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On the Chinese Province of Yunnan and Its Borders

Author(s): T. T. Cooper

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work, and will bring home for the Society most valuable results of careful observations.

"The chronometers went very wild after the land journey from the Red Sea, therefore they were allowed to run down, and remained dormant for some months. They have been wound up and rated, carefully corrected by numerous observations within the last two months, and one is now going remarkably well.

"We have had much sickness in camp during the rainy season. Poor Dr. Gedge lost his reason entirely, and became very violent. There was no hope, and I had him conveyed to Khartoum. After some weeks, during which he frequently refused nourishment, his unhappy malady ended in death. Thank God, we have been free from all ailments, and my wife and I are as well as when in Europe. With love from us both,

"Ever affectionately yours,

"SAMUEL W. BAKER."

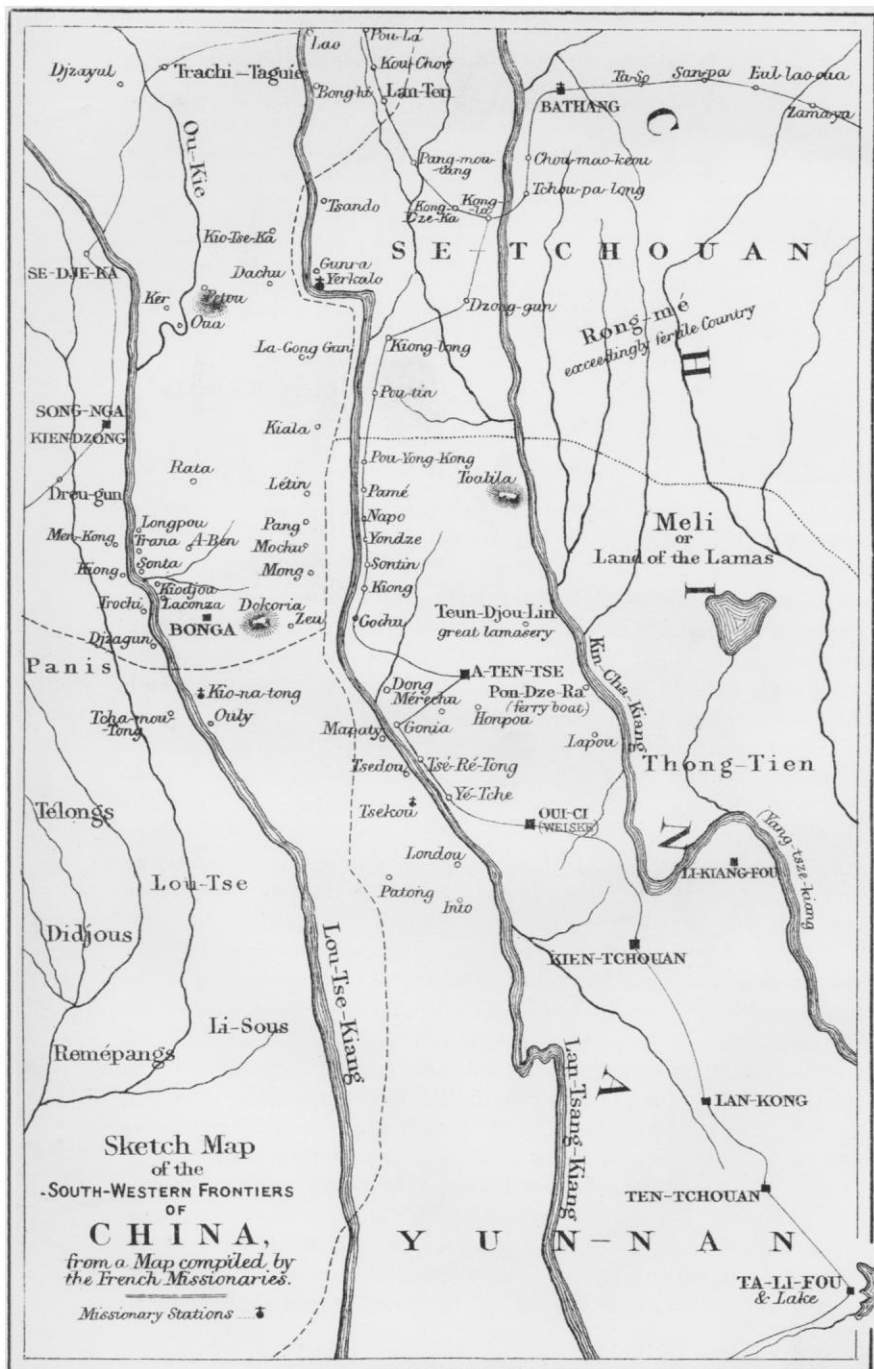
The following paper was then read by the author :—

