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THE TAMANS OF THE UPPER CHINDWIN, BURMA.

BY R. GRANT BROWN, I.C.S.

[WITH PLATES XXXVI-XXXIX.]

THE following note on the Tamans appears in the Report on the Burma Census of 1901 (Part II, page 128). It appears to be the only reference to them which has yet been published.¹ They are not mentioned in Sir George Scott's *Gazetteer of Upper Burma*, nor yet in the *Imperial Gazetteer*.

“Mr. Smyth, Deputy Commissioner of the Upper Chindwin, has sent me a few particulars regarding what is probably a hybrid tribe found in the Homalin and Uyu townships of that district, and known as the Tamans. Their name as well as their habitat would appear to hint at a Burmese-Shan mixture, but their language, like Kadu, shows marks of a Kachin influence. Maung Myat Tun Aung, Subdivisional Officer of Legayaing, who has furnished the particulars above referred to, thinks that the Tamans are not Shans, but it appears probable that there is now more Shan than anything else in their composition. It seems to me that a study of the Tamans side by side with the Kadus might yield exceedingly interesting results. They numbered 829 persons in all.”

The Tamans show no very marked difference in feature from the races living round them. Thirty heads measured by me had indexes varying from 70·7 to 90·2, with a mean of 79·1. The average height was 5 ft. 2½ in. Like the so-called Shans of this district, they wear Burmese dress. They profess Buddhism, but, as will be seen, they have hardly, if at all, begun to forsake their earlier religion. They are regarded with some fear by their neighbours on account of their supposed magical powers.

The Taman language is spoken at Tamanthi, on the right bank of the Chindwin in 25° 21' N., 95° 21' E., with the neighbouring villages of Twetwa and Nantalet, and by a few families at and near Intha, some distance to the east of the same river, in 24° 11' N., 94° 51' E. The Intha people are said to have fled from Tamanthi when it was attacked by Kachins over a hundred years ago. North of Tamanthi the banks of the Chindwin have a sparse population, mostly Shan-speaking, but

¹ Since the above was written Mr. Lowis' *Tribes of Burma* has been issued by the Ethnographical Survey of India. It contains, on pages 26 and 27, a brief note on the Tamans, with a reference to materials collected by me in 1908, which have been utilized in this article.

composed of Taman, Naga, Kachin, and Shan elements, the first two probably predominating. The mountains to the west are peopled by Nagas, and to eastwards the country, which contains no mountains, is uninhabited until the Uyu is reached, nearly thirty miles away. Downstream to Homalin, near the Uyu mouth, all the people call themselves Shans. The headmen of several large villages, however, have admitted to me a tradition that their ancestors came from the mountains on the west, and were Tangkhul Nagas, and there can be no doubt that Nagas who have adopted the Shan language and Burmese dress form the bulk of the population.

The following statement is from the lips of the Pawmaing, or superior headman, of the Tamanthi group of villages. He bears a Burmese name. The Burmese include Nagas in the term "Chin." The hills to the west of Saramati are the Naga Hills.

Tamanthi, 30th October, 1908.—Maung Chein, Tamanthi Pawmaing, states :—

"I am a Taman on both sides, and speak the language. It is quite different from Chin, or Shan, or Kadu, but is a little like Kachin. My father spoke Taman, Shan, and Burmese, like myself, but my grandfather spoke only Taman and Burmese. The use of the Shan language is increasing among the Tamans.

"I heard from my father and grandfather that the Tamans came from the east, from the Indawgyi Lake, where they used to live before it became a lake. They first went to the mountains to the west beyond Nwèmauk (Saramati), but as they did not get on with the people there they came back and settled in the Chindwin valley. Before they lived in the basin of the Indawgyi Lake they came from the Shan States, still further east. In the time of my great-grandfather the Kachins came down from the north, from beyond the rapids, and fought with our people, many of whom fled in various directions, some to Mogaung, some to Wuntho, some to Kindat. The Kachins went back to their country, none of them settling here.

"There are many Tamans in all the villages in Homalin township and many others in Paungbyin. They are also found in Kindat, and even in Monywa and Mandalay, but they have forgotten the language and call themselves Burmans.

"There used to be people at Tamanthi who could turn themselves into tigers, in the time of my grandfather, but there are none now. If a man wanted to turn himself into a tiger he made water on the ground, stripped himself, and rolled on the earth he had wetted. He could then fight and kill other tigers. Villagers who had turned themselves into tigers used to take buffaloes and fowls. Traps with guns were set for the tigers, and men were sometimes found in them, the tiger having turned into a man again. It was owing to this that the custom ceased.

