

THE SIYIN CHINS.

By Major F. M. RUNDALL, D.S.O., 4th Gurkha Rifles.

(Late O. C. Chin Hills, and Political Officer, Northern Chin Hills.)

Map, p. 586.

A SHORT time ago I had the honour of presenting to the Library of the Royal Geographical Society a copy of a small manual I had compiled of the Siyin dialect, spoken in the Northern Chin Hills. This manual,* together with one of the Baungshe dialect, compiled by Lieut. Macnabb, Political Officer at Haka, and published almost simultaneously with mine, are the first attempts, so far as I am aware, at reducing to writing these hitherto wholly unknown languages. But as I believe that, speaking generally, not much is known about the Chin tribes, their country and their customs, I venture in this paper to give what information I can, and I trust it will be found in some measure interesting.

I have been often asked, "Where are the Chin Hills?" and I remember one of my brother officers receiving a home letter while we were serving in that "corner of the earth," in which an aunt of his wrote, "I had no idea you had gone to China." It is, perhaps, needless for me to say that the Chins have nothing whatever to do with China, and have never even heard of such a place. In fact, the tribes in the Chin Hills do not even call themselves Chins, and the word is, I believe, either a Burmese one or of Burmese origin. What it means I do not know, as I am wholly unacquainted with the Burmese language.

The Chins are sometimes confounded with the Kachins. I need hardly say the two nations are wholly distinct, and the countries occupied by them lie very far apart.

Position of the Chin Hills and Lines of Approach.—An idea of the position of the Chin Hills may perhaps be most easily conveyed if I say, that a line drawn from Mandalay to Chittagong passes at longitude 93°45' almost through the centre of the Chin country. The boundaries of the country may be roughly stated as the Manipur valley on the north, the Arakan Hill tracts on the south, the Kubo, Kalé, Myitha, and Yaw valleys on the east and south-east, and the Lushai Hills on the west. To reach the Chin Hills a traveller starting from Mandalay would first proceed by steamer down the Irrawaddy to Pakoko. He would then change into a steamer going up the Chindwin River, and

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travel to Kalewa. From Kalewa he would proceed by country boat up the Myittha River as far as Kalemio. All the above places are to be found in any good atlas. Arrived at Kalemio, he would find himself at the edge of the terai lying at the foot of the Northern Chin Hills, and about 30 miles by road from Fort White, which lies nearly due west of Kalemio. Fort White is our principal post in the Northern Chin Hills; and to reach Haka, our principal post in the Southern Chin Hills, he could either proceed from Fort White by the road which has been recently made southwards over the hills through Tashon Ywama (now Falám) to Haka, or he could go from Kalemio by country boat up the Myittha as far as Kán, and proceed thence westward to Haka, which lies some 60 miles from Kán.

Geographical Features.—The Chin Hills are, I understand, spurs from the Himalayan Range, which finally disappear in the sea; but I have heard it said that the Andaman Islands are a portion of these spurs cropping up again for the last time out of the ocean. The Chin and Lushai Hills run from north to south in parallel ranges, of which the Létha Range, on which Fort White stands, boasts, I believe, of having the highest peaks. When I was serving in these hills, Kennedy Peak, some 6 miles north of Fort White, was supposed to be the loftiest peak in the Chin Lushai Hills, and its altitude is close on 8800 feet above sea-level. But I am not at all sure that there is not a still loftier one lying 40 miles further north, and called Mwelpi, *i.e.*, big mountain, and which certainly appeared to me to be higher than Kennedy Peak. The Létha range forms the watershed for the Kalé and Kubo valleys on the east, and the valley of the Nankathé, or Manipur River, on the west. This river is called by the Chins, Ngúnpi, *i.e.*, big river, but its average breadth is not more than 50 yards at the outside, and its average depth 6 feet or less, though deep pools are frequently met with. The hills are exceedingly steep and precipitous, the eastern slopes of the Létha Range being clothed with dense primeval jungle, while the western slopes are generally comparatively open, except for scattered trees and long grass which is burnt annually. There are no fine valleys to speak of, for the spurs and ravines run steeply down to the banks of the rivers and streams, and the banks themselves are often precipitous. The beds of the rivers are full of rocks and boulders, and the current is very rapid. The most open and level ground of any extent that I have seen in the Chin Hills is at Haka, where the country partakes more of the nature of downs. The principal rivers in the Chin Hills are the Manipur River and the Koladyne, which is known as the Boinu near Haka. The Manipur River runs south for the greater part of its course, but turns eastward near Tashon Ywama, and runs into the Myittha, which flows northwards. The Koladyne flows south at first, and then turns to the westward into the Lushai Hills. I do not know for certain what course it then pursues. The ranges of hills are narrow

at the top ; in some places they deserve the name of razor-backed ranges. They are mostly composed of shale, but I have met with a great deal of rock, though I cannot say of what nature the rock is.

Origin of the Chins.—The origin of the Chins is quite unknown. I believe some people are of opinion that they were aboriginal tribes of Upper Burma, and were gradually forced back into the hills, driving back in their turn the Lushais, who dwelt in the hills now occupied by the Chins ; the Lushais retreating across the Manipur River still further into the hills. Others think that the Chins had always been the aboriginal tribes of the hilly districts they inhabit at the present day. The Chins themselves can give no information whatever as to their origin. As the old men amongst them are not venerated or respected, traditions are not handed down from father to son, and I only came across two traditions amongst them. One was, that there was once a great flood on the earth, which drowned everybody except a few persons, who escaped by going up to Kennedy Peak, on the Létha Range. The other was, that a great teacher (Buddhist?) once taught some Chins who had gone to Burma how to write, and gave them instructions, which they wrote on leather (parchment?). On the return of these Chins from Burma a feast was given to welcome them, and, while they were all engaged in drinking, a dog or some rats ate up the leather books. They then wrote all they could remember of the teacher's instructions on wooden books ; but the house in which these were kept caught fire and was burned down, and so the wooden books were destroyed. After that no further efforts were made to preserve the instructions of the Laihilpa (teacher), and they were forgotten, and the art of writing perished ; and so, the Chins add, this is the reason they have no written language.

Tribal Divisions.—The tribes inhabiting the Chin Hills are numerous, and each has its chief, while every village has its headman. Almost every tribe was nominally tributary to the Tashons when we first penetrated these hills. The tribes are distinguishable from each other by different dialects—some of which amount to different languages—and also by the way in which they wear their long hair. The following is a list of the tribes under the control of the Political Officer of the Northern Chin Hills :—

- (a.) The Siyins, whose villages are in the immediate vicinity of Fort White, and whose territory borders the Kalé valley.
- (b.) The Kanhows, who occupy the hills north of Fort White stretching from a village called Walawun (about 10 miles from Fort White) to the high hill known as Mwelpi, which is marked on the last Survey maps.
- (c.) The Shinshinggyuwa, whose villages lie south of the Siyins, on the east bank of the Manipur River.
- (d.) The Mobingyis, who are apparently half Siyins half Kanhows, and who at some time or other broke away from the main

branches. Their villages lie to the south-west and west of the Siyin territory.