*On the Chinese Province of Yunnan and its Borders.*—By T. T. COOPER.

At the present time the Chinese province of Yunnan is attracting attention in its geographical, commercial, and political relations with the adjacent countries. It has been, so to speak, attacked from three sides, and that almost at the same time, by explorers acting independently of each other; viz. :—the French expedition from Saigon, on the south; Major Sladen's party, on the Burmese or western side; and, last and not least, an attempt was made by myself to reach Tali-foo from Atenze, on the northern frontier.

Its capital, the city of Yunnan-foo was formerly the residence of a viceroy who directed the Chinese political relations with Thibet and Burmah; and out of the early intercourse between Yunnan and these two countries, arose the events which led to the partial subjugation and consequent political relations which have heretofore existed between the Chinese Government and the numerous tribes inhabiting the western and northern borders of Yunnan.

As if to compensate for the wildness of her borders, the interior of the province may be said to form a beautiful picture, having for its centrepiece the great Lake of Tali-foo, 45 miles long and 15 wide, navigable for vessels drawing 6 feet, and abounding in fish; while nine so-called plains are famous for their various agricultural and mineral productions. The Plain of Tali-foo, surrounding the lake, on the banks of which lies the city of that name, ranks first in area and population, which latter numbered, some thirty years ago, no less than 430,000 souls, distributed in more than 150 towns and villages. The next in importance is the Plain of Yuin-chang, lying to the west of Tali and extending nearly to Ten-yua-chew. This plain is called the rice-field of Yunnan, producing an exceedingly fine quality of grain. It is, however, cursed with malaria,



which is a fruitful source of fevers and epidemic diseases. This, however, is an exception to the general climate, which is considered good, and, as far as I am acquainted with it, it is so. From the month of June to the beginning of August, there is a heavy rainfall throughout the province; the sun, however, occasionally shines with great heat during the day, but, in Weisee, I invariably found the nights cool and pleasant, which I was told is the case farther south. After the rains subsided in August, the weather was lovely: bright, sunny days, never too warm to be unpleasant, were succeeded by cold nights, rendering fires in one's room quite a comfort. While in the months November, December, and January, white frost is common everywhere, increasing, of course, in intensity in the northern part of the province, and snow generally falls to some depth on the hills surrounding Weisee every winter.

The Plain of Yunnan-chien, surrounding the capital, is famous for its gold and silver mines; while that of Likang-foo, lying at a considerable height above the others at the foot of the Sui-shan, or snowy mountains, contains valuable quarries of marble, and the plain of Lankong, further east again, abounds in sulphur mines, and has a high reputation for its sulphuric hot springs; while of the other five, lying in different parts of the province, Kien-chuen and Ho-chin, in the north, possess valuable mines of iron. The other plains, Teng-chuen, Kian-oui, and Ngieon-tsin, I have not been able to identify; but in them, as in other parts of the province, there are rich mines of red, yellow, and white copper—as many as 132 mines having been in work by the Chinese.

Thin-leaved tobacco grows everywhere throughout Yunnan, which for fineness of stalk, delicacy of flavour, and aroma, is superior to the tobacco of any other province in China. The leaf is peculiar in shape, being nearly as broad as it is long, and rarely more than 6 inches from the butt of the stalk to the point; when dried, it is of a pale yellow colour. This tobacco is rarely exported, being consumed by the Yunnanese and border tribes.

The cultivation of the poppy has been such as to gain for Yunnan opium a preference over that grown in the neighbouring provinces of Sz-chuen and Kwei-chow. Black tea, in the south and west of the province was cultivated extensively and is highly esteemed as a luxury by the Western Chinese.

