

The Country of the Shans: Discussion

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before it is too late; the inducements are surely sufficient: a good climate, in the midst of splendid mountain scenery, simple, friendly folk to live among, and an occupation full of interest in itself, and sure to lead to results of permanent value."

Before the reading of the paper, the PRESIDENT said: It is scarcely necessary for me to introduce Colonel Woodthorpe to you, because he is so extremely well known as an adventurous and very able surveyor and explorer. It must be now upwards of a quarter of a century ago since he surveyed the Nago and Garo hills, and published that charming account of the Lushai expedition, and since that geographers have watched his career, sometimes in the extreme East in Sadiya, sometimes attempting to solve the question of the Brahmaputra by ascending the Dipong, then in the Kuram field-force with Lord Roberts, again in the Pamirs, in Wakhan, with my old friend Sir William Lockhart, and again in his old ground Sadiya, and exploring the upper tributary of the Irawadi. Now at last, for the second time, I think, we have him with us in the flesh, and I am sure you will all give him a very hearty welcome.

After the reading of the paper, the following discussion took place:—

SIR RICHARD CAMPBELL STEWART: It is a great honour to me that the President should have called upon me to enter into the discussion this evening, for which I was scarcely prepared. I can, however, reflect the feelings of the audience here in having heard the interesting lecture from Colonel Woodthorpe. I have had the honour of meeting Colonel Woodthorpe in Burma, and on former occasions have heard of his very interesting explorations with other officers. I have had the opportunity of meeting a friend of Colonel Woodthorpe's on a former occasion of exploration, and I can only mention the extraordinary exertions of those officers who have made this most interesting exploration, and it must have been satisfactory to those with whom Colonel Woodthorpe served, to know that their explorations were of the greatest value to science and the country. In regard to these Shan States, on which Colonel Woodthorpe has given us so interesting a lecture, I can only say that I perfectly agree with him in all that he has said regarding their character and their interesting language. There is only one point on which I can say I am competent to judge, and that is as regards their qualifications and usefulness hereafter as soldiers in the army. It was said, during the time that I had the honour to command in Burma, that the Shans were not a fighting race. I can recollect, however, that the officer who commanded the Burma Sappers informed me that he was then enlisting many Shans, who were turning out excellent soldiers, and who had many military instincts, which he thought would be exceedingly valuable to the country hereafter. That is the only point upon which I think myself competent to form an opinion. If I may be allowed, I would say that Colonel Woodthorpe's explorations have been of the greatest value to science, and I am sure that you will acknowledge with me the pleasure we feel in the interesting lecture he has given us this evening.

THE PRESIDENT: We are so fortunate as to have present here this evening a political officer in Mr. Scott, who is very intimately acquainted with these Shan States, and I therefore trust that he will favour the meeting with a few remarks.

MR. J. G. SCOTT: Colonel Woodthorpe has charmed your eyes and your ears so completely to-night, and has given us so succinct, so general, and so comprehensive an account of the Shan States, that I feel myself rather in the position of the gentleman at the Mansion House, whose jokes had been used up in the speech before his, or of the young lady whose favourite song had just been sung by some

other young lady. It was, therefore, with some gratification that I discovered a mistake. It is not Colonel Woodthorpe's fault, and, moreover, the mistake is a very venial one. He states that the Muhso, one of these tribes whose names he rushed over—and they are not easily remembered—are so called because they are hunters. That is not exactly true. Muhso is not the Shan word for "hunter," although the idea is that Muhso does mean "hunter." Mokso is the Burmese word for "hunter," and the Burmese interpreters, who have to be used by most officers who have not time to learn Shan or Burmese, tell these officers that *muhso* means "hunter," and these people are hunters. As a matter of fact, they are very great at the crossbow, which they use with or without poisoned arrows. I remember on one occasion beating the jungle with a lot of these Muhso. We got nothing, because the jungle was too dense; so, when it was all over, we collected them, and held an archery meeting. We began at 22 paces, by getting these men to fire bamboo darts at eight-anna pieces; this was too expensive, and we reduced the mark to two-anna pieces, and then had some remarkable sport. I think you will find very few marksmen who would hit a two-anna piece at 22 paces with a revolver. Another point is, that it is hardly correct to say that during the Chinese New Year no one is allowed to go into their villages, because I have spent the whole of a Chinese New Year in the village of one of these chiefs. The Muhso chiefs are rather interesting, and the only personages I can compare them with are the Lamas of Tibet. The head-man of this particular village had to be worshipped during the New Year, and, unfortunately, we marched into the village on the eve of the New Year, so that he could only give me for political work, to discuss matters, what time he could spare from being worshipped. He would go to the population, who would come and offer up prayers, and then he would come over and discuss matters. During the New Year they behave much as the Chinese. They burn postal orders to the lower world, in the shape of slips of gold leaf, in the temple, fire off guns, and beat gongs. It is not that people are not allowed to go into the village on that occasion, but if they did it, they would soon leave, for what with the gongs, firing of guns, burning of crackers, and so forth, it is a noisy place to be in. There is a great number of other hill races among the Shan States, who are very interesting, and I hope some one will have the time to make a study of them.

