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## JOURNEY FROM AVA TO THE FRONTIER OF ASSAM.

CAPTAIN HANNAY, of the 40th Bengal N.I., commanding the escort of the British Resident at the court of Ava, has made a valuable contribution to the geographical knowledge of the Burman empire obtained by Captains Bedford, Wilcox, and Neufville, and Lieut. Burlton, by a recent journey from Ava up the Irawadi, to the south-east frontier of Assam, and the towns of Bamo and Mogaung, through a part of the country which the jealous vigilance of the Burmese authorities closed against those officers. The origin of the journey, of which an account is given in the April number of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, is as follows. The Bisa and Dupha Gauns are the heads of two clans of Singphos, occupying the northern and southern faces of the mountains which separate Ava and Assam. The former chief is a feudatory dependent of the British, and located at the northern foot of the Patkoi pass leading from Assam to the Húkong valley. Between this chief and the Dupha Gaum a feud had long subsisted, and in 1835, the latter crossed the mountains from the Burmese province of Húkong, entered Bisa, ravaging and plundering the country, and murdering the inhabitants. The circumstance being made known to the British resident at Ava, and by him communicated to the Court, with a demand for inquiry, a deputation was sent to the frontier, and Capt. Hannay was attached to the mission, which consisted of the newly-appointed Governor of Mogaung, and several Burmese officers of inferior rank, with a military escort.

They left Ava on the 22d November 1835, in a fleet of thirty-four boats of various sizes. The country they were to visit had been uniformly closed against strangers; "No foreigners," says Capt. Hannay, "except the Chinese, are allowed to navigate the Irawadí above the choki of Tsampaynago, situated about seventy miles above Ava; and no native of the country even is permitted to proceed above that post, excepting under a special license from the Government. The trade to the north of Ava is entirely in the hands of the Chinese, and the individuals of that nation residing at Ava have always been vigilant in trying to prevent any interference with their monopoly."

The soldiers and boatmen were "sad plunderers." The former are in a miserable state of discipline, and Capt. Hannay remarked, "that whatever a Burman boatman eats in addition to his rice, is generally stolen."

At Kugyih, beyond Amerapura, are said to be some Christian villages. At Yedan, they entered the first rocky defile (*Kyout-dwen*) through which the river directs its course, its width being contracted from one and two and a-half miles, to less than a quarter of a mile. During the rainy season, the velocity of the current is frightfully increased, and the eddies caused by the projecting rocks render the passage dangerous. Large rafts of bambús were frequently met with, descending from the Shúeli river, and upon them small baskets of pickled tea, from the hills south-east of that river; this tea is manufactured by a race called Paleng Paon.

At Yedan Yua, which the party left on the 30th, a perceptible change takes place in the character of the country and river; the latter, from covering an extent of miles, is sometimes confined within a limit of 150 yards, without rapids or torrents, but almost as still as a lake. Its depth in some places is ten fathoms. It winds through beautiful jungle, and has, generally speaking, a rocky bed and banks, which rise to a considerable height, composed of sandstone, which varies from dark to white and yellow.

On the 1st December, the mission arrived at Tsampaynago, the boundary before-mentioned. The thana is on the right bank of the river, and Malémyú, which is close to it, contains about 800 houses, with many handsome gilded temples. The myothagyí, or deputy governor of the town, levies a tax of fifteen ticals per boat on the Chinese coming from Bamo. Mogout and Kyatpen, where some of the finest rubies are obtained, are about thirty or forty miles distant from Tsampaynago, N. 80° E. The mines are described as in a very swampy situation, and surrounded by lofty hills. The principal miners are Kathays or Manípúris, with a few Chinese and Sháns. Momeit, the site of which Buchanan had so much difficulty to determine, is between twenty and thirty miles N. of Mogout and Kyatpen, and forty-five or fifty miles E. of Tagoung. The party now began to feel the cold severely.

