



The Cave Dwellers of Perak

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now regularly collected, which caves he said had been used for a like purpose in the old days.

With the approval of the Kinabatangan chiefs (who assured me that I might do so without wounding the susceptibilities of any of the present inhabitants) I authorised the removal of one of the Batu Puteh coffins, with its contents, to the Sandakan Museum. But on subsequently learning that this method of disposing of their dead was probably practised by some of the river tribes up to the beginning of the present century, and that the relics may possibly still be held in veneration by some of the interior tribes, or those of the South-East Coast, I took steps to preserve the remainder of them intact.

From the superior workmanship of most of the coffins, ornaments, and arms, deposited there, it seems probable that the upper cave was used exclusively for the interment of persons of rank.

The CAVE DWELLERS of PERAK. By L. WRAY, JR., M.I.E.E.,
F.Z.S., Curator Perak Museum and State Geologist.

AS far as the writer has been able to ascertain, the only published account of explorations of cave deposits in Malaya is that describing those carried out by Mr. A. Hart Everett in Sarawak, Borneo, between the years 1878 and 1879. The Royal Society and the British Association voted £50 each, and £200 was contributed from private sources towards the expenses of the investigation, which was carried on under the auspices of a committee appointed by the British Association, consisting of Mr. John Evans, Sir John Lubbock, Major-General Lane-Fox, Mr. George Busk, Professor W. Boyd Dawkins, Mr. Pengelly and Mr. A. W. Franks.

Mr. Everett examined some 20 caves in all, but the results obtained were stated to be of no "special interest, either from an anthropological or a geological point of view." "The animal remains discovered" were all "of recent species, the human bones are probably of no very great antiquity, and none of the few objects of human manufacture which have been found can be regarded as of palæolithic age."

One small V-shaped fragment of stone, seemingly artificial, was found, and a few chips of quartz, which might have been produced by human hands. There would appear to be little evidence that the caves examined were ever inhabited for long periods by human beings. The top layers seem in some caves

to have contained remains of recent date, but the lower layers appear to have been very barren.

The limestone hills in which these caves are situated, are stated by Mr. Everett to be substantially identical with those of the Malay Peninsula, and the caves which he excavated were regular caves in the ordinary sense of the term. Now it has been found in Perak that the deposits in similar caverns are also practically free of evidences of human habitation, but that the caves known as "rock shelters," that is shelters formed by an overhanging rocky cliff, are full of vast accumulations of shells, bones, charcoal, burnt earth, and other remains, clearly pointing to prolonged human occupation. It is quite possible that the "rock shelters" of Borneo have also served as dwellings in pre-historic times, for as far as can be gathered from the published reports of the investigation, this class of cave was not examined.

To come now to the cave dwellings of Perak. As has already been said, the caves which have been inhabited are those which are formed by the overhanging of the cliffs, and not those caverns which are hollowed out in the rock. The same class of cave was inhabited by many of the cave dwellers of Europe, and have yielded rich stores of archæological specimens. Rock shelters were also inhabited by the early New Zealanders. It was in some of these caves that the remains of the extinct gigantic wingless bird—the Moa—were discovered, with those of man.

In places, the way in which these overhanging cliffs have been formed is apparent, and they are even now being hollowed out by the action of rivers. In Upper Perak a very interesting example is to be seen at the base of Gunong Sonah. The Perak River has eaten into the hill, to the extent of some 20 feet or more, and when the river is not in flood, a boat can be taken right along under the overhanging base of the almost perpendicular side of the hill. When the river shifts its course a little, as in the natural sequence of events it is sure to do, this large cave will form an excellent camping ground for a large number of persons. This is the history of almost all these caves. Another very good example is to be seen on the face of the limestone hills between Ipoh and Sungei Raiar, in Kinta. The floor of it is now some 20 feet above the present level of the ground, and it extends for a length of over half a mile. At the time when the stream was sculpturing this terraced cave out of the rock face of the hill, the level of the valley must have been some 30 feet higher than it now is. This lowering of the valley represents in a wide valley like the Kinta, a period of very many thousands of years. Some of the cave dwellings

are at considerably higher levels than this, and are consequently of greater antiquity.