"It is quite true that anyone taking a Taman's property without leave is suddenly paralysed and thrown into convulsions, and dies if the owner does not intercede for him. This often happens when strangers come into a house and take up something. It would always happen on an outsider taking up anything in a house, unless the house-owner tells the *nats*¹ not to 'bite,' taking a grain of rice in his mouth at the same time and spitting it out. I have seen men smitten myself. Only last month Aung Ke was passing Kya Do's house with some bamboos, when he knocked them against the side of the house. I was sent for and found him rolling on the floor of his house in convulsions.

¹ Spirits.

He was not seized at once, but about half an hour after he knocked against the house. He was given medicine and asked what he had eaten. He said he had eaten nothing, but had knocked against Kya Do's house when passing with his bamboos. It was then decided that he must have been bitten by Kya Do's rice-*nat*. Kya Do was sent for, and chewed a grain of rice and spit it out again, asking the *nat* not to bite and saying that Aung Ke was his friend. Aung Ke immediately got all right.

"It is said that no one will steal a Taman's property, through fear of the *nat*, but I have known Tamans' things stolen just like anyone else's without anything happening. Thieves are not always bitten: on the other hand honest men sometimes are, for no reason.

"We worship the *nats* regularly twice a year, in Wagaung¹ and Tabodwè.² The same ceremonies take place on each occasion. The Wagaung festival is held when transplanting of paddy is done, the Tabodwè one after the main harvest. Besides these regular times, we worship at any time if there is any occasion for it. Fowls and pigs are killed and offered, and then some *kaung*³ is offered, and the rest drunk. Eight tumblers of *kaung* are offered four times at intervals through the day. Each man is smeared with a little blood in different parts of his body, by a man who is called the *nat*-keeper (*nattein*). This appointment is hereditary, descending from father to son. He gets an extra share of the meat, etc., and a portion of paddy from each house at the time of the feast, but he is not supported through the year by the village, and works like any other villager. He is treated like any other villager, not like a *pongyi*.⁴ Offerings are made to the *nats* when the crops are attacked by insects, and the insects always disappear. Disease has been kept off in the same way when many people had died at other places.

"The offerings are specially made to the *nat* of the village, the *nat* of our ancestors, but prayers for a good harvest, etc., are always offered to the *nat* of Nwèmauk (Saramati),⁵ who is mentioned by name, the worshipper addressing him as *Nwèmauk àshin-nat-kyi*. *Nwè* is the Shan *noi*, a mountain, and *mauk* means a flower, and also snow or mist. The worshipper does not turn to the mountain when addressing it. There is no legend about either *nat*.

"Everyone smears himself with the contents of fowls' eggs from time to time as a precaution against tigers, especially if anything has happened to make him do so. For instance, tigers often throw clotted blood at houses. This means they want eggs, and will kill someone if they are not given. The people of the house then all smear themselves with the contents of eggs and throw the shells away into the jungle outside the village. When we are out in our *taungyas*,⁶ too, tigers sometimes steal our clothes, and we then have to smear ourselves with eggs.

"Malin is not a Taman village, but a Malin village. The Malins are different from the Tamans, though they speak a language something like ours. Sometimes we can understand what they say, sometimes not. There are Malins at Tamanthi, Maungkan, and some other villages, but there are not as many of them as there are of Tamans. They intermarry with us, and have always done so. We never used to intermarry with the Shans, but are beginning to do so now."

Since the above was recorded, I have conversed with several Tamans on the Uyu and Chindwin, including the Pawmaing, and have obtained the following

¹ August.

² February.

³ Rice-beer.

⁴ Buddhist monk.

⁵ The highest mountain in Burma (12,557 feet), 32 miles from Tamanthi.

⁶ Hill-clearings.

details regarding their origin. It is said that they once lived in a place or country in China called Ôkkat; that they wore trousers, used chopsticks, and generally followed Chinese customs; that they migrated to the site of what is now the Indawgyi Lake in Myitkyina district ($25^{\circ} 8' N.$, $96^{\circ} 23' E.$); that the lake was formed suddenly, and thousands were drowned; that the survivors fled in terror to the mountains west of the Chindwin, where they thought themselves safe in the event of another deluge occurring; that here, cut off from the rest of the world, they lived the life of the hillmen, and dressed like the Nagas, with only a strip of cloth to hide their nakedness; and that at last they descended the Nantaleik and other streams to the Chindwin, and adopted Burmese-Shan customs. This story receives striking confirmation from the fact that chopsticks are placed with food offered to the gods, for no one in Burma eats with chopsticks except the Chinese. It is well known that tribal or national customs linger on in religious ceremonies long after they have been abandoned in ordinary life. The admission of the descent into savagery, too, makes it improbable that the story is altogether an invention.

I have not been able to identify Ôkkat, but, as pointed out by Mr. E. C. S. George, C.I.E., Deputy Commissioner at Mogok, there is a place called Hokat on the Irrawaddy, about fifty miles due east of the Indawgyi Lake. This may be named after a place or district in China, and the name may quite possibly have been given to it by the Tamans on their way to the lake.