- (e.) The Ngunngals, who live across the Manipur River (spelt in the newspapers Nwengals).
- (f.) The Ngwité and Zaté, who occupy the hills north of the Kanhows, and, I believe, have villages almost up to the Manipur valley.
- (g.) The Haitsi-Lópa, who live on the eastern slopes of the Létha Range, bordering the Kubo valley.

For a list of the tribes under the control of the Political Officer at Haka I would refer the reader to Lieut. Macnabb's very interesting report on that district.*

Climate.—The climate of the Chin Hills is generally considered to be most unhealthy, and undoubtedly our troops suffered frightfully from fever of a very severe type, and from dysentery, at Fort White and other places; but at the same time it is a well-known fact that some of the posts were in very fairly healthy situations. It is difficult to assign a reason for the unhealthiness of places like old Fort White, and medical men have failed to discover the cause. Men who have suffered severely from fever in India either did not get it at all, or had it slightly; while some who had never had a day's fever in their lives, even when living in well-known feverish places in India and elsewhere, went down before the Chin Hill malaria, and had to be invalided. The generality of officers and men suffered very severely. The hot weather may be said to commence about the middle or end of April; but the heat is by no means excessive, and one does not require punkahs. At about the end of June the rains set in heavily, but I am unable to give the average rainfall. The rainy season is the most unhealthy time of the year in the Northern Chin Hills, and it continues till the beginning of September, when the weather becomes finer and more sunny, though heavy mists roll up in the morning from Burma. By the middle or end of October the cold weather may be said to commence. In the cold weather one gets frosty nights; but rain falls about Christmas-time, and also in the end of February or beginning of March. The two coldest months of the year are January and February. I have never seen snow fall in the Chin Hills, but good hard frosts are frequent.

Reasons for our Occupation of the Chin Hills.—The Chin tribes have undoubtedly only themselves to thank for our invasion of their country. They forced themselves prominently and unpleasantly upon our notice after the conquest of Upper Burma. But at the same time the existence of these tribes had long been known to the Government of India principally in connection with the feuds of the Kanhow Chins with the

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Lushais and Manipuris. A most interesting account of these will be found in Sir A. Mackenzie's book, 'Tribes on the North-East Frontier,' in which, if I remember right, the Kanhows are referred to under their proper Chin name, Sókté or Sóktaté, the name "Kanhow" being given them by the Burmans. After our subjugation and occupation of Upper Burma the Chins began to be a thorn in our side, just as they had been to King Thibaw and his predecessors. Thibaw had tried sending an army to invade their country; but it was ignominiously defeated, and the troops retired after doing more harm than good to the prestige of the Burmese army. The Chins told me that they had heard rumours of our fighting in Upper Burma, but they imagined our troops were no better than King Thibaw's, and so, bursting from their hills in sudden and unexpected raids, they pillaged the Burman villages in our newly-acquired territory, slew all who resisted them, carried off into slavery all whom they succeeded in capturing, and murdered such of their prisoners as could not keep pace with them in their rapid retreat to their mountain fastnesses.

Or perhaps an old Chin chief died, and as Chin custom requires human heads for the adornment of a chief's grave, a head-hunting party would visit our territory for the express purpose of taking our subjects' heads. I have asked both Chins and their Burmese slaves how a raid is conducted, and they describe the mode of procedure as follows. I must first explain that every Burman village which is situated in the valleys lying at the foot of the Chin Hills is surrounded by a very strong double stockade, which bristles with formidable *chevaux-de-frise* of sharpened bamboos, so stoutly fixed and interwoven into the stockade, that were a village pluckily held by the inhabitants, no number of Chins could possibly succeed in forcing an entrance. Thus, an attack by day has no chance of success. The Chins, therefore, have to depend on friends and informers, who let them know when the village night-watchers will be likely to fail in their duty; or these same friends and informers will contrive to admit the enemy. In either case, just before dawn as a rule, the Chins, yelling and firing off their guns, rush the village, slaying those who resist, with their spears, swords, &c., while the panic-stricken villagers bolt in every direction into the jungle. The Chins do not burn down the village as a rule, because they say that in that case the villagers would go elsewhere, and it would be as foolish in their eyes to burn a village as it would be in ours if we first shot over a covert and then destroyed it, and compelled the remaining birds to go elsewhere. But a general pillage takes place, and everything of value is carried off, together with as many captives as they can secure. The Chins, however, do not stop in the village any longer than they can possibly help, but hurry back to their hills with their captives and booty. To retard pursuit and drive off their pursuers, should there be any, they have previously carefully erected stockades in places where the pursuers

would be completely at their mercy. If the marauders expect to be pursued, they leave some of their party to man one or two of these stockades, to take which requires a mountain battery gun, or, at any rate, well-disciplined and fearless troops.

A purely head-hunting party pursues somewhat different tactics. The Chins know well what forest paths in the terai are most frequented by Burmans travelling from one village to another. A head-hunting party will therefore select some one or other of these paths, and then lie in ambush in the early morning close to the side of the road (by close, I mean literally a yard or two from the footpath, the denseness of the jungle allowing them to do this). Then, when a party of hapless Burmans reaches the spot, the Chins fire into them with fatal effect at this exceedingly close range, and so secure some heads. A Chin is not particular as to whether the heads are those of men, women, or children; in fact, I have been told that he will even rip open the corpse of a murdered woman and cut off the head of her unborn babe, and count it as a trophy. Sometimes, again, when villagers' fields are surrounded by dense jungles, a party of Chins will attack the unfortunate unarmed peasants who are tilling the fields, and carry off their heads. I have often asked the Chins why they raid the Burmans, and they answered that, to begin with, they require slaves, for no Chin will work as the servant of another Chin, except in certain cases; another reason they gave is, that the Burmans raid the Chins, and that tit-for-tat is fair-play. Now, I know that there are Chin captives amongst the Burmans, but I find it difficult to believe that a Burman raid into the Chin Hills was a common occurrence, or even that such a thing could have ever taken place; for while it is a comparatively easy matter for hill-men to raid villages in the plains, it is obviously a very different matter for plainsmen to venture into wild and difficult hills and raid the villages of hill-men. The latter, in his native hills, has the plainsman at a far greater disadvantage than the plainsman has him when he ventures into the plains. I am inclined to think, therefore, that the Chins wilfully exaggerate when they say the Burmans used to raid them, and that the few Chin slaves which are held by the Burmans in captivity were never taken in what a Chin would consider a legitimate raid; they were probably captured whilst visiting friends in a Burman village. However, I am open to correction. The Chins further forced themselves into our notice by harbouring dacoit leaders whom we were using our best endeavours to catch—men whose existence at large implied fresh and serious outbreaks of rebellion. When Government found that the peace of certain of our newly-acquired districts was being rudely disturbed by the hill tribes, negotiations were opened up with them in the hopes that we and they might come to some satisfactory understanding. It soon became apparent that nothing but a punitive expedition would suffice to keep these wild tribes in check.

