnished very strong grounds for believing that in all probability it extends as far as the banks of the Kaiendwen (Námtonái or Ningthi) river, the great western tributary of the Iráwádi. Indeed, there is room to believe that further explorations may, ere long, lead us to discover that the Kakhyen and Khyen (often pronounced Kachin and Chin) tribes, spoken of by former writers (Pemberton, Yule, Hannay, etc.), are but offshoots of this one great race."¹ In 1835 Captain Hannay, with the little knowledge then possessed of these people, identified "the Khyens with the Nágás of the Asám mountains." In comparing the vocabularies of these races, and drawing conclusions from them, we must remember that the peculiar character of these dialects, and the social conditions of the people speaking them, constitute an important element in the comparison. Max Müller truly says: "No doubt the evidence on which the relationship of French and Italian, of Greek and Latin, of Lithuanian and Sanskrit, of Hebrew and Arabic, has been established, is the most satisfactory; (but) to call for the same evidence in support of the homogeneousness of the Turanian languages, is to call for evidence which, from the nature of the case, it is impossible to supply. . . . The Turanian languages allow of no grammatical petrifications like those on which the relationship of the Aryan and Semitic families is chiefly founded. If they did, they would cease to be what they are; they would be inflectional, not agglutinative. If languages were all of one and the same texture, they might be unravelled, no doubt, with the same tools."²

In the case of the languages and dialects about to be mentioned their greatest peculiarity is their mutability. We are told of offshoot villages from a clan being formed across two or three mountain ranges distant from the parent valley, and in three generations the language of their grandfathers has become unintelligible to the colonists. Among civilized tribes, before we assumed any racial connexion on the mere evidence of affinities discovered in their languages, we

¹ Journ. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, 1875, vol. xlv. p. 398.

² Science of Language, vol. ii. p. 25.

should naturally seek to ascertain in the first place whether any historic connexion or intercourse had ever existed between them, by which they might have mutually influenced each other's speech. But among these rude and savage tribes, to be separate is to be hostile; each village, or at least each clan, is too isolated, and too jealous of its neighbours, to *borrow* from them any appreciable portion of their language. Where then we find an unmistakable affinity of speech, we may safely suppose an affinity of race and a common origin. But when we find a number of tribes differing from each other in dialect, preserving amongst them a large number of words or roots, which we discover again among certain other tribes separated by a great distance, and with whom they have had no intercourse for ages, and these words not common to all of them, but some here and some there, the evidence of their mutual relationship is rendered much stronger. Such is the case with the two groups of languages or dialects we shall now compare. The first consists of the Hill Tribes of Arracan, viz. the Khyeng, the Kami, the Kumi, the Mru and the Sak. The second consists of the Garo, the Kachari, the various Nágá tribes, the tribes of the Muni-púri valley, the Abor and Mishmi of Asám, and the Singpho. The words are taken for the sake of easy reference entirely from Hunter's Dictionary and the Rev. N. Brown's Tables. It will be seen that the corresponding roots are not found in all the dialects alike, but some in one, some in another, and it is singular that a large number of them are found to correspond with the Mru and Sak tribes that have been long under Burmese influence, and are said to be of the "same lineage as the Burmese."¹ Only a sufficient number of words to serve as a fair example are quoted, and all words which are common to the Burmese and other Tibetan dialects are omitted. Such are, boat, day, fire, fish, hog, moon, road and many others which belong to the mother-language of all the Tibeto-Burman dialects.

¹ Mason.

The first three numerals are either peculiar to each dialect by itself, or are founded on Tibetan roots, then follow :