The former fame of the Yunnan artists in jadestone carvings is perpetuated by the passion of the Chinese for jadestone rings and other ornaments carved from the stone which Chinese jade merchants procured from the tribes in the neighbourhood of Mogoung, in Northern Burmah, to the west of the Irawaddy River, where a

small colony of Chinese sprang up. Amber merchants from Yunnan also established trading posts to the north of Mogoung; while cotton merchants purchased from year to year the whole cotton crop of Northern Burmah, the importation of which, by mule carriage, generally commenced about the end of October and ended in April, after which, until the following October, little or no communication took place between Yunnan and Burmah, owing to the prevalence of fever in the Plain of Yuin-chang and the country westwards.

The city of Tali-foo was a favourite resort of the chiefs of all the surrounding tribes. Even Thibetans found their way to its annual fair, held in the third month of the year. Round the suburbs of the city may be seen to this day many marble tombstones hewn from the marble quarries, worked in the peaked mountain rising, out of the plain at the back of the city, like a huge spire. And these tombstones carved with Thibetan inscriptions mark the last resting-place of Thibetans who died on their visit to the famous city. Numbers of Burmese merchants in former days also attended the fair to purchase the superior silk cloths of China.

Tali-foo, as well as Yunnan-foo, were also famous as slave markets to which dealers from Canton, Soo-chow, near Shanghai, and even Peking itself, resorted for the purchase of female children, numbers of whom were brought for sale by the different tribes visiting the annual fairs, who in their wars look upon women and girls as valuable booty. Caravans, sometimes numbering several hundreds of girls purchased in the neighbourhood of these cities, started regularly every year for the different places I have mentioned, and so great became the traffic in girls, that the authorities in every large town along the routes from Tali-foo to Yunnan-foo appointed officers whose duty it was to inspect the caravans before they were allowed to enter the towns, so as to guard against the introduction of epidemics to which the human merchandize was too often exposed, as they were exposed in the journey to all kinds of privations, fatigue, and cruelty. Although the laws of China do not countenance slave dealing in the true sense of the word, the caravans of girls which left Yunnan were a source of too great wealth to the mandarins for them to enforce the strict letter of the law.

When a caravan was found to be infected with any contagious disease, admission into all towns and villages was forbidden them, and then, dragging along their weary journey by day in all weathers, ill-clad and ill-fed, the older girls might be seen carrying the smaller ones, who were either sick or too young to walk and keep up with the caravan; and at nightfall, when encamped under the

canopy of heaven, the poor creatures, after a scanty meal, would huddle together, the sick with the sound, and thus day by day the caravan would proceed, leaving behind it a long trail of dead and dying, who, by way of burial, became a prey to the packs of hungry wolves which always followed in the rear of the caravans.

In the early part of the last century the fame of the provincial capital was so great that the emperor sent some Jesuit missionaries skilled in engineering to reconstruct the fortifications of the city, and these heralds of Christianity left behind them several monuments of their skill both as architects and workers of metal. A magnificent gateway was erected under their superintendence, and two large brass cannons, over nine feet in length, cast in Pekin by the same fathers, who embellished them with Latin inscriptions, were sent to occupy a conspicuous position near the gateway.

Such was the famous province of Yunnan up to within the last thirty years, as described to me by an old resident, who lived in the province for fifteen years previous to the outbreak of the Mahomedan rebellion, which, though it has left the natural capabilities and resources of Yunnan unimpaired, has destroyed the prosperity arising from them as developed by the industrious population which, before the war, was more than double the number of its present inhabitants.

Although it may seem out of place in a geographical disquisition, a short sketch of the rise and progress of this little known rebellion is absolutely necessary to a proper understanding of the present condition of Yunnan.

It is difficult, from any Chinese source, to gain reliable information on the origin and progress of this Mahomedan rising. The accounts which reach the eastern shores of China through native sources are never to be relied on, and Major Sladen, to whom we are indebted for much valuable information gathered in his late visit to the town of Ten-yua-chew, or Momein, speaks of the want of reliability experienced in the native reports which reached him on the Burmese side.

My information on this subject was gathered from one whose authority, as having resided in the province at the time of the outbreak, is unquestionable.