Mr. Lowis, late Superintendent of Ethnography in Burma, has called my attention to the article on the Indawgyi Lake in the *Upper Burma Gazetteer*. This mentions a local legend, according to which the lake was once inhabited by a people called Tamansai. (Tamansai is the Shan form of Tamanthè or Tamanthi, the alternative name for the Tamans and the name by which their present headquarters is called.) This people incurred the displeasure of the god of the lake, and all but one old woman, who was warned by a dream, were drowned and became fish. The posts of their houses are still visible under the water. The writer of the article evidently had no idea that a people called Tamansai were still in existence.

The statement that house-posts are still visible will be investigated next April, when the lake is at its lowest. I have not been able to get any confirmation of it in time for this article.

The recent history of the Tamans as told by the Pawmaing is not without interest. According to this there was rivalry between his great-grandfather, who was Myoza of Tamanthi, a title inferior to Sawbwa, and the Shan Myoza of Maingwè, on the other bank of the Chindwin, eighteen miles further down. Both were sent for by the Burmese King, but the Maingwè Myoza did not go, and the Pawmaing's great-grandfather was appointed Sawbwa of the whole valley of the Chindwin from the Falls, about latitude $26^{\circ} 15'$, to the neighbourhood of latitude 25° . While he was Sawbwa a body of Kamti Shans from Great Kamti (above latitude 27°) appeared on their way south, and he offered them an asylum. They stayed for a while at Nanmanin on the Nantaleik, some way above Naungmo, the scene of the massacre last February, and then offered to man an outpost which

the Sawbwa had placed against the Kachins by order of the king at the village then called Singalein and now Kanti, a little below the Falls. This was agreed to, and they founded what is now the State of Kanti. Meanwhile the Maingwè Shans were intriguing against the Sawbwa, and he was murdered by some of his own people, who had been persuaded to turn against him. This angered the Kachins of the north, who were friendly with the Sawbwa, and three thousand of them came down and destroyed Tamanthi. No new Sawbwa was appointed there, but the Maingwè Myoza gained nothing by his intrigues, for he was reduced to a mere headman under a Burmese official, and a Sawbwa was created at Kanti. This, according to the history of Kanti State, was in the time of King Bodaw, who reigned from 1781 to 1819.

The English words in the list given below are taken from the comparative vocabulary at the end of Hanson's *Kachin Dictionary*. Those marked with an asterisk are in the standard list of words in Grierson's *Linguistic Survey*, which has become available since the vocabulary was first prepared. Those marked with a dagger are in the list of Kadu words on page 691, Part I, volume i, of the *Upper Burma Gazetteer*.

The second column shows the Taman word as written down by me after hearing it repeated by three men and two women. I have used the alphabet of the International Phonetic Association.¹ So far as I am aware this is the first time the alphabet has been employed for committing an unknown tongue to writing; it has hitherto been used mainly for teaching the correct pronunciation of European languages. The alphabet, however, is admirably suited for the purpose for which it is now employed, and as there is no system of notation in general use (though there are several based, like it, on the Continental pronunciation of the vowels, the English pronunciation being obviously impossible as a basis) it might well be adopted by ethnologists and others who have to put strange sounds into writing. The system is not, of course, an ideal one, for it is a compromise, and no compromise is ideal. But, while it differentiates sounds with sufficient accuracy, it is easily intelligible to anyone who can read the Roman character, and can be printed without excessive expense, a consideration which has led to the use of inverted letters in place of diacritical marks or new characters. In both these respects it has a great advantage over the more scientific systems of visible speech which have been invented.

The Shan, Karen, Tibetan, Yawyin, Atsi, and Chinese words in the third column have been taken from Hanson, the spelling being of course retained; the Kachin and Chin words from Hanson, corrected where possible by Grierson; the Burmese from my own knowledge; the Sengkadong Naga from a vocabulary prepared by me, on the basis of Grierson's standard list, of the dialect of the nearest Naga neighbours of the Tamans; the Kadu from the *Upper Burma Gazetteer*; and the remainder from Grierson's *Linguistic Survey*.

¹ Mr. D. Jones, 74, Gloucester Place, Portman Square, London, W., represents the Association in England.

A key to the pronunciation is prefixed to the vocabulary. The mark (‘) to distinguish aspirated letters is not prescribed by the International Phonetic Association, but is indispensable.

The sound system, though not quite so simple as the Burmese, is very much simpler than that of the Naga languages. The only Taman sounds unknown in Burmese appear to be Λ , ϵ , \ddot{u} , v , and x . The combination ts (the two sounds are pronounced as nearly as possible together) was a common Burmese sound until a generation or two ago, and in old English books on Burma ts is always written for the sound now pronounced as a pure s . The v appears to be interchangeable with w . The sound Λ seems rare, and is not used in the vocabulary, but is found in “ $\chi\lambda\pi\tau\epsilon$,” the name used by Tamans of themselves.