Tagoung Myú (lat. 23° 30' N.), which was reached on the 5th December, is said to have been built by a king from Western India, whose descendants afterwards founded the kingdoms of Prome, Pagan, and Ava. The ruins of the place appeared to Capt. Hannay to denote the building of a people different from the present race of Burmas. About a mile to the south of Tagoung are the extensive ruins of Pagan, which stretch as far as the eye can reach; and here Capt. Hannay discovered impressions of Hindu Buddhist images, stamped upon a peculiar kind of brick composition (*terra-cotta*), and with inscriptions which he imagined to be written in some variety of the Devanagari character. The Burmese on the spot were unable to explain their nature or origin, and even an aged priest was unable to decypher them. They were subsequently submitted to some native antiquaries at the capital by Col. Burney, who could not read the characters. Upon forwarding the images to Calcutta, it was found that the character is the same as that on the image of Buddha found in Tirhut, and in other ancient inscriptions, even to the form of the letters, and that the import was the same, the dialect being Magadhi or Pali.\* It is a Buddhist formula, of which a translation by Dr. Mills and M. Csoma de Körös may be seen in our twenty-first volume. The images are figures of Gautama (the countenances being different from Burmese images), and the Burmans connect some traditions with two lines of the inscription. The chronicles record the founding of Tagoung by Abhirája, king of Kappilawot, in Central India, long before the appearance of Gautama. The city was destroyed by the Shans A.D. 1363.

On the left bank of the river, between Henga-myo and Tagoung, the teak tree first appears, and at Kyundoung, on the opposite side, it is said, very large timber is found. The bazar at this place contained fifty shops, which were supplied with British piece goods, as well as articles of country manufacture. There were three Chinese shops. The streets were crowded with people from the interior, amongst whom were several Kadús, a race of different origin from the Burmahs, and who are scattered over the tract of country between this and Mogaung. Yellow and red cotton handkerchiefs of British manufacture sell here for two ticals a-piece, which is about one hundred per cent. above the price at Ava.

To this point of their progress, no diminution in the volume of the Irawadí was perceptible, and the channels proved sufficiently deep for the passage of large boats, from which we may infer that all the principal feeders or affluents which pour their tributary streams into the Irawadí were still further north, and had not yet been reached. The first of any importance noticed is the Shuelí khyoung, on the left bank, the northern branch of which flows from

\* See Col. Burney's paper, in the Journal of the As. Soc. of Bengal for March 1836, p. 157.

the Chinese frontier town of Santa-fú, called by the Burmahs *Mola Santa*, and a southern branch from Momeit, the site of the celebrated ruby mines already noticed: the confluence of these streams is represented as occurring at the village of Laha, about forty miles from the Irawadi. Neither branch can be of any magnitude, for Capt. Hannay remarks, that at the point of junction with the Irawadi, the breadth of the Shuéli is not more than three hundred yards, and that it contained but little water—a satisfactory proof that this stream can have no connexion with the Tsanpo of Thibet.

On the 13th December, the party reached Katha, a town of four hundred houses, on the right bank, whose population appeared to be unusually increased by large parties from the interior, for the purpose of fishing and traffic. Even at this remote spot, there was a “tolerable display” of British piece-goods. A *kyoung*, or monastery—a large wooden building covered with beautiful carved work—is one of the most remarkable objects of the place. The river is here confined by lofty banks, not more than two furlongs apart, but the stream is very deep.

At *Kyouk-gyih*, which the party reached on the 17th, they had fairly entered the remarkable curve in the Irawadi which had been previously represented in all our sketches of the river, and served, in the absence of more accurate information, as a point of reference, generally well known to the Burmahs and Sháns. Here there is a ledge of rocks, over which the stream passes with so great a degree of rapidity, as to render it very difficult of navigation during the rains. The rocks are serpentine, and the sand collected amongst them appeared to be a mixture of small garnets and iron-sand. The right bank of the river, for two miles below *Kyouk-gyih*, is composed of small round stones and sand; and Capt. Hannay was told that the natives wash the soil for gold.