Some short time previous to the year 1854, the Imperial Viceroy governing at Yunnan-foo became a convert to the new faith, and under his countenance the ranks of the faithful greatly increased, until the Viceroy, probably influenced by ambitious motives, tried to constitute himself a religious authority, and in doing so interfered with the established rites: this interference at once



called forth a remonstrance from one of the twelve elders who had been appointed in twelve different districts to guard the religious welfare of the faithful. This first remonstrance came from the elder in charge of the district of Likiang-foo, and was subsequently joined in by all the other elders. But to no purpose; for, to quote my informant's own words, "the haughty official disdained to listen to the prayer of his co-religionists." Matters soon came to a crisis, and the elder unfurled the white flag of rebellion from the walls of Likiang.

The rising of the faithful at Likiang was approved by the other elders, and the twelve districts almost simultaneously flew to arms, and a religious war, with all its horrors, ensued. "Death or the new religion" was the war-cry. Towns and villages that held out against the swelling wave of Mahomedan victory were overwhelmed and burnt, while the inhabitants were butchered to a man. A panic preceded the Mahomedan march: all who could, retreated before it; and when no longer able to flee, thousands of poor women, in order to escape their inevitable fate, resorted to suicide.

For several years the unchecked tide of Mahomedan conquest swept the western part of the province; its beautiful plains were deserted, and ruins everywhere alone marked the homes of the former population. Yunnan-foo, the provincial capital, was surrounded; and the Viceroy, in order to save himself, signed a treaty with the elder who had been chosen commander-in-chief of the rebel armies.

This treaty gave to the Mahomedans control of the western part of the province, including the city of Tali, while it secured to the Viceroy the city of Yunnan and the country thirty miles to the west of it. On the conclusion of this treaty, the Viceroy sent a despatch to Peking stating that he had crushed the Mahomedans, and peace was once more restored to the province. But when the real nature of the peace was known at Peking, an officer was sent to supersede the Viceroy; who, however, declined to obey the emperor's orders. Though he scrupulously maintained his title of "She-tai," Viceroy, he did not openly attack the troops sent from time to time to subdue the rebels; but bribed the leaders to remain personally inactive, and send small detachments, unsupported and betrayed, to meet certain defeat. This desultory warfare, which continued for fourteen years, resulted in the firm establishment of Mahomedan rule over more than two thirds of the province; and the remnant, remaining under Imperial rule, has at last been transferred to the Viceroyalty of the province of Kwei-chow. As may be supposed, this continued warfare has

caused the total destruction of trade and the loss of more than half the population; in fact, nearly two-thirds of the province has been laid waste, and the ruins of hundreds of villages are buried in a rank growth of vegetation.

The most recent pilgrims from Yunnan to Burmah report that all is tranquil; this, coupled with the accounts of the victorious progress of the Mahomedan usurper in the north-west province of Kan-su, may well make us ask where will the Mahomedan conquest end? Sz-chuen, lying between the two, and containing a numerous Mahomedan population, is only too likely to catch the blaze and suffer from the same conflagration. The result of this Mahomedan outbreak, on the different tribes round the borders, will appear from the following description of the several tribes I have visited.

On leaving Eastern Thibet at the small border town of Atenze, I met at a village, one day's journey to the south, on the banks of the Lantsan, the remnants of a tribe called by the Chinese Goneahs. They, while resembling the Thibetans in their great stature, costume, and manners, were of much fairer complexion, and spoke a language peculiar to themselves, though largely intermixed with Thibetan and Chinese. The women wore the loose-fitting jacket of the Thibetans, with the small plaited petticoat reaching to the knee, and leaving the leg bare below the knee; while the men wore large woollen coats, of the same make as the Thibetan sheepskin coat, and completed their costume by woollen hose reaching to the knee and soled with sheepskin. Their heads were shaven according to Chinese custom, and their long black hair twisted into a tail and coiled round the head. As weapons, they carried the Thibetan knife, about four feet long, and of the same width from hilt to point. The Goneahs are chiefly herdsmen, tending their flocks of goats, which feed on the high and rugged mountains forming the banks of the Lantsan River. They do, however, cultivate a little beard-wheat and peas. This tribe pays the Government an annual tribute, which is collected by Chinese officers, sent from Atenze, in the harvest month of August every year.