The first time the writer noticed evidences of the ancient human habitation of these caves was in the year 1880, in the western end of the limestone hill at Gapis, called Gunong Pondok. Here shell and bone stalagmites were found of considerable thickness. Since then similar signs have been found in nearly every limestone hill that has been carefully examined.

In 1886, a cave in a limestone hill near Ipoh, in Kinta, known as Gunong Cheroh, was visited. This cave is some 40 feet above the level of the Kinta River, which passes close by the foot of it. The cave is a rock shelter, evidently cut out by the action of the river in past times. Near by are some large caverns, which are now well known and often visited. Some pits were sunk in these large caves and except on the surface, where there was some recent Malayan pottery, ashes, &c., nothing was found but a few small bones of bats and birds. The earth was mostly a stiff yellow clay. In the rock shelters, however, were found vast quantities of fresh-water shells, both univalves and bivalves. Land shells were also present in considerable numbers. Nearly all the univalves had had their points broken off so that the animal might be easily extracted. Amongst the shells were numbers of bones, all the larger of which had been broken to get at the marrow, and many of them were more or less burnt. Pieces of burnt earth and charcoal were also of frequent occurrence throughout the material composing the floor of the cave. The most striking feature, however, was the extraordinary number of shells. In places they formed a layer over 12 feet in thickness. Portions of this layer were composed of beds of stalagmite, that is to say, the shells and bones cemented together with carbonate of lime. Some of these layers of conglomerate are as much as five feet in thickness. The present floor of this cave is some six to eight feet lower than it has been at a previous period. This is clearly shown by some masses of shell and bone conglomerate sticking on to the back wall of the shelter at that height above the present level.

In one place a curious thing is to be seen; an immense stalactite hangs from the roof, and at a height of some eight feet from the ground is a large flat mass of the shell conglomerate attached to and suspended in mid air by it. The floor level having fallen, the stalactite has gone on forming again below the layer of conglomerate.

About 18 inches beneath the existing surface of the floor there was found a portion of a mealing stone, and a short way from it the stone that had been used as the muller. The former

is of granite, about $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter and $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches thick. It is undressed, having probably been found in the bed of a river. The muller is $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches long and $2\frac{3}{8}$ inches in diameter. It is also of hard granite, and has been originally obtained from a river bed. The mealing stone has been used on both sides, and is worn quite thin in the middle, being reduced to one inch in thickness. A second mealing stone was found in December, 1895, in an adjoining cave, at a depth of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the surface. This is also worn on both sides to a very considerable extent, but is much thicker than the previously found one and is quite perfect. The name gives rather a wrong impression of the purposes to which such things are applied in the East. This implement is not used for grinding grain, and its presence does not imply agriculture in any form. The Malay equivalent is made of a flat slab of wood, with a grinder of cocoanut shell, and is called Sankalan. It is used for grinding up chillies, ginger, turmeric and other things, preparatory to cooking or eating them raw. Stones ones are used in India, and are the common curry-stones of our kitchens in the East. The Sakais also use rude wooden sankalans; not unfrequently part of the joint of a bamboo is used for the purpose when they are travelling in the jungle. In this they grind up their salt, chillies, and other flavouring to eat with their rice, which they boil in a joint of bamboo. Pounding stones, mostly of hard quartz, and more or less round or egg-shaped, have been found in several of the caves. These bear marks on them clearly showing the use to which they have been put.

In the year 1891, further excavations were made in this cave, and two human skeletons were dug up. They were of adults, and were lying close together. The positions were similar, both skeletons being on their sides, with their legs drawn up, but not so close to the body as to suggest their having been bound in that position. The teeth were not filed or artificially ground down, and some Malays who were present when they were exhumed, said that they could not have been Malayan. The inference was drawn from this interment, that the bodies had been allowed to remain in the positions in which they had died, and that they had been simply covered over with the earth of the cave without any grave having been dug. Probably it was a case of epidemic disease—cholera, small-pox, or something of that kind—which would account for two almost simultaneous deaths.

The bones were very soft and much broken up, but still in their proper anatomical positions. The crushing of the bones was undoubtedly due to the trampling of elephants, as this cave had been much frequented by them for a long series of years.