Capt. Hannay experienced, even beyond the sacred line of demarcation, the most friendly and polite attentions from the Burmese authorities; houses were erected at the various stages for his accommodation, differing in no respect from those intended for the *Myo-wún* of Mogaung; presents of provisions were daily made to himself and his followers, and the tedium of the evenings was relieved by a band of singers and dancers, found at almost every town and village. At *Kyouk-gyih*, the civility and attention of the *wún* of *Munyen* were the theme of conversation in the fleet. The house of this liberal *wún* is described as a very neat and comfortable dwelling, with a remarkably clean compound, in which there is a garden laid out with a great deal of taste; and besides many articles of costly Burman household furniture, he had a number of very fine muskets and other fire-arms.

The party were now approaching *Bamo*, and numerous villages denoted the vicinity of this celebrated mart. From *Shuegú Myú to Balet*, a distance of three miles, the houses appeared to extend in an uninterrupted line, and *Kywúndo*, the name of a celebrated island in the river, covered with one hundred pagodas, is most conveniently situated between these towns, the inhabitants of which hold their principal festivals upon it, at particular seasons of the year.

Near this spot is the entrance to the second *kyouk-dwen*, or defile, the scenery of which appears to be very magnificent. “The river passes directly through the hills, which rise perpendicularly on both sides to the height of four hundred feet; they are rocky, and of irregular and singular forms, having at the same time a sufficient number of trees on them to render the scenery very striking. One part of the range, on the right bank, rises as perpendicularly as a wall to the height of five hundred feet, forming a grand and terrific precipice. This *kyouk-dwen* extends for four miles, and the hills which form it are

throughout of a rocky nature. The upper part of them appeared to be sandstone, resting on a base of blue-coloured limestone, mixed with veins of beautiful white marble; and at one spot I saw large masses of compact and foliated primitive limestone, along with calcareous spar in large pieces."

Koun-toung, which the mission reached on the 20th, is said to contain about two hundred houses, and is noted for the defence made by its Burmese garrison against a large invading force of Chinese during the last war between these two nations. A ditch surrounds the town, and the remains of a brick redoubt, loop-holed for arrows or musketry, are still perceptible, encircling a pagoda. The town is defended by a palisade of bambú against the incursions of the Kakhyens, a tribe occupying the hills to the east, whom Capt. Hannay describes as perfect savages in aspect: "Long faces and straight noses, with a very disagreeable expression about the eyes, which was rendered still more so by their lanky black hair being brought over the forehead so as entirely to cover it, and then cut straight across on a line with the eyebrows. These people, though surrounded by Sháns, Burmese, and Chinese, are so totally different from either, that it is difficult to imagine from whence they have had their origin."

They reached the important town of Bamo on the 21st December; but a feeling of jealousy having arisen between the two wúns of Mogaung and Bamo (the latter being inferior in rank), the former resumed his journey on the 22d, which compelled Capt. Hannay to defer his inquiries until his return in April, when he found the people far more communicative than they had ventured to be in the presence of the Mogaung wún.

The conflicting statements of the natives as to the site of Bamo—some affirming that it was on the bank of the Irawadí, others that it was on the left bank of a small stream which flows into the Irawadí, about a mile above the town—are reconciled satisfactorily by Capt. Hannay. It appears that the *modern* town is erected on the left bank of the Irawadí, for the convenience of water-carriage between it and Ava; and that the old Shán town of Manmo, or Bamo, is situated two days' journey up the Tapan river, which falls into the Irawadí about a mile above the new town of Bamo, or Zee-theet-zeit, 'new mart landing-place.' "This modern town," says Capt. Hannay, "is situated on high unequal ground, and the bank towards the river is from forty to fifty feet in height, and composed of clay. With the exception of Ava and Rangún, it is the largest place I have seen in Burmah, and, not excepting these places, I certainly think it the most interesting. The novelty of so large a fleet as ours passing up (and no doubt, having heard that a European officer was of the party) had attracted a great crowd of people to the river side, and on landing, I felt as if I were almost in a civilized land again, when I found myself amongst fair-complexioned people, wearing jackets and trowsers, after being accustomed to the harsh features and party-coloured dress of the Burmans. The people I saw were Chinese, from the province of Yunan, and Sháns, from the Shán provinces subject to China. Bamo is said to contain 1,500 houses; but, including several villages which join it, I should say it contained two thousand at least, two hundred of which are inhabited by Chinese. Besides the permanent population of Bamo, there are always a great number of strangers there, Chinese, Sháns, and Kakhyens, who either come to make purchases or to be hired as workmen. There are also a great number of Assamese both in the town and in the villages immediately connected with it, amongst whom are several members of the Tapan or Assam raja's family. Bamo is the jaghire of the Tapan raja's sister, who is one of the ladies of the King of Ava.