The Shans themselves are well worth studying. Unfortunately, none of the officers there have had time to study their customs and habits. I may allude to one thing which seems interesting. They have a system of tenure which much resembles some of the feudal systems of tenure. For example, one very like socage—villagers holding land on condition of rendering some service to the sawbwa. In Ho Kut, for instance, they hold their lands free on condition of supplying the sawbwa with orchids. Another village of seventy or eighty houses had their lands free on condition of cutting grass for the sawbwa's ponies. Others came to look after the sawbwa's ponies. Then there was another case like petit sergenty, villagers holding their lands on condition of supplying swords and gun-barrels. The Shan States grow a good deal of produce, which will become valuable. Perhaps you would like to know something of how the country is going to be opened up. A great deal has been talked about different lines of railway through the Shan States to Yunnan. I don't want to bore you, but the man who has been there is usually a great bore. We see an exception occasionally; Colonel Woodthorpe is a notable exception. I am the bore. The man who has not been there, or within 500 miles of there, and talks as if he had been there, is not only a bore, but a nuisance. We have been told that the Burma-Karenni railway is very feasible. Running up the banks of the Salwin to a point at the bend of the river about 19° N., the railway is supposed to get to the point

where the Nam Teng flows into the Nam Kong. It then follows the eastern bend, till, we are informed, it is only 40 miles to the Nam Kok flowing into the Mekong. In these days of photographing the money a man has or has not in his purse, it is difficult to say that anything is impossible; at any rate, this is too expensive to be done. There is a story I am fond of telling, I don't know whether you have heard it. It refers to the difficulties of the Shan roads. You have to climb up 4000 or 5000 or 6000 feet over what is like a ruin, and people going to the Shan States ought to be Alpine climbers. When first I went up with European soldiers, on getting to the top, one said, "Is this the Shan tableland, sir?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, then, we've been climbing up the blooming legs." The range is of the worst possible character of legs, and is 6000 feet high. In Europe tunnels would be driven through it; it is not likely with this railway, and it is absolutely unfeasible. With regard to the Kunlon line, it is asserted that at the Kunlon ferry the railway lands one in a *cul-de-sac* of the hills; this is absolutely inaccurate. When you get there, the country beyond is easier than before. It is practically absolutely certain that the railway can be taken on from the Kunlon ferry to Shunning-Fu, and from there it is nearly certain that the line can be carried down a stream to the Mekong, and from there again to Talifu, if the Chinese will allow it to be built. I am afraid I am wearying you, but I have only to regret that the picturesqueness of Colonel Woodthorpe's lecture has deprived me of much I should have liked to have said, and driven me to rather dull subjects.

The PRESIDENT: It only remains for us to thank Colonel Woodthorpe for having given us so interesting an account of the country, at present of extreme interest to Englishmen, and of which at present we know very little. We have also to thank Mr. Scott for the observations of great interest which he has made on the subject. We have had the very great advantage, not only of receiving this account from Colonel Woodthorpe, and his very full account of the manners and customs of the people, but we have to thank him also for the beautiful illustrations of his paper. I am quite sure you will all instruct me to return Colonel Woodthorpe our very cordial thanks for his paper.

THE WATERWAYS OF ENGLISH LAKELAND.*

By J. E. MARR, M.A., F.R.S., Sec. Geol. Soc.

I.—INTRODUCTION.

THE attention of geographers has recently been directed to the English Lake District by Dr. H. R. Mill, whose paper on a "Bathymetrical Survey of the English Lakes"† is valuable alike to the geographer and the geologist. In that paper the configuration of the district is briefly described, the radial symmetry of the stream-lines noticed, and the former existence of a vanished dome of rocks over the area maintained. The cause of the radial symmetry alluded to above has been discussed by many writers, but it will be convenient to add some further observations upon it in the present communication, which is

* Paper read at the Royal Geographical Society, March 23, 1896. Map, p. 688.

† *Geographical Journal*, vol. vi. pp. 46 and 135.