Parts of the roof and sides are perfectly polished by these animals having been accustomed to rub themselves against the marble rock. The bones were decidedly small, but they were in such a friable condition that it was impossible to dig them out in an unbroken state, so unfortunately not much more can be said about them. Some short way above these skeletons was a well-defined hearth, and over all had, at a previous time, been a bed of about four feet of hard shell and bone stalagmite. A careful search was made for implements near the bodies, but nothing was found.

The other bones found in the cave, were of many different animals and fish, wild pig, and deer being the most common. No bones bearing traces of human workmanship were found in this or any other cave, but all the larger bones had been broken, and many of them more or less burned. One bone bears teeth marks on it, apparently having been gnawed by a dog, and it may perhaps have been the work of a domesticated animal.

The shells were all of recent species, belonging to the following genera:—*Unio*, *Melania*, *Paludina*, *Ampularia*, *Hybocistis*, *Cyclophorus*, *Bulimus*, &c.

There was also found in this cave three valves of a marine bivalve—a species of *Cyrena* which is very common in the mangrove swamps of the sea-coast. Mr. Cecil Wray sent to the Perak Museum a piece of stalagmite containing another valve of the same species of mollusc, which had been obtained by the late Mr. William Cameron, from a cave in a hill near Kapayong, in Kinta, while another sea-shell of a different species was found at Gunong Pondok near Gapis.

The presence of these sea-shells is evidence that there was intercourse of some sort between the dwellers in the caves and the inhabitants of the sea coast; or, what is more probable, when the conditions of savage life are taken into account, the cave dwellers were themselves in the habit of making periodical visits to the coast, and on their return brought back a few sea-shells. This latter view of the case receives considerable support from the occurrence of so-called "kitchen middens" near the coast. Mention is made of one of these by Dr. J. G. Koenig in his "Journal of a Voyage from India to Siam and Malacca in 1779," though it is evident he had no idea of the modern interpretation of these deposits of shells. He says, when describing his visit to the harbour of Kedah, "The country is very low everywhere and consists of a very muddy soil, intersected by yet muddier canals I could see that the soil underneath the mud consists only of *cardia*. . . . A few steps further on I saw some Christian graves near the path. I could see from the thrown up

earth, that the soil consisted only of cardia, and was little intermixed with clay." From which it would appear that the small village he saw at the mouth of the Kedah River had been built on the site of an old kitchen midden.

Newbold, in "The Straits of Malacca," published in 1839, gives some interesting and more definite information on this point. He says, "That singular mass of limestone, the Elephant Rock, in the Quedah territory . . . was visited by Dr. Ward. . . . At the foot of a detached piece of the limestone rock he found elevated, about eight or ten feet above the level of the surrounding plain, a quantity of shells, chiefly cockles, oysters, and a large kind of mussel, which he describes to have been cemented together, in one compact mass, by calcareous matter, the interstices being filled with soft earth, containing numerous smaller shells. The mass was of irregular shape, between three and four feet square, and about the same in thickness, perfectly superficial, and not connected in any way with the rock near it. No appearance of shelly strata was discovered in the neighbourhood. The rock itself is an insulated mass of limestone, close grained, and of a dark smoky grey colour, perforated by stalactitic caverns of considerable size. It is situated about six miles from the coast, in an immense plain bounded to the east by a small ridge of hills, about 16 miles inland, supposed to be composed of a fine-grained sandstone. The soil of the plain is a whitish clay, mixed with sand. From its general appearance, the low nature of the surrounding country, the existence of the shells in the breccia, and local tradition, Dr. Ward thinks that it was at one time surrounded by the sea, and at no very distant period. The nature of the fossils, when discovered, must determine this point. It does not appear that the stalagmitic flooring of the caves was broken up by Dr. Ward; this should be done in order to get at the silt, sand, gravel, or mud, in which organic remains have been usually found imbedded in the ossiferous caverns of Europe."

The detached mass of shell conglomerate mentioned here is evidently similar to that found in the caves of the inland hills, excepting that the shells are marine instead of fresh water. Probably it was formed at the time when the sea washed the foot of the hill, and was then detached and left in the place where it was found by Dr. Ward by the action of the waves.