Following the Lantsan southwards, the next tribe encountered are the Ludzus, very wild, and inhabiting the mountains which form the watershed between the Lantsan and Nankiang rivers. Emigrants from this tribe have formed a village on the left bank of the Lantsan, one day's march from the Goneah village, and have adopted the pursuits and habits of peaceful cultivators since their conversion by the Catholic missionaries residing at the mission-



station of Tz'coo, a few miles lower down on the right bank. This village, and the portion of the tribe which inhabits the country immediately bordering on the right bank of the Lantsan, are subject to the Yatezu chief, residing at the village of Yatezu, a day's march from Tz'coo; but the main body of the tribe, inhabiting the vicinity of the Nankiang River, are independent savages, living in the caverns of their almost inaccessible mountains, and rarely communicating with the other tribes, and then only to plunder and carry off slaves. They never cultivate, subsisting chiefly on the chase and wild roots growing on the mountains. As hunters, with the poisoned arrow and spear, they are very successful in the capture of mhitton, deer, bears, wild boars, and leopards. They wear but scanty clothing, and allow their hair to grow in long matted locks reaching to the shoulder. The men rarely wear more than a strip of bear or monkey skin round the loins; and occasionally, in the case of chiefs, a leopard, wolf, or bear skin is thrown over the shoulders; while the dress of the women, I am told, is still more limited. The Ludzus can muster at any time over twelve hundred fighting men, and occasionally serve as voluntary allies of the Chinese (for the sake of plunder) in the annual raids made by them into Mahomedan territory. In complexion the Ludzus are naturally as fair as the Chinese, though, being washed and unkempt, they look much darker. Unlike the Thibetan hill tribes, they are short in stature, and have undoubtedly the Mongol type of feature. They have a language peculiar to themselves, but no written characters, and in communicating with the Chinese use certain symbols: as, for instance, a piece of fowl fat, a green chillie, and a piece of chicken liver, packed in red paper, and sent to the chief by the Weisee mandarin, means, "Repair to Weisee with your warriors;" and some equally curious symbol in return signifies the chief's determination to join the Chinese or otherwise.

After passing the Ludzu district the tribes become more civilised and more closely resemble the Chinese. The first are the Mosos, who so closely resemble the more powerful Yatezus, except in language, that a description of the latter tribe will suffice to convey a fair idea of them.

The Yatezus inhabit a strip of country bordering the left bank of the Lantsan, and are governed by an hereditary chief. The tribe is numerous and powerful, holding as tributaries some clans of the Ludzus and the Mosos, as well as a few petty chiefs of the Leisus, who inhabit the valley of Weisee. Previous to the Mahomedan war, the Yatezu chief, as well as his neighbour the Mooquor chief,

paid an annual tribute to the Chinese Government, and acted as an ally in the war which resulted in the supremacy of the Chinese throughout the Leisu country. Now, however, the Yatezus and Mooquors have asserted their independence, and beyond contributing a few men for the fights between the Chinese and Mahomedans pay no other tribute.

In manners and customs the Yatezus are quite Chinese. The men shave the head and wear the tail common in China, and their costume is the loose trowsers and jacket made of blue cotton commonly worn by the lower orders of Chinese. The native costume of the women is very becoming. A short plaited petticoat of cotton reaches from the waist to the knee; while a tight-fitting loose-sleeved jacket, buttoning from the throat, shows their magnificent figures to perfection. By way of stockings, their well-shaped legs are swathed from below the bend of the knee to the ankle in strips of blue or white cotton cloth; and little leather shoes, with pointed turn-up toes, give a pleasingly trim appearance to their feet. As a head-dress, they wear neat little caps of scarlet cloth, sometimes varied amongst the women of the Moso and Mooquor tribes by a hoodlike cap of cowrie shells.

The villages of these tribes consist of streets of mud- and wood-built houses, precisely similar in style to those of China, and surrounded by a high mud wall, erected as a protection against sudden surprises. In religion they are Chinese Buddhists, and every village has its joss-house, with a school attached, in which Chinese alone is taught to the Chinese. The cultivation of rice, barley, wheat, tobacco, and opium is their chief employment, though both the Yatezu and Mooquor chiefs possess many gold-mines which are exceedingly rich. They also own numerous herds of very fine black cattle, which they use only in tilling the ground; and pigs and fowls are as common amongst them as with the Chinese.