	ARRACAN.	NAGA, ETC.	BURMESE.
Four.	ma-li ta-li pa-lu	me-li a-li pha-li	lay
Five.	pang-gná ta-ngá	pha-ngá ba-ngá	ngá
Six.	ta-ru	ta-ruk	khyouk
Seven.	tha-ni	the-ne	koh-hnit
Eight.	sat	i-sat	shit
Nine.	ta-ku	ta-ku	kó
Ten.	si-su	si	tsé
Twenty.	hún	khún	nhit-tsé
Arrow.	to-li-malá li	malá lá	hmyá
Bird.	ta-vá ta-wu	vá wu	hnget
Blood.	a-thi	a-thi	thway
Cow.	tha-muk	sa-muk	nua
Ear.	ka-nhan a-ka-na	kha-na akhana	na
Earth.	ka-laí	klai, thalai	myay
Elephant.	ka-sai	kasai	tsin
Hand.	kuth	kut-pak	let
Head.	lú	lu	goung
Horn.	a-rung ta-ki	a-reng, rung ta-ki	gyo
Horse.	sapu	sapuk	myen
Mother.	anu, nu	an-nu, onu	amay
Night.	ayán	ayan	nya
Star.	kirek	merik	kyay
Tree.	tsindung thin	sundong thing	apin
Village.	nam, thing	nam, ting	yua
Water.	túi	tü, tui	yay

We have thus a large number of common words in which the Arracan dialects agree closely with the various dialects spread over the country extending north and west to the Brahmapútra River, and in which they differ from the Burman. The extent of the coincidence is too great to be fortuitous, and the past history and social condition of these tribes forbid our ascribing it to mutual intercourse and influence, such as has caused the adoption of several

Hindustani words for domestic objects, in some of the Brahmapútra dialects.

We have thus collected into one group, more or less closely allied, the Chepang and other 'broken tribes' of West Nepál, the Arracan Hill tribes, and those various races to the east and south of the Brahmapútra. The next step will be to show the connexion between these last and the Burman. That they belong to the Tibeto-Burman stock is generally conceded, it will only therefore need to take a few examples from three representative dialects, the Mikir, the Kuki, and Nágá :

	BURMESE.	MIKIR.	KÚKI.	NÁGÁ.
Bitter	Kha	aké-ho	akhai	Kékhu
Blood	Thway		Thi	Thé-za
Eye	Myet(k)	mék	Mit	Mhi
Eyebrow	Myet-kon	mékúm	kemit-kho	
Fire	Mee	mé	mei	mí
Fish	Nga		ngá	ná
Fruit	a-thēē	athé		
Great	kyee-thee	ké-thé		ké-di
House	Eim	hém	in	
Kill	that		that tan	
Listen	na-toung		ngai-tan	
Little	a-nay		a-néo	
Long	a-shay		a-shao	
Moon	la		lhá	
Nose	na-koung	no-kan	naktí	
Rice	tsau	sang	chang-chang	
Road	lam		lampi	lamá
Sick	na		ana	
Tail	a-myee	armé	amei	mi
Water	yay	lang	tui	dzu

(Kachari di)

The word 'water' is singular in having preserved in each dialect a separate root, and all differing from the Burmese. Thus the Kuki has the 'tui' of the Arracan Hill Tribes, from the Chinese 'sui'; the Nágá has 'dzu,' derived, like the Tibetan and Serpa 'chu,' from the Chinese 'chui'; the Kachari preserves the 'ti' root of the Karen dialects in the form of 'di' (d=t); while the Mikir 'lang' seems to be derived from the Newar 'la,' or more probably is a form of an archaic root preserved in the Kusunda 'tang.' Thus

these kindred and neighbouring dialects possess in this word 'water' distinctive roots belonging to four widely sundered separate branches of Turanian speech. This can hardly be chance, still less probable is it that each deliberately *borrowed* its peculiar term; we must believe that each dialect in its earliest growth adopted and kept one of the many synonymous roots of the common mother Turanian language.

The first five numerals are given below, and it may be noted that they afford an instance of what Max Müller and other philologists have remarked of the tendency of these savage dialects to find separate expressions for the first and often the second numerals, while deriving the others from common roots.

