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CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. Colquhoun's Journey from Canton to Bhamò.

Aug. 15th, 1882.

In reply to your letter of to-day about Mr. Colquhoun's journey, let me say that I have seen the telegram from Calcutta in the *Times* of yesterday, but it is very difficult to make head or tail of it. Probably the writer did not have any very clear apprehension of the matter, and the telegraph has perhaps added some further confusions.

Mr. Colquhoun is said to divide his journey into two parts—the first the “Canton river,” and the second the “Yunnan river.” There is no river known to geographers by the latter name; but I can only suppose it to mean that from the bifurcation of the Si-kiang, or “West river,” i. e. the Canton river, up which Mr. Colquhoun travelled from Canton—(the bifurcation that takes place near Hsin-chou in about long. 110°)—he calls the river below the said bifurcation “the Canton river,” and the branch which he ascended “the Yunnan river.”

It is the more northerly branch (called Hong-kiang, &c.) which, according to our maps, rises in Yunnan, and not far east of Yunnan-fu. But it is the southerly branch, passing Nanning-fu, which was, before recent disturbances, the route of an important trade from Yunnan to Canton, and therefore it seems most probable that Mr. Colquhoun followed the latter. A passage regarding this route, based on one in Richthofen's Letters, will be found in a paper of mine in the *Geographical Magazine* of April 1875, p. 99.* This branch's sources seem hardly to pass the boundary of Yunnan; they are almost confined to Kwang-si province.

I imagine that Colquhoun, on arriving in Yunnan, endeavoured, as his intention in a general way was when he left England, to make his way down through the Shan States into Pegu; and that he got as far as the *Semao*, or Szemao of the maps, south of Puer or Pou'eul, and not far from Kiang Hung (or Xieng Hong) on the Mekong,

* “Formerly there existed a very important trade-line from Yunnan to Canton, which involved little more than twenty days of land travelling; taking up the navigation of the southern or Nanning-fu branch of the Si-kiang or West River of Canton. The navigation commences at *Pe-sé-p'u*, a place that I cannot indicate on the map, but which appears from Biot to be in the Ssengen-fu department of Kwangsi. The voyage thence to Canton is of twenty days, down stream. The road of late years, owing to the disorders in Kwangsi, has been entirely abandoned; but “the metals of Yunnan, the jade and gems of Burma, the musk of Tatsienlu, and many other articles of that remarkable through-trade which passed through Yunnan from west to east, went formerly by that route.”

where he was stopped "by the intrigues of the officials." This place, once familiar as "Esmok" in the days of Captain Spry, I presume, you see, to be the "Shumao" of the telegram.

It is said "an examination of the country between Yung-hoo and Shumao was considered most important," but this is what "no fellow can understand." The most probable interpretation occurring to me is that "Yung-hoo" means *Toungoo* in British Burmah, and that what the traveller considered desirable was to make his way from Szemao, where he was stopped, to *Toungoo*.

But, on being stopped, he would appear to have turned due north and made his way from Szemao to Tali-fu, perhaps through Shunning-fu. This would bring him into the latter part of the most direct road from Mandalay to Tali.

The remainder of his road, from Tali to Bhamò, has, as you know, been often travelled of late years. But so far as I know (and always excepting the travels of the Roman Catholic missionaries, which are little known in most cases), Mr. Colquhoun's journey up the upper waters of the Canton river to Yunnan, and again his journey from Szemao to the neighbourhood of Tali, are over ground of which we have no European report whatever, and they should afford much of interest.

Mr. Colquhoun is to be congratulated on an enterprising and successful geographical achievement, of which we can say no more till we have a fuller account of it.

As to the value of the journey in opening up a new commercial route, that is a matter on which it is not my nature to take a sanguine view. His route between Canton and Yunnan can hardly come near that from Yunnan by the *Tongking* river to Hanoi in physical advantages. And from what is said in the telegram, as well as by Richthofen in the passage to which I have referred above, the political impediments seem to be even greater on Colquhoun's route.

Yours very truly,

H. YULE.

The Assistant Secretary R. G. S.

The Irawadi and the Sanpo.

HENYADA, BRITISH BURMA, *July 7th, 1882.*

By last mail I received my copy of the May number of the R.G.S. 'Proceedings,' and see that the subject of the Sanpo outlet to the sea has again engaged the attention of the Society. I am not at present disposed to reply to any reference to myself, or to my report on the Irawadi, which you were kind enough to notice in the *Nineteenth Century*; but I should like an addendum to be made in the 'Proceedings to Major Sandeman's paper. It is an official Note which I caused to be added to the original when this was still confidential. I saw Major Sandeman's native surveyor (Moung Alaga) by appointment in the Survey Office at Rangoon, and in Major Sandeman's presence carefully examined him. The substance of the examination is contained in the Note, a copy of which I gave to Major Sandeman at the time.

I am still working steadily at the problem, and am in correspondence with others in China and India (and I hope soon in Tibet) who are also working at it. You have read the geographical part of my Report and may possibly agree with me that all who took part in the discussion at the Royal Geographical Society's meeting in February missed the principal points of my arguments, or at least did not allude to them. I confess that I always looked on the size of the Irawadi as described by Mr. Strettell where it issued from the hills as the weakest part of the whole case, and the one where attack must be most expected, and it was at my suggestion that the Chief Commissioner wrote to General Walker, and offered to