To the Yatezus succeed the Mooquor tribe, whose manners, customs, appearance, and political relations with China, are identical with those of the Yatezus, a difference of language alone serving to mark the distinction. These several dialects, to my ear, resembled Chinese; but few of the women could understand Chinese when spoken.

Immediately to the south of the Mooquors lies the country of the Leisus. This tribe, according to their own traditions, originally emigrated from the west of Yunnan. There is, however, nothing about them but the difference of language to distinguish them from the Yatezus, Mooquors, and the Tzefans, whose country lies to the south of them. The Leisus are simple cultivators of the soil, and

living in closer communication with the Chinese in Yunnan are, if anything, more Chinese than all the other tribes I have mentioned; the women, for the most part, wearing the Chinese costume. Almost in the centre of the Leisu country stands the imperial Chinese city of Weisee-foo, the residence of the mandarin who manages the political relations existing between China and these tribes. The Leisus, of all the tribes I have mentioned, alone at this moment pay tribute to China. Shortly after the Mahomedan outbreak, the Tzefan district, to the south, and the Leisu country were overrun by the Mahomedans, whose victorious march was only arrested by the united efforts of the Yatezu and Mooquor tribes; and the effects of their visit can even now be traced in the ruins of villages, while they left the town of Weisee half in ruins, and it was not until several years after the Mahomedans had voluntarily left the country that the Chinese regained complete control of the Leisus. Their southern neighbours, the Tzefans, whose territory extends to the district of Talifoo, in outward appearance resemble the Chinese also, but speak a language of their own. These Tzefans espoused the Mahomedan cause, and for long indulged in a predatory warfare against the Chinese and their Leisu subjects; though ready at any time, as I experienced, to side again with the Chinese, if the Imperial cause seemed likely to prove stronger than that of the Mahomedans.

The numerous tribes of Kachyens, on the western frontiers beyond Ten-yua-chew, have been relieved from their partial submission to the Chinese, and seem to exercise their liberty by indulging in petty jealousies and quarrelling amongst themselves, rendering a journey through their country both dangerous and expensive, on account of their rapacity in levying black-mail on travellers. Thus the result of the Mahomedan war, besides destroying half the population and ruining the prosperity of the province, has thrown the frontier tribes into the greatest confusion, and destroyed that order amongst them which (much to the credit of the Chinese) resulted from their political intercourse with them, and converted these tribes, from independent savages, into a most efficient and vigilant guard for her western frontier. This disorder amongst the tribes, coupled with our treaty relations with China (which prohibit all English intercourse, as travellers or traders, with declared rebels), will defer, for some years to come, all profitable and peaceable communication between our Eastern possessions and the Chinese province of Yunnan.

The CHAIRMAN explained to the meeting that Mr. Cooper, the author of the paper they had listened to, proceeded, two years ago, from the seaboard of

China to the western extremity of that country; his intention being to penetrate to India, either by way of Thibet or the country farther south into Assam. He was stopped, however, at the Thibetan frontier, and obliged to return to the sea-coast, after traversing a portion of the wild country along the western border of Yunnan. He afterwards made another attempt from the opposite direction, proceeding by sea to Calcutta, and thence to the north-eastern extremity of Assam. He ascended the Brahmaputra to the Mishmi country; traversed the latter district for 60 or 70 miles, but was at last compelled to turn back. He was the only Englishman who had a thorough personal acquaintance with Western China.