Punitive Expeditions.—For the last four cold seasons our troops have been operating in the Chin Hills. The first expedition was sent in the winter of 1888–89, under General Faunce. The force started from Kalemvo, and advancing towards the Létha Range, met with determined resistance the whole way. As our force advanced we constructed stockaded posts at convenient spots, in which small garrisons were left to guard our rear, furnish escorts for convoys, &c. These posts were known by their numbers, such as No. 2, No. 4, &c. A good road, at a fairly easy gradient, was also made as time went on, and has since been greatly improved. It would take up too much space to give any detailed account of the campaign; suffice it to say, we lost many men, chiefly through the unhealthiness of the primeval forests through which the troops worked; and though we drove back the tribesmen as we advanced, still they showed subsequently, by their undiminished misdemeanours, and by the incessant harassing of our posts and convoys, that they had not the slightest intention of giving in without further chastisement. Our troops, however, did very excellent work, as anyone will acknowledge who has ever attempted to force his way through a wholly unknown country, and operate in wild rugged hills where no supplies whatever are obtainable, and resisted, as we were, by hardy hill-men, who fought us pluckily every step of the way, and knew how to turn to the best account every coign of advantage offered by dense jungle or precipitous hill-side. General Faunce's force pushed down the western slopes of the Létha range, destroyed many villages, built Fort White, and penetrated, by means of small columns, as far as the principal Kanhow village of Tiddim. The Chins could not at all understand who the white men were who thus invaded their hills. For some time they set us down as spirits of some sort; and I remember that some of them came to General Symons, when he was operating at Haka, in 1890, and begged him, as we were all spirits, not to plague them with diseases. Some of them also told me that they thought we were children of the sun. They did not at all realise, either, that the troops were going to stay in the hills, and they consoled themselves by saying, "The troops will stay as long as their rice supply holds out, and then they will have to go back to Burma." I never could make the Chins understand where England is. They had no idea of there being any other country but Burma, and they dreaded being sent there as prisoners. Once when I caught two incorrigible telegraph-wire cutters, and sent them to Myingyan for a sight of the world outside the Chin Hills, their friends came to me in great grief, saying they knew they would never see the prisoners again. On my inquiring why they said this, they replied, "The Queen of England will see them, and as she has never before seen Chins, she will be so taken with them that she will keep them."

During 1889, Government decided to send a further expedition into the hills, and endeavour to make a road right through them from

Chittagong to Burma. General Symons was entrusted with the supreme command of this force, which worked in three columns. One, under General Symons, marched from Pakoko, on the Irrawaddy, up the Yaw Valley to Kán, a village on the Myittha, and struck into the unknown mass of hills west of that place. This column worked its way to Haka, which had been selected as the objective also of a second column operating from the Chittagong side, through the Lushai hills, under General Tregear. The third column, under the late Colonel Skene (murdered afterwards at Manipur), operated southwards from Fort White, and effected a junction at Tashon Ywama with General Symons' column. The work done by these three columns was very great; but so untamable and wild are the tribes that, at the close of the operations in May, 1890, directly the main bulk of the troops was withdrawn, the Chins commenced giving trouble again. The Lushais rose and attacked the posts of Changsil and Aijal, while their brethren south of these places were becoming troublesome. The Chins in the Haka district were defying us, ambuscading convoys, and doing everything they could to annoy us; in the Northern Chin Hills, the Kanhows refused to deliver up their Burman slaves or come to terms with us, and committed several serious raids on Burman villages, and laughed at the idea that we could ever succeed in penetrating their country and punishing them. Accordingly, in the cold season of 1890-91 fresh troops were moved up, and small punitive expeditions again operated through the Chin-Lushai hills.

I had been entrusted with the political work of the Northern Chin Hills, and had had the good fortune to succeed in getting in touch with the Siyins, the most warlike of all the tribes; but I knew that our friendly relations with this tribe were in their infancy, and an ill-advised speech, or anything which could be construed into a repulse at the hands of the Kanhows, would bring the Siyins about our ears again at once. The expedition against the Kanhows, which I had the honour of commanding, fortunately turned out a success, and they were taught a severe lesson, which had a favourable effect upon the tribes in the Northern Chin Hills. In the Haka district the various expeditions were in the main successful, and though operating columns have again been working through the Chin Hills this cold weather, they have met with no opposition to speak of, if one may judge from telegraphic reports in the newspapers. I believe there has been a slight disturbance in the Haka district lately; but we cannot expect wild tribesmen, who have never known either law or order, to turn all at once into a peaceable and law-abiding people. There must be some lawless, restless spirits amongst them, just as there are still in our own civilised London.*

* The above was written and printed some months ago. Since then the Siyins and Nwengals rose and gave much trouble. It is more than two years since I left the

Dress and Appearance of the Siyin Chins.—Taken as a whole, the Siyins are a finer race of men than the Burmese, and have well-developed arms, chests, and legs, though their average height does not, I think, exceed that of the Burman race. Their features are different to those of the Burmese, and of a rather darker colour. The Siyins have often, too, some hair on their faces, though not much. Some of the men have fairly good-looking countenances, but as they advance in life their faces show the marks of intemperance. The women for the most part are very ugly, with fat, flattish faces, but their limbs are sturdily built. The men gather their long hair into a knot behind their heads, and they have a small plait of hair on each side. For a head-covering the Siyin wears a dirty white flat turban. In the rains he uses a broad-brimmed hat, made of plantain leaves inclosed in a latticed framework of thinly-sliced bamboo, slightly tapering to a small cone at the top. For clothes, the men wear but one garment, usually a coarse dirty white or coloured cotton sheet, which they throw carelessly and loosely round them, and which they discard altogether sometimes without the slightest shame. The women wear no head-covering, but arrange their hair in great stiff curls on either side of their faces, with the remainder lumped together in a knot behind, the whole being saturated with pig's lard, the smell from which is most offensive. Girls and boys in early childhood run about naked generally, but little girls of seven or eight years of age usually wear a small strip of cloth round the loins. As they grow older they increase the size of this, or else wear a sort of short petticoat made of hundreds of strings, each of which hangs loosely and separate from the others from a narrow band round the waist. One would imagine that a garment of loose strings could not possibly be decent; but it is so, though the strings do not reach to the knee. At about the age of fifteen or sixteen the women wear a coloured cotton cloth woven by themselves. This is wrapped once round the hips, and barely reaches to a foot above the knee. Some women wear a cloth round their breasts also. Nearly every man wears a necklace of some sort; carnelian beads, both large and small, are much prized, and coloured beads from Burma are also largely used. The women wear quantities of necklaces, and prize greatly a large spiral shell which, they say, is obtained from tribes living near the sea.