The people in this district live in large comfortable houses, thatched with grass, the walls of reeds. All the villages are surrounded with bambú palisades. The Palongs of the Chinese frontier are good dyers, carpenters, and blacksmiths, and remarkably industrious: all the *dhos*, or swords, used in this part, are made by them. Capt. Hannay received great attention from the Myowún of Bamo, and also from the head Chinese there. The people of Bamo were so strongly impressed with the idea that Capt. Hannay's only object was to find a road by which British troops might penetrate to China, that he found it extremely difficult to obtain any information from them regarding the routes into that country. The Chinese themselves, however, proved more communicative, and from them he learnt the existence of several passes from Bamo into Yunan; but as one of these presents far greater facilities of transit than the others, it is generally adopted for commercial intercourse, and the mode of carrying it on is thus described: "At the distance of two miles\* above Bamo, the mouth of the Taping or Tapan river is situated. The river has a direction N. 70° E. for about two days' journey, when it cuts through the Kakhyen range, and under these hills, old Bamo, or Manmo, is situated. To the latter place the Chinese take their merchandise from modern Bamo by water, and then proceed overland to the chokí or ken of Loailong, near Mowan, which they reach in three days, and from thence to Mounyen or Tengyechew, in the province of Yunan, at which place they arrive in eight or nine days. The road from Bamo to Loailong is through the hills, which are inhabited by Kakhyens and Palongs, after which it passes through the country of the Sháns, called by the Burmans, Kopyi-doung. The road is described as being very good, and quite a thoroughfare. The Tapan Khyoung is not navigable for large boats, in consequence of which the Chinese use two canoes tied together, with a platform over them, for the transport of their merchandise to Manmo, or old Bamo, and for the remainder of the journey it is carried on ponies or mules."

The size of the Tapan Khyoung (which is also called by the Sháns, Numtaping) seems to set at rest the question of its identity with the Tsanpo of Thibet, supposed by M. Klaproth, who calls it, on the authority of Chinese writers, the Pinglangkheang. Capt. Hannay describes the Taping or Tapan as not more than 150 yards broad, and with only sufficient water to float a small boat. The Singphos affirm that it is a branch of the Shueli Khyoung (the Lung-shwuy-kheang of the Chinese), from which it separates above Momein; but this is doubted.

The principal article of trade is cotton; it is entirely in the hands of the Chinese, whose caravans arrive at Bamo in December and January. The greater part of their imports is taken to Ava; they dispose of here copper-pots, carpets, and warm jackets, which are also taken all over the Burmese empire. Five hundred Chinese constantly reside in the town, where they have cotton godowns. They have built a neat temple at Bamo, which Capt. Hannay visited, and was most politely received by the officiating priest. "On entering his house," he says, "he rose to meet me, saluted me in the English fashion, asked me to sit down, and ordered his people to bring me tea; after which he sent a person with me to show me the curiosities of the temple. Most of the figures were carved in wood, and different from what I have generally seen in Chinese temples; one of them represented the Nursing of the Hindus. The Chinese of Bamo, although different from the maritime Chinese, in language

\* In another place it is mentioned as only one mile above Bamo.

and features, have still the same idea of neatness and comfort, and their manners and mode of living appear to be much the same."