MAJOR SLADEN said, that, having attended the meeting without notice or preparation, he did not then feel himself in a position to say all that he desired on the subject under discussion; but he would gladly avail himself at some future time, if the Society so willed it, of an opportunity of relating his own experiences in South-Western China. He believed that he, and the expedition party with which he was associated in 1868, were the first European travellers who had ever penetrated that hitherto forbidden tract of country which separates Burmah on her north-eastern frontier from the south-western provinces of China. He had it on the authority of Father Abbona, a Roman Catholic priest, who had resided at one or other of the capitals of Burmah for more than thirty years, that Bishop Cheauveau, whilst a missionary in Yunnan, had on three different occasions tried his utmost to cross over from that province to Burmah, but never succeeded in doing so. The expedition which he (Major Sladen) accompanied in 1868 proceeded from Mandalay by water to Bhamo, on the Irawaddy, and from thence, crossing the Kachyen Hills (a belt forty miles in breadth), descended into that portion of Yunnan known in Burma as the Northern Shan States, but in reality a dependency of the great Chinese empire. Thus a land-journey of 50 miles from Bhamo, on the Irawaddy (*a point to which the river is navigable for steamers of four feet draft all through the year*) brought us within the confines of the great Celestial empire. The Kachyen Hills had always been represented to be an almost impassable barrier to anything like intercommunication between Burmah and China: not only by reason of physical difficulties, but on account of the alleged hostility of the hill-tribes which inhabit them. His experience quite falsified all such representations. His party found the hill-tribes, as well as other races with whom they were brought into contact, practicable in all respects, when fairly dealt with or free from the influences of contiguous native governments. A very interesting portion of Mr. Cooper's paper was that which related to the Mahomedan Chinese conquerors of Yunnan. It was by *their* assistance and active co-operation alone that his party was enabled to cross over from Burmah to China. They took up arms in behalf of the English Expedition, and fought a way for them through the fortified passes of Mauphoo. They were afterwards their guests for six weeks at the Chinese walled city of Momein, and had ample opportunity of testing their friendliness of disposition, and the earnest desire they evinced of entering into commercial relations with British Burmah. It was a fact of the greatest importance to the British commercial world to know that these Mahomedan Chinese looked to us as a people who would help them to re-establish the old overland trade-route between Burmah and China. Burmah would thus become a highway for our piece-goods trade with Central and Western China, and much of the still undeveloped produce of that vast empire would find a cheap and easy exit down the Irawaddy into the Bay of Bengal, instead of being taken thousands of miles to the eastern seaboard of China, from whence, in order to reach a European market, they would be subjected to the dangerous navigation of the Chinese seas, to heavier insurances, and to a comparatively much longer sea-voyage, than if brought down the Irawaddy and shipped away from the Port of Rangoon. The Irawaddy was navigable for river-

steamers, at all seasons of the year, to a point within 50 miles of the Chinese frontier; and this one fact alone, when properly comprehended, would undoubtedly in time, in spite of opposition or conflicting interests of whatever nature, mark it out as a means of revolutionizing in part our present imperfect attempts to reach the great producing districts of Central and South-Western China.

Dr. BARTON said the first exploration up the Yang-tsze-Kiang, undertaken by Capt. Blakiston, Colonel Sarel, and himself, in 1861, reached as far as Ping-shan. There they found that the southern bank of the river formed the northern boundary of Yunnan, while the opposite bank of the river formed the southern boundary of Sz-chuen. He had not, however, seen any map on which these boundaries were correctly marked. The expedition was accompanied by several Sikhs, and they received every assistance from the Mahomedan villagers.

The CHAIRMAN stated that, within the last few days, fresh intelligence had been received from Bishop Cheauveau by way of China, all attempts to communicate with him overland from India having failed. He had sent a manuscript map, containing much information regarding that little-known frontier country. Since Major Sladen's expedition, our Indian Government had taken a great interest in the question of opening up a route from Burmah to the Western Provinces of China; and, had it not been for the Mahomedan insurrection in Yunnan, no doubt a commercial route would have been established by this time. But, notwithstanding these disorders, caravans continually passed between the two countries, and only recently he had received information that Captain Stroker and Major MacMahon had endeavoured to obtain permission to accompany one of these caravans from Bhamo to Momein. It was satisfactory to find that English officers on the spot were looking out for any opportunity that might occur, so that the way might be kept open.