Disposition and Nature.—The Siyins are undoubtedly a brave and

Chin hills, and I do not at all know what caused the rising. Just as the Afghan tribes on the North West Frontier of India (notably those in the vicinity of the Black Mountain) are continually giving trouble, so, I suppose, will the tribes on our frontiers in Burma fret and chafe at the power which has been the first to hold their untamed spirits in check. Undoubtedly the only way to deal successfully with such tribes is to hit promptly, and to hit hard; it saves them and us future bloodshed, and untold expense; and a stitch in time, if it is a good one, will probably save more than nine.

hardy race. It is their boast that one Siyin is worth five of any other men; and the other tribes, generally speaking, acknowledge their superior pluck. I was told that long ago the Kanhows, Tashons, and Burmans banded together to exterminate the Siyins, and succeeded in surrounding their head village; but the Siyins made a desperate and sudden sally, and boldly rushed their enemies, who incontinently fled. The Siyins are very independent, and the free and easy way in which they put their hands on your shoulder and stroke you is apt to be resented by new-comers, who do not understand that this is not meant for impertinence, but friendship. Their chiefs do not possess much authority over them, chiefly, I think, because they are usually more drunk than sober. The women are by no means bashful, and though they are more or less in subjection to their husbands, they are not as a rule badly treated by the men. It is true they do most of the drudgery and agricultural work; but the men help them a good deal, though they consider that a man's proper work in life is to drink, hunt, and raid, and get slaves to help his wife. The Siyins are doubtless cruel, but I do not think they are nearly so cruel as the Burmese, and they are easily moved to mirth, and readily understand and appreciate a joke. They are by no means dull of apprehension, and I should put them down as a quick-witted, intelligent race, who would readily take to education.

Siyin Villages.—The villages are always built on the hill-sides where either natural springs exist, or where water can be brought from above by means of wooden troughs. These are made of hollowed-out saplings, and are about six inches in diameter, and by means of them water is often brought from some spring a mile away from the village. Villages are of various sizes, but I do not think the largest Siyin village contains much more than two hundred houses. They are very fairly clean, as pigs are kept not only for food but also as scavengers. Every house is built on ground which has been terraced, and is on piles three or more feet from the ground. In front of each house of any size there is a wooden platform, where the owner sits and basks in the sun, and receives his friends. Wooden steps lead up to this platform from the ground, and at the further end of it is the house, which is constructed of planks and beams, with a well-thatched roof. There is one door, but windows are scarce; consequently every house is dark. The larger houses contain two or more rooms, and the smoke from the fireplace, having no other outlet, wanders about, and escapes partly through the door and partly through chinks and crannies, and blackens the inside of the house. The chiefs' houses are larger than those of the others, and are sometimes over a hundred feet long; they usually have a large private enclosure fenced with a stockade of pine-logs ten feet high. A chief's house has also a finer platform outside it than the others. Every house stands apart, with plenty of space between it and the neighbouring ones. Underneath the houses the pigs and fowls live, and

other live stock, and all refuse is thrown down to them through a hole in the floor. The Siyins, like all other Chins, adorn the outside walls of their houses, just where the door is, with trophies of the chase. I have seen hundreds of skulls of all manner of animals, including those of tigers, bears, and panthers. Villages are rarely stockaded all round. Stockades are usually met with wherever the village is most easily approached. The jungle is allowed to grow around a village so as to afford the Chins good cover both for ambuscading and attacking an enemy, or for making good his escape from one. The stockades are generally very difficult to attack, being purposely built in spots very disadvantageous to an attacking party; and to take a Chin village which means to offer an obstinate resistance is a task which requires less skill than pluck—pluck of the best quality that can be got. Volleys fired out of an unexpected stockade, or out of thick jungle at a distance of a few feet, where you cannot even see your enemy, try the pluck of men and officers considerably; and as the Chin almost invariably fires low, the wounds received are usually fatal ones in the stomach. The ground is also sometimes "pangied"—that is, thickly studded with bamboo spikes, which are difficult to see, and which inflict severe wounds in the leg, and are a formidable obstacle to pass. A Siyin village is a picturesque sight when the apple, apricot, or other trees in it are in full blossom.

Household Utensils.—These are extremely few in number, and are very primitive. A few earthenware pots and gourds, a spinning-wheel of sorts, and liquor-pots and gourd-spoons are about all they have, unless one includes empty jam tins picked off the rubbish heaps at our various camping-grounds. There are no tables, chairs, or beds, and the men and women of course eat with their fingers. They have, however, shelves in their houses. For pounding millet or rice the Siyin cuts a block of about thirty inches or less off the solid trunk of a tree. This he excavates conically for about sixteen inches, and to lighten it he chips away at the outside till it assumes the appearance of two cones with the apex of each meeting in the centre of the block of wood. While chipping he leaves two or three handles to enable him to carry this heavy mortar. As we were hard up for chairs we used these rice mortars as stools, inverting them so that the hollow part rested on the ground. To husk rice in these primitive mortars the Siyin pours a handful or two of the grain into the hollow end and pounds it with a long heavy pole.

Hospitality and Drunkenness.—The Siyins, like other aboriginal tribes I have met, are much addicted to drunkenness, a propensity which is inherent in their nature. This is not a vice acquired from civilised nations, for they had had no dealings with the civilised world till they came into contact with us a short while ago. The Chin liquor is made chiefly from millet, and in taste is not unlike cider. I do not think they keep the actual liquor itself for long, but the dry ingredients from

which it is made are improved, so they think, with age. When liquor is required a large narrow-necked earthenware vessel about two feet six inches high is partially filled with the dry ingredients; a long hollow reed is then thrust into it and cold water is poured into the vessel till it is full. The liquor thus formed is then either drawn off by a syphon into a gourd, if required for refreshment on a journey, or is sucked up through the reed. It is rather heady if the ingredients are old, or mixed with a small quantity only of water, and men and women get very drunk off it, though they say it produces no nausea or headache in the morning. Drunkenness is no vice in their eyes, and the man who can carry more liquor than his fellows is rather looked up to than otherwise. I believe there are two kinds of Chin liquor, but none is imported. Crimes committed when a man is drunk are not punished. The Siyin, like all other Chins, is extremely hospitable, and it is thought an insult to go to a Chin village and not partake of the hospitality offered. To get drunk is considered a delicate appreciation of their hospitality.

Smoking.—The Siyins grow inferior tobacco, and the men rarely smoke. The women smoke for them, and collect the tobacco juice in the bowls of their pipes, which are made large for the purpose. When the bowl has received a good supply of tobacco juice it is mixed with water or saliva, and then put into a little gourd flask for the use of the men, who sip it. This custom, I believe, obtains amongst the Akas in Assam also. The horrible concoction is not swallowed, but is held in the mouth behind the lower front teeth, and no council or palaver of any sort is held without the nicotine flask, or *tui bu úm* as it is called, being passed round; and when one Chin meets another, instead of offering a snuff-box or a cigar, he will offer his *tui bu úm*. The women and little girls smoke from morning till night, and what with the reek of the tobacco juice, and the horrible odour of the pig's lard in their hair, and the general filthiness of their bodies, it is hardly to be wondered at that whenever duty compelled me to hold a conversation with a woman I always carefully noted the direction of the wind; and I have been guilty, on more than one occasion, of the rudeness of contriving that the lady should stand forty yards from me during our conversation.