On the other hand the Burmese sounds θ , tj , and their corresponding sonants δ , dj , appear to be unknown in Taman. The Burmese θ (our *th* in *thin*) is merely a modern form of s , and the old pronunciation is retained in Taman (e.g., in the word for *three*), as in some dialects of Burmese. The sounds I have written tj , dj , are possibly identical with the Association’s c , j , which are found in Magyar.

The enunciation of the Tamans I have met is particularly indistinct. The lips are hardly moved, and there is a tendency for most of the vowels to take the loose form even when they are long and final. Thus the vowel in $t\dot{i}_-$, water, is pronounced almost i (our *i* in *tin*). This lazy pronunciation is also characteristic of the Nagas in the neighbourhood.

It is difficult to pronounce on the tones of a language without an intimate knowledge of it, which I do not possess in the case of Taman; nor is there any Taman of sufficient intelligence to explain. The Pawmaing told me that the tones were the same as in Burmese, but that is certainly not the case. As far as I can ascertain there are only two tones, the high (ˉ) and the low (ˉ). One of these appears in the word for “water,” which is $t\dot{i}_-$, while that for egg is $t\dot{i}^-$. Some other words with the same ending may be pronounced with indifference in either tone. Thus vi , a dog, may be pronounced either vi^- or $vi_$ without altering the meaning. This is not the case in Burmese, where with certain endings one of three tones must be used, any other being wrong. The Burmese check tone appears to be absent. The final vowel is often short, even when accented, but this is the case in French, and is quite a different thing from the sharp closure of the glottis, combined with a falling tone, which is found in Burmese.

The final consonants are treated as in Burmese and apparently most other Tibeto-Burman languages: that is, they are only half uttered. Thus in the English final t , after the passage is closed by the tongue, the closing parts are smartly separated, producing a distinct sound called by Sweet the “off-glide.” In Burmese and Taman this action is omitted, and the parts separated gradually and silently.

In addition to this vocabulary I have obtained the Taman equivalents of most of the words and phrases in Grierson’s standard list, and have paid some attention to

the syntax. From these materials, and the brief grammars in Grierson's *Survey*, I deduce the following facts :—

- (1) The Taman vocabulary differs widely from those of all other languages and dialects in Burma and Assam.
- (2) It has a few roots in common with Kadu which are not found in the other languages, but most of the roots available show no resemblance whatever.
- (3) The vocabulary of the Sengkadong Nagas, the nearest neighbours of the Tamans, is if anything further removed from the Taman than that of most of the Naga tribes, though it supplies the nearest form of the word for "six." The sound system and the syntax also show very wide differences, both being far more elaborate than in Taman. On the whole the Taman language has hardly more roots in common with Naga than with Burmese.
- (4) Kuki-Chin and Kuki-Naga, though neighbours, show no more marked affinities, either in vocabulary or language, than do the rest of the Tibeto-Burman group.
- (5) The language has a considerable proportion of roots in common with Kachin. There seems no particular reason to suppose that these have been borrowed, as the nearest Kachin village is nearly a hundred miles away; the Kachins have never come into contact with the Tamans, so far as is known, except in an occasional raid; and they are known to be comparatively recent arrivals in Burma from the north. On the other hand the syntax shows no very close resemblance as compared with other Tibeto-Burman languages.
- (6) One would expect to find many words borrowed from the Shan, the language which the Tamans hear far more than any other, and which, with the exception of Kadu, is practically the only language spoken in their homes by the people of the plain for a degree of latitude above and below them and a degree of longitude to the east. Yet the list contains no words that are obviously borrowed. At first sight *vè*, the word for "fire," which is *mi* in Burmese, Chin, and Naga, would seem to be borrowed from the Shan *fì*, but the fact that Kachari, Kachin, and Kadu all show what are apparently allied forms makes this improbable. The words for "good," "body," and "flesh" seem to have the same roots as the Shan, but are not of a class likely to be borrowed. On the whole it seems probable that the resemblances are due, not to borrowing, but to the fact that Shan, like Karen and Chinese, belongs to the same great family of languages, though to a different group from the Tibeto-Burman, to which Taman presumably belongs.
- (7) Lastly, the vocabulary shows no greater resemblances to Burmese

than to other languages of the Tibeto-Burman group, and less than it does to Kachin. In structure and idiom, however, the similarity is remarkable. In this respect Taman is nearer to Burmese than either Chin or Kachin, and a great deal nearer than the Naga group. Indeed the particles differ hardly more than those of the spoken Burmese from those of the written language; that is, the roots are different, but the use and meaning, as well as the order, are almost identical. An ordinary Burmese sentence can be translated into Taman almost word for word, without changing the order, just as it can be translated into literary Burmese.

From these facts I conclude that Taman is a member of the Tibeto-Burman group; that it forms, by itself or possibly with Kadu, a separate branch of that group, like Tibetan, Naga, Chin, Burmese, or Kachin; and that of these branches it shows the nearest affinity with Burmese and Kachin, but especially with the former.