Mr. COOPER stated that Bishop Cheauveau told him he had on three different occasions unsuccessfully tried to send messengers across from Sz-chuen to Burmah, but he himself had never made the attempt. A better class of people than the Mahomedans, as a small community, could not be found in China. Their character was quite at variance with the ordinary Chinese character, as they were brave and energetic, qualities unknown in other parts of the empire. The proper boundaries of Yunnan and Sz-chuen were marked in a map published by Wyld so long ago as 1837. The trade-route in former days was from Tali-foo to Momein, and thence through to Bhamo; but there were originally three routes,—a northern, a central, and a southern route,—each of which was guarded by separate clans, and the most fruitful source of danger and loss to the caravans was the jealousy of those tribes. He hoped that sooner or later English piece goods would find their way up the Irawaddy and into Yunnan by the route spoken of by Major Sladen, but he never expected any trade to be carried on by the Brahmapootra route, beyond that in Assam tea.

Mr. MICHE said that for about 150 years all our geographical knowledge of these countries was obtained from Jesuit missionaries, and it was only within the last ten years that other observations had been made, but these had already led to most valuable results. Last year Baron Richthofen made a very important journey from Canton to Peking, and he had described a coal-field in Shan-si, exceeding in magnitude that of Pennsylvania. He calculated it was capable of supplying coal to the whole world for thousands of years to come. In the event of a railway being made into that part of the country it would have to be tunnelled through the heart of this vast coal-field; but so defective were the means of communication in that province that the coal, which cost a shilling per ton at the mines, at a distance of 30 miles cost 24s., and at 60 miles cost 42s. Beyond that distance it is of no use at all, in consequence of the excessive price required for it. While such enormous coal-

fields were lying idle, the inhabitants had ruined their climate by cutting down their forests for fuel. The Baron intended to have made a return journey through the north-western provinces, so as to make a complete tour of the country, but he was prevented from doing so by the state of feeling in the country after the Tientsin massacre which occurred last June. It was manifest that it was of extreme importance to geographers to know what was the disposition of the people towards foreigners, and an impression appeared to be prevalent in some quarters that there was a general hostility on the part of the Chinese towards Europeans; but, though he had had considerable experience among them, he had never detected the hostile feeling, and, as far as he had heard, travellers and explorers had, as a rule, met with nothing but civility from the people. If the policy of England was founded upon a false hypothesis, it was of the greatest importance that the truth should be known; and he therefore wished to inquire what Mr. Cooper's experience had been on this point.

Mr. COOPER said he lived a year among the Chinese as one of themselves, and in no single instance did he experience from the people the least molestation. On the contrary, the only difficulties he encountered, and the only harsh treatment he met with, were direct from the mandarins. On one occasion he suffered five weeks' imprisonment and a good deal of starvation at the hands of a mandarin. The present relations of England with China seemed to be very much like that of a pan of water, with a hole in the bottom, set on a fire. It was quite a mistake to imagine that the official classes were doing their best for the country. If the Governments of Europe could only appreciate the utter corruption, the absolute want of energy, and the base cowardice of the ruling class, they would act quite differently from what they did at present. If the political and governing classes could be removed, China would become a free country, and her immense resources would be fully developed.

Mr. W. LOCKHART said he had been told that the mother of Bishop Cheauveau was an Englishwoman, and this would account for his intimate knowledge of the English language. The province of Yunnan was remarkably rich in its mineral products. It was the great source of the mineral wealth of China, and even gold was found in the upper part of the stream of the Yang-tsze-kiang. There was, however, no such thing as a white copper mine. That which was called white copper was a compound metal, melted from various ores. The reason why Yunnan was celebrated for its opium was because it was so near to India, and the people had adopted, in part, the Indian mode of cultivation. The cultivation of opium was spreading rapidly throughout the upper valleys of the Yang-tsze-kiang, but it had no connection with the importation of the drug on the coast. There could be but little doubt that the Mahomedan rebellion had been so successful in consequence of the trouble the Chinese Government had with the Taeping rebellion, which prevented their putting forth their strength against the outlying tribes. These Mahomedans were an energetic race, and their doctrines had spread throughout the western regions and a large part of Mongolia. Many Mahomedans were also to be found in Peking. When the present race of the Chinese people overran the country, the aboriginal inhabitants of the south-western provinces were driven into the mountainous districts, and also beyond the boundaries of the continent into the islands of Hainan and Formosa; and very probably the various tribes of the Miau-tsze were the descendants of these aborigines.