Caste, Religion, and Morals.—The Siyins, like other Chins, have absolutely no caste whatever, and will partake of food cooked and offered by anyone. They will eat pigs, fowls, goats, oxen, dogs, cats, rats, and snakes—in fact, anything; and an armadillo is considered a great delicacy. But they do not understand the milking of cows, and so do not use either milk or butter.

[As regards religion, I cannot say I discovered anything worthy the name of a religion amongst them. I believe, but am not sure, that some of these hill tribes acknowledge one Supreme Being, but I could not find that the Siyins believe in anything but spirits of the wood, water, trees,

and house. Of course they are believers in ghosts and witchcraft, but I failed to discover any one chief spirit; and their religion, if it be called so, does not teach them that any particular act is a sin; it has no moral influence over them. I believe the only sin is detection as the author of an injury to a fellow man or woman. Curiously enough, the word *shiam*, which means *to work*, also signifies *to pray*, and this of course recalls to one's mind the old motto, *Laborare est orare*. There are individuals amongst them for whom I can find no better name than *medicine men*. Not that they deal in any medicine except charms. The Siyin uses no medicine except what we have lately dispensed to them, and thinks that every hurt or sickness can be cured by an offering to the *dwaité*, or spirits. The medicine-men profess to be able to tell them what spirit has afflicted them, and directs what conciliatory offerings are to be made. Sometimes these take the form of merely little clay balls threaded on a string, and fastened on the tree where the spirit dwells; but more often the medicine man will order a goat, dog, pig, or fowl to be killed, according to the means of his patient, and he himself comes to help eat the viands thus provided. He also officiates when treaties are made, and mutters charms over the head of the beast which is to be slaughtered. The Siyins have various methods of determining whether a venture will be successful or not. One is, I think, worthy of being mentioned. A small piece of ground, say two feet in diameter, is marked off with a stick into three or more divisions. In the centre a small tripod a few inches high is erected, and an egg with the top cut off is balanced on this; fire is placed under the egg, and if the white bubbles up and falls over on an unlucky side the venture will not be undertaken. All Siyins are more or less dirty in body, and in mind too. To wash the body is considered a sign of faulty intellect, and a habit out of which a man should be chaffed. I have said a Chin loves a joke, but he would think it a serious joke if you playfully spread a report about that he was in the habit of washing, for he would be laughed at more than he cared to be. The morals of the Siyins are decidedly loose, though adultery is occasionally punished either by heavy fine or death. Before marriage a man may have intercourse with an unmarried girl so long as she consents; if she is forced against her will it is considered a crime. Should a child be born before marriage it is destroyed. Murder and theft are punished by death or fine if the murderer is not too influential to be meddled with.

Marriage and Divorce.—Beyond offerings to the spirits the Siyin does not make his marriages a religious ceremony. When he wishes to marry he employs a friend to go to the girl's parents, and settle what price he is to pay for his bride. This of course is paid in kind—either grain, mythun, or goats, &c. Should the price be too heavy for the wooer's means, he either gives up the idea of marrying the girl, or, if he marries her, he works off his debt as a bondsman to his father-in-law. Sometimes marriage debts are not paid off for years. There is of course

a marriage feast, and the bride receives presents from her friends, and a pig or mythun is killed, according to the means of the family. I never saw a Siyin marriage, and do not know exactly what ceremonies are gone through. A Siyin may marry as many wives as he can afford to keep, but only the most wealthy amongst them have more than one wife. It is not easy to say what are considered sufficiently good causes for a man to divorce his wife; for the Siyins have such lax ideas of female purity that adultery is only a crime if the woman can prove she was forced against her will; and again, if she can satisfy her husband that though she sinned willingly she was drunk at the time, then the adultery is not considered a crime. A Siyin would probably divorce his wife if she committed the offence very often. Again, if a girl finds she cannot get on with her husband, she can run away back to her father's house. If a man divorces his wife he can demand back the price he paid for her; but whether he gets it or not is another matter, and depends a good deal on whether he has more influence and position in the tribe than his father-in-law. The Siyins are very fond of their children, and treat them kindly.

Funeral Obsequies.—The Siyins bury their dead, but not immediately after death. The body is kept in the house for sometimes a year or more, being dried and cured by smoke and by the sun. They do not use any method of embalming, and do not even remove the intestines, and why the bodies of the dead do not become offensive I do not know. I remember once going into the hut of a miserable old man who was paralysed from his waist downwards. He had only one child, a little girl of nine, to look after him. It was a bitterly cold evening, and I found him sitting stark naked by a wretched smoky fire in a hut the walls of which let in the cold wind everywhere. I asked him where his cloth was, and he pointed to a shelf. I lifted the cloth up, and found, to my surprise, the corpse of his wife, destitute of all clothing. The old paralytic had given up his only garment to cover his dead wife, who, I learnt on inquiry, had been dead four months. I doubt if many men could have left that hut untouched by the sight. In spite of the woman having been dead so long there was no smell whatever, and the body seemed shrivelling up into parchment. There are various funeral ceremonies, such as lying in state, or taking the body outside the house for the general public to come and view it, and offer food to the corpse; this is called *thi mai*. Then there is the *thi phe'*, which is keeping the body in the house, when only relations are admitted, and they offer it food. Placing the body in a coffin and removing it to its final resting-place in a cemetery is termed *thi wi*. The Siyins hold regular wakes for their dead. I attended one such gathering when three bodies were waked. Numbers of guests had been invited, and on a raised platform outside a hut I found a large number of men and women dancing round the corpses. The three bodies were swathed from head to foot in cloths of

various colours, so that not even their features were visible. They were decked out with all sorts of ornaments, and peacocks' feathers nodded on their heads. All three were secured in an upright position in a stout bamboo framework which was carried by some men, while the female relations of the deceased stood by the bier weeping and shrieking. One of the bodies was that of a young man, and, consequently, a bamboo, representing a gun, was fastened over one of his shoulders, while a powder-horn was slung over the other. The bearers and weeping women formed the centre of a circle of men, who danced round them. Each man had one arm round the neck of the man in front of him, and the other arm round the waist of the man behind him, and they danced a slow measured step, singing the following words:—

Háng suon pó! Háng liou liou!
 Tong suon pó! Tong liou liou!
 Tong hí suoné,
 Háng suoné,
 Khutáng shié báng,
 Píal móé.

This being fairly literally translated, runs:—

Brave relations, all! brave, again and again!
 Feast relations, all! feast, again and again!
 Our relations (*i.e.* the corpses) have had their feast;
 Our brave relations are caught (by death) as in a trap,
 They cannot get free.