Malin, mentioned in the last paragraph of the Pawmaing's statement, is 17 miles upstream from Tamanthi, on the other side of the river. A vocabulary has been made with the assistance of two old women, who appear to be the only persons now living who really know the language. Even they have nearly ceased to speak it, and it may almost be regarded as dead. It is, however, very closely allied to Taman, being almost as near, perhaps, as Italian and Spanish, and far nearer than the Naga dialects are to each other. The eight persons in Plate XXXVI, Fig. 2, are the only pure Malins who could be found in Malin village. They have a tradition that, with the Tamans, they came from the Nantaleik Valley, now inhabited by wild Nagas, and that they once wore Naga dress.

KEY TO PRONUNCIATION.

a	as in F. <i>patte</i> , <i>part</i> .
q	„ E. <i>father</i> .
e	„ F. <i>les</i> .
è	„ E. <i>men</i> .
i	„ E. <i>machine</i> .
ì	„ E. <i>it</i> .
o	„ F. <i>nos</i> .
u	„ E. <i>rude</i> .
ù	„ E. <i>put</i> .
ø	„ E. <i>amiss</i> .
æ	„ E. <i>burn</i> .
ʌ	„ E. <i>but</i> .
ɔ	„ E. <i>paw</i> , F. <i>note</i> .
ð	„ E. <i>not</i> .

- ö a sound apparently partaking of *e* and Λ , as defined above; approaching the F. *peu*, but formed quite differently, with the lips loose.
- k, p, s, t as in French.
- k̄, p̄, s̄, t̄ aspirated as in English, but more strongly.
- j as in English *yes*.
- x „ German *ach*.
- ɟ „ *song*.
- ʃ „ E. *shy*.
- indicates a high tone.
- „ low „
- \ „ falling tone.

English.	Taman.	Compare. §
One* †... ..	tə	Karen <i>tö</i> , B. <i>tít</i> .
Two* †... ..	nek	B. <i>hnit</i> , Tib. <i>nyi</i> .
Three* †	sùm	B. <i>thon</i> , O.B. and Tib. <i>sum</i> , etc.
Four* †	pəli	E. Naga <i>peli</i> .
Five* †	məɟə	Kch. and Naga <i>manga</i> , B. and Tib. <i>nga</i> .
Six* †	kwa	Sengkadong Naga <i>kwðkə</i> , Kadu <i>kok</i> .
Seven* †	sənè	Kch. <i>sinit</i> , Naga <i>seni</i> , etc., B. <i>kuhnit</i> .
Eight* † (not in Han-son)	pəsè	Kch. <i>masat</i> .
Nine* †	təxə	Naga <i>takhu</i> , Kch. <i>chaku</i> .
Ten* †... ..	ʃi	Kch. <i>shi</i> , Tib. <i>chu</i> , B. <i>šè</i> , Kadu <i>shim</i> .
Ape	jùn	—
Arm, hand* †... ..	la	B. <i>let</i> , O.B. <i>lak</i> , Kch. <i>lata</i> , Tib. <i>lagpa</i> .
Arrow	pəlo	—
Axe	wətùm	Atsi <i>wa</i> .
Bag	tùmbo	Shan <i>htung</i> .
Bamboo	wə	B. and Karen <i>wa</i> .
Bat	səɟpula	Yawyin <i>wala</i> .
Bear	šap	Kch. <i>tsap</i> .

§ B. = Burmese. O.B. = Old Burmese. Tib. = Tibetan. Kch. = Kachin. E. Naga = Eastern Naga. M. = Meithei or Manipuri.

English.	Taman.	Compare.§
Bee	ùìy	—
Big	lway	Chin <i>len</i> .
Bird*†	kət/èksə	Andro (Manipuri) <i>ujiksa</i> , Aimol (Old Kuki) <i>kache</i> .
Bitter	xə	B. ká, Atsi <i>hkuaw</i> .
Blood†	še	Kch. <i>sai</i> , Kadu <i>se</i> .
Boat	li	Kch. <i>li</i> , B. <i>hle</i> , etc.
Body	tu	Shan <i>tu</i> .
Bone	raŋ	Kch. <i>nra</i> .
Buffalo†	mək	Kadu <i>mok</i> , cow.
Call	lu	—
Cat*†	mət/èksə	E. Naga <i>mashi</i> .
Cold	xəm	—
Dog*†	vi	Chin, <i>wi, wi</i> .
Ear*†	nəpa	B. and Tib. <i>na</i> , Yawyin <i>napaw</i> , Sopvoma (Naga-Kuki) <i>nubbi</i> .
Earth (soil)	pəkə	—
Eat*†	sə	B. and Tib. <i>sa</i> , Kch. <i>sha</i> .
Elephant†	məki	Kch. <i>məgwi</i> , Kadu <i>akyi</i> .
Eye*†	pekkwe	—
Father*†	və, wə	Kch., E. Naga and Goro <i>wa</i> , Kadu <i>awa</i> .
Female... ..	nəm	Kch. <i>nam</i> .
Fire*†	vè	Shan <i>fi</i> , Kachari <i>wai</i> , Kch. and Kadu <i>wan</i> .
Fish†	ətsə	—
Flesh	hè	Shan <i>ha</i> .
Give*	nəm	—
Go*	hə	—
Gold*	xəm	Siyin and E. Naga <i>kham</i> , Shan <i>ka</i> , Chinese <i>kin</i> .
Good	kəmè	Shan <i>hkam</i> .
Grass	šèìy	Kch. <i>tsing</i> .
Head*†	kəkə	M. <i>kok</i> , Tib. <i>go</i> .
Hill	kəùrwe... ..	Kch. <i>kawng</i> , Tib. <i>ri</i> .