Further information is given by Mr. W. E. Maxwell, in a short note on the "Antiquities of Province Wellesley" in the first number of the "Journal of the Straits Royal Asiatic Society." He says, "Singular mounds of shells which are to be met with in the north of Province Wellesley not far from the Muda River. They are composed of sea-shells of the kind called

Kepah and Karang (cockles) by the Malays, though they are situated at some distance from the sea. No other shells of the kind are to be found near the place, I believe. I have been told by Malays in Province Wellesley that one of these mounds was opened and explored by Colonel Low. If the others, left perfect by him, have escaped destruction at the hands of Chinese lime burners, they will probably be worth examination and description. 'Goa kepah' (shell-cave), a place in the neighbourhood, no doubt takes its names from these mounds." Unfortunately, Colonel James Low, the then Lieutenant-Governor of Penang, does not seem to have left any record of his investigation, and no one else would appear to have made an examination of these interesting relics.

It may be objected that these shell-mounds were made by the Ichthyophagi, or sea gipsies, who may in former times have frequented the coasts of this part of the Peninsula. Their position some way from the present coast line points to their having been formed long ago, when the sea-coast was in a different position, and, given a considerable antiquity, there would be no difficulty in reconciling the two suppositions. The sea gipsies are Negritoes, and it is by no means improbable that they, in past times, took to a sea life while other portions of the tribes moved inland when the Malays or some other superior race invaded and occupied the littoral and river lands at this part of the Peninsula. This view of the case is supported by local tradition, as the following extract from Newbold's "Straits of Malacca" proves: "The Rayet Laut (subjects of the sea) or Orang Akkye, are unquestionably from the same stock as the Jakuns. The two tribes, it is true, differ from each other in localities, habits, and slightly in personal appearance, yet both generally admit the fact of a common origin. The following tradition, however is current . . . amongst the Malays, . . . Dattu Klambu, a man of power in former days, employed a number of Jakuns in the building of an astanah or palace. He had an only daughter, a young and beautiful damsel, who, once upon a time, observing the primitive costume of one of her father's workmen, was seized with an uncontrollable fit of merriment. Whereupon, the irritated Jakuns commenced the incantation 'Chinderwyte,' and pursued their way to the forest, followed by the spell-bound princess. Dattu Klambu despatched messengers to bring back his daughter, but she refused to return, and eventually became the spouse of the Jakun chiefs. Dattu Klambu, on receiving intelligence of this occurrence, dissembled his resentment, and invited the whole tribe to a sumptuous entertainment, on pretence of celebrating the nuptials. In the midst of the feast he fired the palace, in which the revels were carried on, and the

whole of the Jakuns except a man and a woman perished in the flames. These two Jakuns fled to Rawang, a marsh near the sea-shore, and from them sprang the Rayet Laut, sometimes termed Orang Rawang or Akkyye, who not daring to return into the interior, have ever since confined themselves to the coasts and islets."

This is naturally a more or less fanciful account, but it is not at all improbable that it has a foundation of fact, and that it was raids by Malays or some of the wild tribes that drove some of them inland and others into the protection of the mangrove swamps of the coast, to escape from their persecutions. Had they been in the habit of visiting the coast before this, and were consequently acquainted with the arts of sea fishing and collecting shell fish, this would have been a most probable course for them to adopt.

Returning now to the Ipoh cave. There were found in it mixed with the deposits of shells and bones, numerous lumps of red hematite. The same mineral was also found in two other caves in Perak. This ore has been discovered in the old cave dwellings in Europe; and it is conjectured that it was used as a pigment for painting the faces and bodies of the inhabitants of the caves. The occurrence of this substance, associated with similar remains, in so widely separated localities is very interesting. When first noticed, the idea was formed that possibly the mineral had been collected and brought into the caves on account of its weight and bright metallic appearance, much as children will collect any similar stones, or as the Chinese miners at the present time gather up all pretty or curious shaped stones they may find in the workings and place them on the small altars they form in the mines; or that medicinal or magical properties were attributed to it. The hypothesis of European Archæologists may, however, be the true explanation of its presence, for it is only necessary to grind up some of the hematite between two stones to form, with a little water or some oil expressed from a seed, like the *prah* or the *kapayong*, a very excellent red paint for personal adornment.