	BURMESE.	MIKIR.	KUKI.	NAGA.
One	Ta, tit	Isi	Khat	A-khet
Two	Nit	Hi-ni	Ni, nik	A-ne
Three	Thong	Ké-thom	Thum	A-sam
Four	Lay	Phi-li	Ll, li	Pha-li
Five	Nga	Pha-nga	Ra-nga	Pha-nga

It will be seen that there is less resemblance to the Burmese forms than to some of the Himalayan dialects, especially to the Magar numerals, 1. kat, 2. nis, 3. song, 4. bu-li, 5. ba-nga. The country of the Nágá tribes has been already described; the Kukis extend over the hilly tracts from the valley of the Koladan in Arracan, where they border on the Kumis, to Northern Cachar, where they march with the Mikir tribe on the Kopilee river. This latter clan (the Mikir) occupy the hills of the Nowgong District east of the Brahmaputra River. They are the furthest removed of all these tribes from possible Burman influence, and still they exhibit the closest affinity in language to them. It must, however, be said that these tribes, having probably the same origin as those of the Arracan Hills, seem to have formerly occupied the whole mountainous country around the head-waters of the Kyendwen River, until in comparatively recent times they were driven westward by the Singpho, Abor, and Khamti races.

We have hitherto dealt with the wilder tribes on the western side of Burma, but there remains one great and

important race which extends itself along the whole northern frontier of Burma Proper from Yunnan, where it is designated 'Kakhyen,' into Assam, where the tribes style themselves 'Singpho,' that is, 'men' *par excellence*. It has been alleged that they are allied to the Karen race, and this by so late a writer as Anderson in his "Mandelay to Momein," published in 1876, but except in their state of savage rudeness, and certain customs that are common to almost all the primitive tribes of these regions, there is really nothing to warrant this idea. On the contrary, the comparison of their vocabularies shows that, outside the common Indo-Chinese roots, all their lingual affinities are with the Burmo-Naga languages, as shown below :

	BURMESE.	NAGA DIALECTS.	SINGPHO.	KAREN.
One	ta, tit	Ama	Ai-má	hta, la
Two	nhit		nkhong	'kie, nie
Three	thong	A-sam	ma-sum	theu
Four	lé	a-li, be-li	me-li	lwie, lie
Five	nga	mānga	ma-nga	yai
Six	krouk	{ ta-ruk kruk (Chepang) }	kru	khu, khoo
Seven	koo-nit	nith, i-ngnit	si-nith	nwi, nwai
I	nga	ngai	ngai	ya, yer
Thou	nang, nin	nang	nang, ni	nah, ner
He	thoo	mih, kho (Tibet)	khi	awai, ur
Air	lé	ma-bung	m'bung	kli, li
Bird	nghet	ta-wu (Kumi)	wu	to, tu
Blood	thway	ai-chui	sai	thwi
Bone	aro	rha, kereng (Garo)	nrang	khi, kwi
Cow	nua	masu	kan-su	po, k'lau
Dog	kway	kui	gui	htwi
Fire	mee	van	wan	may, mi
Flower	pan	taben	siban	paw
Hair	san	{ kra (Murmi) škra (Tibet) }	kara	kho-thoo
Hand	let	lappa (Bhutan)	lettá	tsu, su
Head	khong	gu-bong	bong	hko
Hog	wak	vak, vah (Horpa)	wa	to, htu
Horse	mrang	se rang (Chepang)	ka-mrang	ka-thi, thi
Moon	lā	yita, lita	sita	lah
Mother	may	annu, nu (Khyen)	nu	mo
River	mrach	kharr	khá	klo
Road	lam	lam	lam	klay
Salt	tsa	hum, sum	jum	itha, htula
Sun	nay	san, sanh	jan	mu, muh

In these examples some of the Burmese words are written as spelt, and not as pronounced, to show the true root. There is surely enough to warrant our affiliating the Singpho to the Nagá, and not to the Karen race, until the latter theory is proved by some incontestable evidence.

The Singpho or Kakhyens now fringe the whole northern frontier of Burma, extending from the Chinese province of Yunnan into the valley of Assam. Their irruption into Assam took place about 1783, and is a comparatively modern instance of the flux and reflux which characterized the early movements of all these races. Cut off for centuries from their Nagá brethren, who at one time joined them in the Upper Valley of the Khyeen-dwen River, as their tribes increased in numbers, they have had no room to expand eastward, owing to the barrier opposed by Chinese civilization; the Burman power checked them on the south: they have thus been forced to use the only outlet afforded them, and partly retrace westward the route of their original migrations.