§ B. = Burmese. O.B. = Old Burmese. Tib. = Tibetan. Kch. = Kachin. E. Naga = Eastern Naga. M. = Meithei or Manipuri.

English.	Taman.	Compare.§
Hog†	va, wa	Kch. <i>wa</i> , B. <i>wet</i> , O.B. <i>wak</i> , Kadu <i>wag</i> .
Horse* †	tʃipòuk	Siyin <i>shipu</i> , Maring Naga <i>sapuk</i> , Kadu <i>sabu</i> .
House* †	ʃip	Tangkhum Naga <i>shim</i> .
I†	në	B. <i>nga</i> .
Iron* †	ʃa	Tib. <i>chag</i> , Garo <i>ser</i> , Kadu <i>sin</i> .
Kill†	səsèuk	Kch. and O.B. <i>sat</i> .
Know	tʃùp	—
Man (human being)* †	mek	Tib., Shonshe Chin, and E. Naga <i>mi</i> .
Male	laktʃay	—
Moon* †	sələ	Lushei <i>thla</i> , B. and Karen <i>la</i> , Kadu <i>sada</i> .
Mother* †	nëm	Kch. <i>mu</i> .
Name	təmey	M. <i>ming</i> , Thādo (Chin) <i>min</i> .
Night†	nqtay	Kadu <i>natkyet</i> .
River†	(word for water used)	—
Road †	lam	B., Kadu, Tib., etc., <i>lam</i> .
Rock	taypə	—
Salt†	tsùm	Kch. <i>jum</i> , Kadu <i>sum</i> , M. <i>thum</i> .
Snake†	pə	Kadu <i>kapu</i> .
Silk	nè	Shan <i>lai</i> or <i>nai</i> , Kch. <i>lai</i> .
Speak†	t'è	Atsi <i>dai</i> , B. <i>tè</i> (particle), Kadu <i>tutabauk</i> .
Star* †	taypə	—
Steal	xələ	B. <i>kov</i> .
Sun* †	pupek	Kadu <i>samet</i> .
Tooth* †	wəkòun, wəkòun	Garo <i>wagam</i> , E. Naga <i>va</i> , Kch. <i>wa</i> .
Water* †	tí—	Chin <i>ti</i> , <i>tui</i> , Garo and E. Naga <i>ti</i> , Karen <i>hti</i> , Tib. <i>ch'u</i> .
Write	rek	B. <i>yev</i> , O.B. <i>rev</i> , Hindustani <i>likh</i> .
Year	kèly	Chin <i>kun</i> .

§ B. = Burmese. O.B. = Old Burmese. Tib. = Tibetan. Kch. = Kachin. E. Naga = Eastern Naga. M. = Meithei or Manipuri.

On the 25th August, 1910, I was present at one of the sacrificial feasts of the Taman community. It was held on a small hill near the left bank of the Nantaleik river about a mile from Twetwa, which lies at its mouth on the Chindwin. All the men from the Taman villages under the Pawmaing were there, and also a few Nagas.