The three colours used by the modern Sakais for painting their persons are charcoal, a vegetable red, and white china clay. These are mixed with oil, and the faces and sometimes the breasts of the women and occasionally the men are painted with patterns with lines and dots. It is only done on occasions when they wish to add to their personal charms.

No implements but the pounding and grinding stones already mentioned have been so far discovered in any of the caves: though it has been somewhat rashly taken for granted that the cave dwellers were the makers of the stone implements that

have been so abundantly found in Perak and the neighbouring states. But the least reflection would serve to show that these implements indicate a much higher intelligence than would be compatible with the evidences afforded by the remains discovered in the caves.

All the stone implements are axe or chisel pointed, not one single spear-pointed implement has ever been found. The second division of the stone age is divided from the first by the introduction of axe-pointed implements, and all the important advances that are indicated by the use of this type of tool. If the cave people had been acquainted with the use of stone, they would almost certainly have employed spear-pointed implements of the rudest kind; as when they had advanced as far as the making of chisel and axe-pointed tools, they would have been able to build houses, and be independent of the shelter of caves, and have been in a position to cultivate the soil and raise food instead of having to subsist on shell-fish and the animals of the jungle. The multiplicity of the types of stone implements found in Perak shows that the users of them must have been comparatively in a high state of civilisation.

The remarkable absence of all palæolithic patterns may be explained by supposing that there never was a period in this part when the ruder implements were in use, but that the people, whoever they were, who employed them, were settlers from some other locality, who on arrival had reached the second stage of the Stone Age. There is, of necessity, no means of fixing even in the most approximate manner the date of the introduction of the use of stone in Perak, but the similarity of the types of the implements is quite sufficient to indicate that it was a continuation of the same wave of progress which led to the evolution of these tools in other countries. This is, of course, far from saying that the Stone Age in Malaya was contemporaneous with that of Europe. The number of the stone implements is, however, as striking here as in other parts of the world, pointing indubitably to the long continuance of the use of these lithic tools.

The finding of a few implements in the cave deposits would by no means prove that the inhabitants were the makers of them, but only that they were of the same age. For it would be quite likely that, were two races of different degrees of advancement living in the country at the same time, that the lower might occasionally acquire, either by barter or other means, the weapons of the higher race. In the same way as the wild tribes now use iron axes, pottery, clothes and other things bought from the Malays, and the Malays themselves use articles of European manufacture.

So far, pottery has not been found, except some fragments of coarse earthenware in the superficial layers of the earth of some of the caves, and this is undoubtedly of comparatively speaking recent Malayan origin. At the present time the Malays are acquainted with the potter's art, but the wild tribes are not. They use bamboos for cooking rice and other grain, when they cannot get Malay cooking pots.

The burial customs of the cave dwellers would appear from the only interment which has been discovered to have been of the most primitive kind, that is, the bodies were left where they fell, with possibly a slight covering of earth, and the family or tribe, as the case might be, left the place. This same custom is still followed by both the Sakais and the Semangs. Not only the house in which the death takes place, but the clearings, often of some acres in extent, planted up with crops, are also abandoned. If anything was wanted to prove the recent date when the cultivation of the land was adopted by the wild tribes, a custom such as this is sufficient. It is inconceivable that such a habit could long survive in a community which depended for its sustenance on the produce of the soil. At the present time it is dying out in places, and as the cultivation of the land increases, it must ultimately fall into desuetude. The Malays bury their dead in amongst their kampongs, and this custom seems to show a close connection between the wild tribes and them in this respect. It is really only a step. In fact, what is now taking place among the Sakais in the less remote places will supply instances of all the phases between the two customs. From shutting up the body in the house, leaving the body in the house but covering it with earth, to making a grave in the garden near the house.

There would appear to be no available data by which even the merest approximation to the age of these cave remains can be made; but it must be very considerable, as in some of the caves at least 12 feet of a mixture of shells, bones and earth has been accumulated and subsequently removed again in the floors of the caves. In places, two and three layers of solid stalagmite have been formed and removed, some of these layers having been 5 feet in thickness. Portions of these layers are to be seen sticking on to the walls of the caves or on to the ends of the stalactites hanging from the roof. As already mentioned, the level of the caves is, as a rule, very much higher than the present level of the valleys in which the hills stand, though there is nothing to show what time elapsed between their formation and occupation by human beings. In the case of the caves at Ipoh, the human deposit rests on a bed of coarse river sand, and there does not appear to be any

earth in between the two deposits. A factor to be taken into account is that the caves could not have been occupied for long at a time. For the supply of food would soon run short, and the people would have to shift to another cave, and leave that again as soon as the supply of food became exhausted in its vicinity. Thus the occupation must have been only intermittent, with often comparatively long intervals intervening.