Each time the song or chant ended the men would stamp loudly with their feet, and laugh merrily if anyone stamped out of time. Outside the ring of dancing men women perambulated, who sang and wailed by turns. In the hut and its verandah crowds of men and women were seated round a dozen large liquor-pots, sucking up the liquor through reeds, and getting drunk rapidly. I did not notice any signs of quarrelsomeness as they grew intoxicated; all seemed to be in a good humour, and simply bent on getting as drunk as they could. The only musical instruments were a gong and a small drum. Towards evening guns were loaded with blank ammunition and fired into the air. Many of the men brought their guns to me and requested me to help on the wake by firing them.

Diseases.—The Siyins suffer from fever, dysentery, and eye diseases. They are also occasionally visited by cholera and small-pox. They do not, as far as I could make out, suffer from contagious diseases, and I never came across a case of syphilis or leprosy, though I believe the latter disease is not unknown amongst the other tribes. They know absolutely nothing of the healing art, and have no medicines, and do not understand the healing properties of any herbs.

Agriculture.—The Siyins have no fertile valleys with level patches of ground, as their hills run down precipitously to rocky watercourses.

They are, therefore, compelled to make clearings on the steep hill-sides by cutting down trees and burning the jungle. When a clearing is made they do not terrace the hill-side, but merely dig it up rudely with a mattock (they have no ploughs), and, when necessary, irrigate the crop by little troughs made of hollow trees, which conduct water from the nearest spring. The crops sown are cotton, Indian corn, millet, the aunglak bean, a little rice, yams, sweet potatoes, and a few other vegetables, such as pumpkins, a kind of cucumber, and a sort of elongated French bean. Sowing is usually commenced in March, and the reaping of various crops begins about August, and goes on for some time, according as each crop ripens. The fruit-trees commonly found are plantains, oranges, limes, a poor kind of mango, and indifferent apricots. The wild medlar, cherry and apple also grow in the jungle.

Minerals.—The hills do not seem to afford much mineral wealth. I have come across traces of iron, and have seen quartz. The Siyins themselves do not seem to know what gold, silver, and copper are, though they have names for them. They have no ornaments made of these metals, and they do not appear to be able to extract iron from the soil, but get it from Burma. The telegraph-wire was a great boon to them, and they annoyed us excessively by perpetually cutting it, and carrying off several miles' length of it at a time. I found that out of it they manufactured knives and agricultural implements, and also bullets. Salt is found sparingly in the hills, and is greatly valued, being procured by the process of evaporation from the soil. The Siyins had no money or tokens until we settled amongst them. They refused our money at first, and would only take brass buttons and empty tobacco-tins, &c., in exchange for fowls, eggs, or anything else which they brought for sale. Now, however, they have begun to learn the value of money.

Handicrafts.—The Siyin women manufacture, with rude looms, a coarse cotton cloth, the threads of which are sometimes white, sometimes yarn-dyed with some vegetable dye they procure. They also get dyed yarn from Burma. I noticed that the patterns differed with different tribes in the Chin Hills, so that one might almost classify them as clan tartans; for though members of the same tribe did not exactly tie themselves down to one pattern, yet one would find that some particular pattern predominated in each tribe.

Amongst the men some follow the trade of blacksmiths, mending guns, and making spears, knives, and agricultural implements. Their bellows are very ingenious, and consist of two large hollow bamboos, about six inches in diameter and three feet high, placed vertically in the ground about eighteen inches apart. From the bottom of each of these hollow uprights run, horizontally, two small iron tubes, which converge till they almost touch each other, at a distance of about three feet from the uprights. To drive a current of air through these

iron tubes, and blow up the fire placed over their extremities, two pistons are worked in the uprights by an assistant; these pistons are circular pieces of wood, with bamboo piston rods, and each circular piece is made to fit the cylinders tightly by quantities of feathers securely fastened round them. I possess one or two small swords and knives made by Siyin blacksmiths, and very neatly made they are too, and well sharpened.

Carpentering is an enormous labour to the Siyin, for his tools are so few, and so inferior. He has no saw, file, or plane, and his axe is a very indifferent one. To obtain a plank he chips away at a tree which has either fallen of its own accord, or which he has felled partly by chipping, partly by burning it through at the base. Out of one tree he at last chips away one plank, and it is wonderful how, with no other implement than an indifferent adze and a knife, he will smooth the surface of his plank. The labour of cutting planks is so great that it will be readily understood how greatly planks are prized by the Siyins.

Domestic Cattle.—Beyond a few goats and some mythun, the Siyin has no domestic cattle. Occasionally he succeeds in raiding oxen and buffaloes from Burma. The mythun, known amongst the Siyins as *shiel*, are a kind of wild cattle, I believe, but they are very harmless and docile. In colour they are generally black, with white legs. They have thick, short, curved horns, and powerfully-built legs. The village mythun are allowed to graze over the hill-sides, and are not herded at night, being prevented from roaming too far by means of fences. They are only kept for slaughter on big occasions, such as weddings in well-to-do families, treaty-making, &c. They are never used for agricultural purposes or as beasts of burden, nor are the cow mythun ever milked.

Weapons.—Besides flint-lock muskets, the Siyins still use occasionally bows and arrows, and spears. They also possess swords, or dahs, some of which they make themselves, while others are bought, or stolen from the Burmans in raids. They are said to manufacture their own gunpowder, and I believe the aunglak bean enters largely into its composition; but I never saw any gunpowder being made, and they can get it, or could get it a short time ago, from the Burmans. They have a coarse-grain powder for the actual charge, and a finer grain for the priming. The coarse-grain powder is carried in a handsome powder-horn made of the horn of the mythun, the wild ox, or the bison, and it is more or less ornamented with lacquer, which is also used in the ornamentation of their guns. This lacquer is the gum of some tree, and is red, but to obtain black lacquer the Siyins mix powdered charcoal with it. The fine-grain powder for priming is kept in a small horn about the size of a she-goat's horn. These powder-horns are carried by a strap passing over the shoulder, and are prettily ornamented with cowries and beads. The Siyin's bullets are usually made of hammered iron. He values his gun more than anything else

he possesses, and takes great care of it, keeping it clean and bright on the outside, though the inside is usually very dirty. I asked the Siyins where they got their guns from, as they all bear our Tower mark. They said they bought some, and took others from the Burmans in raids.