On the hill was a large open shed, erected over a low square platform formed with four wooden beams.¹ The wood of these had the appearance of great age, and the first shed was said to have been erected in the same spot when the Tamans first settled near the river. There was then a village hard by, long since deserted. The platform was for the Pawmaing and his family. In the middle of it was a cane wicker stand, about a foot high and four feet wide, and circular, on which were placed some tumblers of rice-beer and some tea-salad.² Round this were hollow bamboos, also filled with rice-beer. On the south side of the shed, seated on an ancient block of wood, was the hereditary custodian of the god, an old man wearing the long white robe of Burmese ceremony.³ I shall call him the priest. By his side were some sheaves of young paddy. In front of him was another wicker stand, with more rice-beer and tea-leaves. Underneath this, I was told, was earth which had been brought all the way from China, and had accompanied the people in their wanderings. I was also shown a cannon-ball which was said to have been fired at them by the Chinese as they fled from their old home. A number of fowls were then produced, one cock and one hen for each village including the Naga villages. The cocks were held up in a row and slowly strangled between finger and thumb, while the priest offered prayers to the guardian spirit of the community for its prosperity, for good crops, and for freedom from sickness and war. As he did so, he poured rice-beer drop by drop on to the ground from a bamboo, just as water is poured out at Buddhist religious ceremonies. When the cocks were dead they were brought to the Pawmaing and their feet examined for omens. If the feet were separate, and hung symmetrically side by side, the omen was good, and meant general good luck for the village; if they were unsymmetrical, or the claws interlaced, it was bad. The same ritual was then gone through with the hens. They were specially connected with the crops, and their feet showed whether the crops would be good or bad. I regret to say that the Tamans are going to have very bad crops this year, while the Nagas, who work only hill-clearings, will get a good yield. A pig, bought for twenty rupees from the Nagas, was then brought and placed near the shed. The priest poured rice-beer on him, and a young man killed him with several blows on the head from a heavy club. He was cut open, and the blood caught in a bamboo and handed to the priest. The fowls were broiled, and the pig roasted over a wood fire. The thigh-bones of the fowls were then examined for more omens, these now depending on the symmetry of some small holes on each side of the bone. The priest then went outside, and smeared each man as he came up, and lastly himself, on the forehead and breast with blood from the bamboo,

¹ Plate XXXIX, Fig. 4. ² Plate XXXIX, Fig. 1. ³ Plate XXXIX, Figs. 1 and 3.



FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.

THE TAMANS OF THE UPPER CHINDWIN, BURMA.



FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.

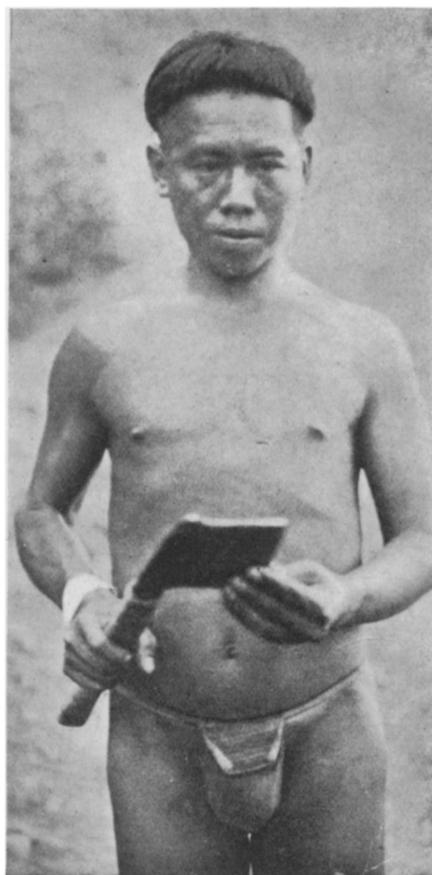


FIG. 3.

THE TAMANS OF THE UPPER CHINDWIN, BURMA.

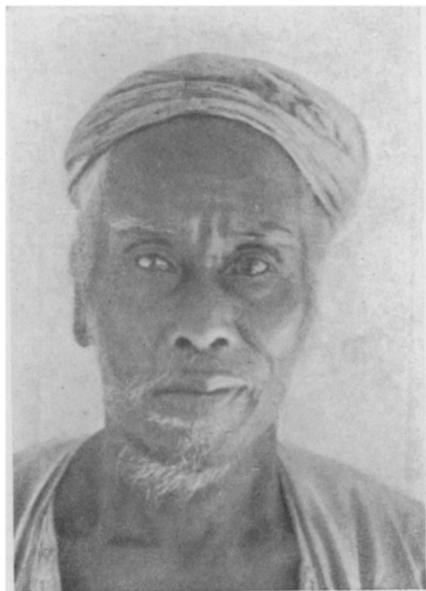


FIG. 1.



FIG. 2.

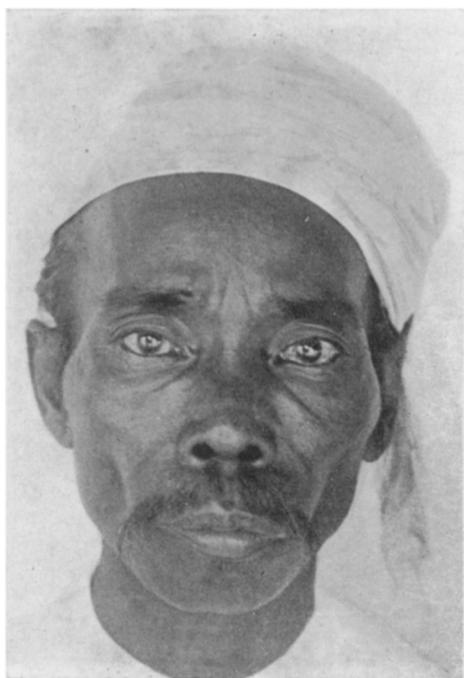


FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.