Of the habits and customs of the cave dwellers not much can be gleaned, but some idea of them can be formed. From the extraordinary quantity of shells in these caves it is evident that fresh water and land molluscs must have been their staple food, supplemented by such animals as they snare or kill with their rude weapons, the fish they could catch, and the fruits, leaves and roots of the jungle. The absence of any implements, except those already mentioned, indicates an extremely low state of intelligence, though it is quite possible that they may have been able to fashion weapons out of bamboo, with knives made of the same material hardened by the application of fire, and probably supplemented by the use of sharp fragments of stone. In this way it would be quite possible to make bamboo pointed spears, blowpipes, darts, and bows and arrows. With these and a knowledge of the means of extracting the poison from some of the plants of the jungle, they would be able to kill the animals whose bones are so plentiful in the caves. Bamboo weapons would of course leave no trace after all the long time that must have passed since they were in use. That they used fire is abundantly evident, and this, in the hands of some savages, is made into a most effective means of shaping wooden objects. The use of fire in cooking was probably confined to roasting their food, for without tools it is in a country like Perak impossible for any cultivation of grain to have been carried on, and therefore the necessity for boiling would not have arisen. The presence of pig bones, shows the cave dwellers were not Mohammedans. The nature of their food and the indications of a custom of leaving their dead, would show that they were continuously shifting from cave to cave, and the presence of sea-shells far inland, that they may at times have extended their wanderings as far as the sea-coast in search of a change of diet.

This is all the evidence we have of their habits and customs. It is meagre, though apparently sufficient to enable an idea to be formed of who these cave dwellers were. In the southern part of the Malayan Peninsula there are three races of people, without counting the Chinese and other modern introductions. These are the Semangs, the Sakais and other nearly allied tribes, and the Malays. The former are nearly pure Negritos, while the

Sakais are a mixed race, apparently a cross between the former and the race that has been called Indonesian. The Negritoës are probably the true aborigines, as they are met with even now in comparative purity, while the Indonesians are only to be traced by their admixture. From this point of view the earliest cave dwellers were therefore most likely the Negritoës. Looked at from the other aspect, the habits of the modern wild tribes are so similar to those of the people under consideration, that if they were to be deprived of the iron tools they now obtain from the Malays, they would be, to all intents and purposes, in the same position as the ancient cave men. Probably at a subsequent date the mixed races also occupied the caves in some parts of the country. The habit in all likelihood continued until the introduction of tools by the Malays, or some other race in an equally advanced state, enabled them to fell the jungle and build houses for themselves.

A PRELIMINARY NOTICE of the LUCHUAN LANGUAGE. By BASIL HALL CHAMBERLAIN, Emeritus Professor of Japanese and Philology in the Imperial University of Japan.

(Read January 7th, 1896.)

HAVING spent twenty years in exploring most corners of Japan, and as many corners as possible of the Japanese mind—the history, the poetry, the customs, and above all the language of this peculiar people—I naturally wished to make acquaintance with the neighbouring little archipelago to the south, the archipelago of Luchu, which, till the year 1874, had formed a semi-independent kingdom, tributary on the one hand to the Japanese Prince of Satsuma, and on the other to the Court of Peking. This wish was fulfilled in the spring of 1893, and the results of the journey were sent home to the Royal Geographical Society. They show that the Luchus are no mere barbarous islands like some others further to the south in the Pacific, but the scene of an eventful history, and the seat of an ancient and highly complex civilisation.

The most interesting feature, however, is the language, concerning which nothing had hitherto been known in Europe, save a short vocabulary printed seventy-seven years ago by the first British explorers of the chief island.¹ The very few missionaries

¹ See Lieut. H. Clifford's Appendix to Captain Basil Hall's "Voyage of Discovery to the West Coast of Corea and the Great Loo-choo Island." Murray, 1818.