Fortifications.—The Siyins, and indeed all Chins, are very clever in the construction of defences such as stockades and stone walls, and they invariably select the strongest and best positions for them. Sometimes a ditch is dug across a narrow neck between two knolls, where an enemy is obliged, by the nature of the ground, to pass. The ditch is covered with bullet-proof logs, and you come upon it suddenly, and are only aware of its existence when a volley greets you, fired apparently out of the ground. The ditch will have two exits, one at either end, to enable the defenders to escape if necessary down the steep hill-side; and it is always made where the hill-side is covered with dense jungle, and so steep that an enemy would find it difficult to work along it. Stockades and walls are also constructed in positions which are extremely difficult to turn, and where an attacking enemy are brought suddenly under a close and heavy fire. Stockades are generally constructed of stout pine logs some ten feet high, roughly loopholed, and with occasionally a second row of logs placed behind the interstices of the front row. Sometimes they are constructed of open-work bamboos, with thick bristling *chevaux-de-frise* of sharply-pointed bamboos firmly interwoven with the uprights and cross-pieces. Such a stockade is extremely difficult to take. It requires great care and time to cut it down, owing to the huge *chevaux-de-frise* extending from top to bottom, the spikes of which, pointing in every conceivable direction, give wounds which fester badly; and those who attempt to try and cut it down are exposed to a heavy fire from the defenders, who, lying down concealed in dense jungle a few feet in rear, fire with deadly effect through the open bamboo framework. Stone walls are constructed at a height of about four feet from the ground, and logs are placed on the top to give head-cover to the defenders. The jungle is also cut down for a little distance in front of stockades and walls, so as to bring an enemy well under fire, and deprive him of cover.

Treaty-Making.—Formerly, whenever a dweller in the plains wished to obtain exemption from being raided, he would, if he had the boldness to do it, visit and interview an influential chief by whom he feared he might be raided. If the interview were successful, the chief would give him a large carnelian bead, and as long as he had this bead in his possession he and his were supposed to be safe; but it was not an easy thing to get one of these beads. The ceremony, however, of treaty-making between the Siyins and the English is a different matter, and the ceremonial observed when any Chin tribe makes a treaty with the English is very much the same as that which obtains amongst the Siyins. Terms are explained and discussed for days, two of the principal

points being abstention from raiding British territory, and the delivering up of all Burman slaves. When a satisfactory understanding has been arrived at, and the small amount of tribute, and the fines for past misdeeds, have been paid up, the English representative and the Chin chiefs proceed to a convenient spot, where a mythun is tied to a stake firmly driven into the ground. The medicine man sprinkles water and Chin liquor over the animal, and mutters various charms. When he has finished his task, the head chief takes his gun and shoots the animal through the head, killing it instantly. The carotid artery is then cut and the blood is caught in a vessel, while the medicine man cuts off the mythun's tail, dips the end of it in the blood, and strikes every principal person with it, including the British representative. He then digs a hole in the ground, and pours some liquor and blood into it, and then sets up a stone firmly in the hole as a witness. The slaughtered mythun is cut up, and portions of it are given to the English officers as well as to the Chins, who carry away every bit they can get, including the entrails. The paper on which the terms of the treaty were written is after this burnt, and the ashes are placed in a cup, which is then filled with Chin liquor, and the chiefs, English political, and other officers, each drink some of this nauseous mixture. The ceremony is then completed, though I cannot say the treaty is always kept inviolate by the Chins.

Flora of the Siyin Hills.—I am, unfortunately, not a botanist, so I can only give a general description of the flora of the Siyin Hills. Endless varieties of orchids are found, and they blossom at different times of the year. A very large variety of white lily, with a delicious perfume, grows abundantly near old Fort White, at the end of the rains; also tiger lilies, lilies of the valley, oleanders, acacias, the common red rhododendron, daisies, primulas, purple cowslips, violets (white and purple), anemones, and hosts of other flowers. Amongst trees I may mention a species of ilex, the holly, teak (at low elevations), and a pine tree, very like the *Pinus longifolia*. In the primeval forests, trees, creepers, flowers, and ferns of various kinds abound.

Fauna. Hunting and Fishing.—The wild animals found in the Siyin Hills, and in the adjacent ranges and terai forests are the elephant, rhinoceros, tiger, panther, black bear, wild boar, gural, sarrao, sambhur, wild ox, bison, wild buffalo, four-horned deer, barking deer, hare, hoolak monkey, langoor, small brown monkey, fox, wild cat, and jackal. Amongst the birds there are, I think, three distinct kinds of pheasants, including the *Phasianus Horsfieldii*, about three kinds of partridges, two or three different kinds of quail, woodcock, snipe, the common wood-pigeon, the blue rock, the imperial, and the green pigeon, jungle fowl, larks, thrushes, blackbirds, crows, doves, and sparrows. Amongst birds of prey an occasional eagle will be seen; also vultures, kites, and hawks. The rivers are fairly well stocked with fish, amongst

which mahseer seem pretty plentiful. The Siyins catch the fish with nets, or else by poisoning the stream. They are great hunters, but how they manage to kill elephants and tigers with their wretched guns is a mystery to me.

Musical Instruments.—The only musical instruments I have ever seen or heard in the Siyin district are gongs, drums, and a little pipe made of a hollow bamboo, and capable of producing two or three dismal little notes. But near Tashon-ywama I was presented with a curious instrument. It was made of a small gourd, with eight small hollow bamboos, about eight inches long, fastened into the gourd with beeswax. Four of these pipes sloped at a slight angle outwards, and four of them sloped towards the performer. There were various holes bored in each pipe, and to produce a sound the thumb and fingers of each hand had to cover certain holes; you then blew into the neck of the gourd as hard as your lungs would allow, and one really harmonious but fleeting chord was produced. But the sound was only momentary, for the gourd and pipes let out the air instantaneously; and so great is the effort required to produce the sound, that after two or three prodigious blows the performer has to lie down and rest.

Language.—When I first went to the Chin Hills I found that no European was acquainted with any of the dialects spoken there, and it was rather up-hill work at first learning the Siyin dialect and reducing it to writing. As far as I know none of the tribes possess a written language, and I could only get at the Siyin dialect by means of an intelligent Burman who knew English very well indeed, and a Chin who knew Burmese very well. I claim no great merits for my 'Manual,' for I merely intend it as a stepping-stone for those who come after me, and whose duties lead them to the northern Chin Hills. The Siyin dialect is well understood in the northern Chin Hills, though its proper home is in the villages around Fort White. The dialects of the Kanhows, Nwengals, and other tribes in the northern Chin Hills, differ from that of the Siyins; but, as I say, they all understand Siyin sufficiently for most purposes. The dialects of Haka and Tashon, however, differ very widely from Siyin, as will be seen by comparing the following sentences taken from my book, and from Liout. Macnabb's 'Manual' of the Haka dialect.