THE TAMANS OF THE UPPER CHINDWIN, BURMA.



FIG. 1.

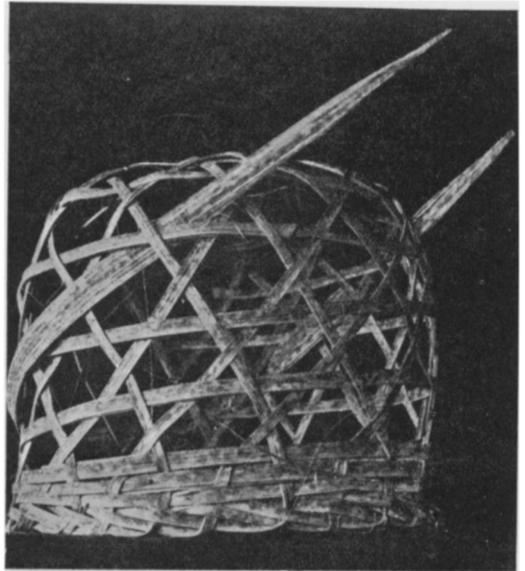


FIG. 2.



FIG. 3.

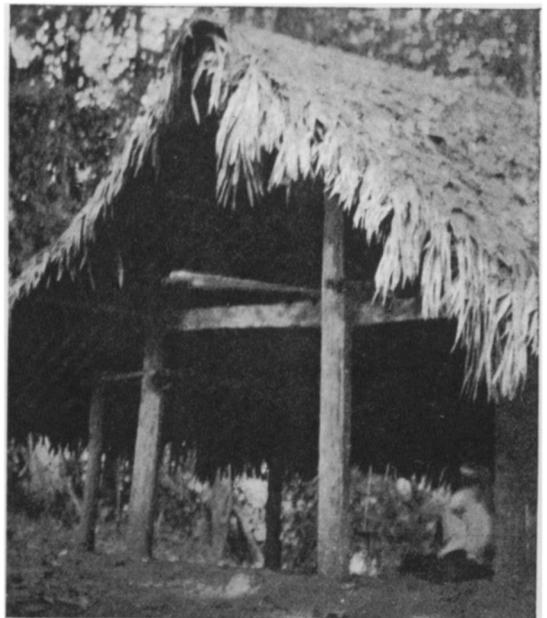


FIG. 4.

THE TAMANS OF THE UPPER CHINDWIN BURMA.

muttering prayers the while, as a protection against tigers and evil spirits. When the cooking operations were finished, pork, fowl, and rice were placed in bowls with chopsticks and set on the wicker stands, and the priest called on the god in a loud voice to come and eat. I was now told that there was nothing more to see except the feasting. Nothing could have been more orderly than the proceedings up to this point, but the rice-beer was being handed round freely, and I left the company to enjoy itself.

On a shelf under the roof in the south-east corner of the shed stood some helmet-shaped baskets of split bamboo, with pieces projecting from them like ears.¹ These, I was told, represented the heads of enemies slain in battle. The house of every Naga chief in unadministered territory is provided with a similar platform, on which are ranged the skulls of persons killed in raids or fights with other villages.

Description of Plates.

PLATE XXXVI.

Fig. 1.—A group of Tamans.

Fig. 2.—Group of Malins at Malin (25° 31' N., 95° 24' E.). The two old women in the foreground are the only persons who still use the Malin language.

Fig. 3.—Heinsun, near Naungmo, a Naga village, under the Tamanthi Pawmaing.

PLATE XXXVII.

Fig. 1.—Naga girl weaving at Heinsun.

Fig. 2.—Naga of Heinsun in full war equipment. (Helmet and shield from Mätong, in unadministered territory.)

Fig. 3.—Mashatweu, Naga headman of Naungmo, under the Tamanthi Pawmaing, whose wives and children were killed in the head-hunting raid by Nagas from unadministered territory in February, 1910.

PLATE XXXVIII.

Figs. 1 and 2.—An old Taman of Tamanthi, Chindwin River, now living at Yebawmi on the Uyu.

Figs. 3 and 4.—Maung Chein, Pawmaing of Tamanthi.

PLATE XXXIX.

Fig. 1.—In the sacrificial shed. In the foreground are bamboo cups for rice-beer on the table in the centre of the shed. The priest sits with his face to the south. On his right is another table for offerings, and in front of him are two sticks with fowl's feathers to mark the place where the earth from China is buried.

Fig. 2.—Bamboo basket-work representing human head.

Fig. 3.—The high priest of the Tamans.

Fig. 4.—One end of the sacrificial shed. The priest is on the right.

¹ Plate XXXIX., Fig. 2.