	SIYIN.	HAKA.
Which is your eldest son?	<i>Nangmá tapálienbil akwó yim?</i>	<i>Ná fa ä-u pá-byik ä-ho-dä-shi?</i>
It is raining.	<i>Ngó yú hi.</i>	<i>Rwa-pi ä-shür lyo.</i>
How far is Burma from here?	<i>Misunpán Kaulpi akhó- lá yim?</i>	<i>Ma-hin Koi-kwa yë-yä-dä ählat?</i>

At the same time there is a connection between the two, inasmuch as many of the commoner words, such as father, woman, &c., are the same in both dialects. I believe the Siyin dialect would be properly classed

as a monosyllabic language, though one will find agglutinative particles in it. Words that I have spelt as one long word can, I believe, with a few exceptions, be split up into monosyllables, each having its own meaning. Thus, take the word for "eldest son." I have written this as one word, *tapálienbil*, because I think it is easier for a beginner who has to learn where the accent comes in pronouncing a compound word like this. But *tapálienbil* is composed of *tá*=child, *pá*=male, *lien*=big, and *bil*, the sign of the superlative, answering exactly to our *est* in *biggest*. Again, in *anhwinná*=a cooking-pot, the *ná* may be termed an agglutinative particle; *an* means *food*, *hwin* means *to cook*, and *na* is the sign of the agent, or instrument rather, in this case. I can hardly in this paper give a minute description of the language, but I will try and give, as shortly as I can, a brief summary of what will be found at length in my 'Manual.' There is no *r* in the Siyin language, and *f* is only used in one or two words. There is no article, properly so called. Where *a* in English can be translated as definitely meaning one, and one only, the Siyins would then express it by *khat*=one; *the* is expressed by *mishié*=this, or *miashié*=that, when necessary to be explicit.

There is no inflexion of substantives to express case, gender, or number. Masculines are expressed by the suffixes *pá* and *tal*, as *tapá*=a male child, *i.e.*, son, and *kieltal*=a he-goat; feminines by the suffixes *ná* and *pui*, as *tanú*=a female child, *i.e.* a daughter, and *kielpui*=a she-goat. The plural is often not expressed at all; when it is, the suffix *té* is added to the singular, as *khwó*=a village; *khwóté*=villages. Adjectives follow the substantives they qualify, and are not inflected, nor do they undergo any change or addition to express gender or number. Degrees of comparison are expressed by *sáng* . . . *zau* for the comparative, and *bil* for the superlative degree; thus, *anai*=near, *sáng anai zau*=nearer; and *anaibil*=nearest. The pronouns are indeclinable, and the personal and possessive pronouns are the same. The infinitive is the only form of the verb; by using certain words in conjunction with it the tenses are formed. Infinitives end in no particular letter, nor are they of any particular form. The personal pronouns in a shortened form are generally added as pronominal affixes to the infinitive. The personal pronouns and their shortened forms are as follows:—

I=*kémá*; a shortened form used as pronominal prefix, *ka*.

Thou or you=*nómá* and *nangma*; a shortened form used as pronominal prefix, *na*.

He, she, it=*amá*; a shortened form used as pronominal prefix, *a*.

We=*kómá*; a shortened form used as pronominal prefix, *ka*.

They=*amáté*; a shortened form used as pronominal prefix, *a*.

The present tense is formed by adding *hi* or *hí* to the infinitive.

The past tense is formed by adding *yó hi* and *tá hi*.

The continuative past (by which I mean "used to") is formed by adding *té hi* to the infinitive.

To express an action completely finished, or, as the Madrassies would say, "done finish," the words *phayó hi* or *khoun* are added to the infinitive.

The future is expressed by adding *tú hi* or *tú wé* to the infinitive.

The conditional future is expressed by adding *yó tú hi* to the infinitive.

The imperative is expressed by adding *ó* for the singular, and *wó, téé,* or *téun* for the plural.

The following examples will show how the tenses are formed, and how the pronominal affixes are used.

I am throwing a stone = *Kémá súng* (stone) *kasep hi* (*sep* = to throw).

Thou art throwing a stone = *Nangmá súng nasep hi*.

He threw a stone = *Amá súng asep yó hi*.

We used to throw stones = *Kómá súngté kasep té hi*.

They will throw stones = *Amáté súngté asep tú hi*.

Throw a stone = *Súng nasepó*.

The verb *to be* is the word *óm*. If any of my readers are acquainted with Theosophy they will remember the stress Theosophists lay on the meaning of the Sanskrit word *om*, which also signifies *being, existence*, and is believed to have a deeply mystic signification.

In interrogative sentences the words or particles *yim, mó, ngé,* and *né* are placed at the end of the sentence to show that a question is asked.

The potential mood is expressed by the words *yó, zó,* or *thé* = can, or able, added to the infinitive form.

The agent is sometimes defined by the particles *ná* and *pá*.

The passive voice is expressed sometimes by the words *nga(t), dó,* and *khám*, all of which mean to bear, suffer, or endure; they are added to the infinitive. But if possible the sentence is turned; thus, *He will be killed*, would generally be rendered by *Others will kill him*, or *So-and-so will kill him*. Again, *The man was killed by a tree falling on him*, would be expressed thus, *A tree having fallen on that man, he died*.

The idiomatic uses of tenses, verbs, auxiliary endings, &c., cannot of course be treated of in this paper, and really can only be learnt by a careful study of the numerous sentences I have given in the 'Manual.'

The present and past participles are formed thus:—*kap* = to cry; *kakap* = crying; *kapá* = having cried; *ling* = to shiver; *laling* = shivering; *lingá* = having shivered.

There are a large number of adverbs and prepositions.

The simple rules of syntax are:—

1. Adjectives follow the substantives they qualify.
2. There is no distinguishing sign of the possessive case; the object possessed follows the possessor.
3. The dative case is not usually expressed, though sometimes the words *hong* or *hom* are used. *To me* is always expressed by these words, but not so *to you, to him*.

4. The personal pronoun, or the subject of the verb, usually stands first in the sentence.

5. The verb and its auxiliary ending come last, unless the word *not* occurs in the sentence, when *bó* or *bong*=not, comes last. If there is a question asked, the interrogative particle comes last; and if both *not* and an interrogation occur in the sentence, the interrogative particle ends the sentence immediately after *bó* or *bong*=not.

6. Pronouns sometimes follow and sometimes precede the nouns they qualify.

7. Conditional sentences are distinguished by the word *lé*=if, occurring at the end of that portion of the sentence which expresses the condition.

Of course there are many idioms in the Siyin language, but nothing like what there are in Persian and Pashtú.

Being an unwritten language the Siyin vocabulary is not large. I succeeded in getting hold of about seventeen hundred words only, and I doubt much if that number can be largely added to.

Poetry.—The Siyins have many songs, both for grown-up people and for children; and they are great hands at making impromptu songs. In fact, at a wake, marriage, or any festival, the head man is expected to make impromptu verses in honour of the occasion, and the individual who makes the most of these couplets, distiches, &c., is considered the wit of the party. The night before I left the Chin Hills a feast and dance were held to bid me good-bye, and many songs were sung in praise of me; and though I was by no means sorry to be returning once more to civilisation, yet I felt that a bond of union had grown up betwixt these savages and myself which I was in a measure loth to sever. Those who take the interest in them that I could not help taking, will find that there is something in them to admire, and much, very much, to pity.

Major Rundall's Map.—This map is based on the Indian Trans-frontier survey, with additions from route maps made during the recent military operations.