Besides the Chinese traders, the Sháns, Palongs, and Singphos under China, are great purchasers of salt, *gnapee* (potted fish), and rice, at this mart. The Sháns, who inhabit the country to the east of Bamo, and are generally designated as Shán Taroup, or Chinese Sháns, are distinguished by their fair complexions and broad, good-tempered faces. They wear turbans and trowsers of light blue cotton cloth; they greatly resemble the Chinese, and from living so near that nation, many of them speak the Yunan-Chinese dialect. The Palongs, though they have a distinct language of their own, speak the Shán. The men, though small in stature, are athletic and remarkably well made. Flat noses and grey eyes are very common amongst them. They wear their hair tied in a knot on the right side of the head, and dress in a turban, jacket, and trowsers, of dark blue cloth. They are a hill people, and live in the tract of country situated between Burmah and China, but those to the east of Bamo pay no revenue to either country, and are governed by their own tsobuas. "The whole of these people," says Capt. Hannay, "pay for every thing they require in silver; and were it not for the restrictions in Burmah on the exportation of silver, I think an intelligent British merchant would find it very profitable to settle at Bamo; as, besides the easy intercourse with China, it is surrounded by industrious tribes, who would, no doubt, soon acquire a taste for British manufactures, which are at present quite unknown to them." The revenue of the district is estimated by Capt. Hannay at three lakhs of rupees per annum; and he adds, "If appearance of comfort may be taken as a proof of its prosperity, the inhabitants of Bamo show it in their dress and houses. I have seen more gold and silver ornaments worn here than in any town in Burmah."

On leaving Bamo, the country became more hilly, and great precautions were taken against the Kakhyens, who inhabit the ranges in the vicinity of the river. The escort was reinforced by 150 Sháns, a remarkably fine set of men, from the banks of the Tapan Khyoung, forming a striking contrast, in dress and appearance, to the miserable escort which had accompanied the party from Ava.

At Thaphan-beng, they entered the third kyook-dwen, from which a beautiful view is obtained of the fertile valley of Bamo, bounded on the east by the Kakhyen hills, which are cultivated to their summits. Serpentine and limestone were the principal rocks in this defile, as well as in the preceding. The river is here in some places not more than eighty yards broad and thirty feet deep, and its rise in the rains is fifty feet above the present level: the defile can then be passed only on rafts.

At Thabyebeng-yúa they found a new race of people called Phwons, who described themselves as having originally come from a country to the north-east, called Motoung Maolong, the precise situation of which could not be ascertained. Their native language, which they speak only in intercourse with each other, differs altogether from the Shán and Burmese, but they have no written character. There appear to be two tribes of this race, distinguished by the Burmahs as the great and small:—the former are found only at Tshenbo and in the vicinity of the third kyook-dwen, while the inferior tribe is scattered all over the country: the only difference apparently between them consists in some trifling varieties in the dialects they speak. Their extensive cultivation proved their agricultural industry, and four Chinese Sháns were constantly employed in manufacturing their implements of husbandry. Their houses were

of a construction totally different from any that had been previously seen, and consisted of a long thatched roof rounded at the ends, and reaching almost to the ground. Inside of this, and at the height of eight or ten feet from the ground, the different apartments are formed, the walls of which are made of mat. The same description of house is built by the Sháns occupying the valley of Kubo.

On the 26th, the fleet reached the most dangerous part of the navigation of the Irawadí, called Paskú, where the stream is confined to a breadth of thirty yards, with nine fathoms depth in the centre. The rocks bore every appearance of fierce volcanic action, varying in colour from brown, yellow, red, and green, to shining jet black. The strata also presented a scene of great confusion, some being vertical, some horizontal, and others twisted; "the whole having exactly the appearance of having been poured out from a furnace."

The navigation of the Irawadí river up to this point had been unmarked by difficulties of any magnitude, and, with the exception of the passes through the kyouk-dwens, the channel appears to have afforded, even at that season of the year, an abundant supply of water for the largest class of boats, which ply between Ava and Bamo: above the village of Nanihet, however, they first met a succession of rapids, extending for a mile and a-half, which were even then considered dangerous; and Capt. Hannay remarks, that he had seldom seen, in the worst season, and worst part of the Ganges, a stronger current, or more turbulent water, than at the rapids of Shuégyain-man, a short distance above the village of Namhet.

At Tshenbo, ten miles below the mouth of the Mogaung river, the boats were exchanged for smaller ones, better adapted for so small and tortuous a river as that of Mogaung. There, too, Capt. Hannay was visited by the head-priest, who was eagerly curious to obtain some knowledge of European customs and habits, and who informed him that Tshenbo was formerly a principal city of the Phwon tribe, who were dispossessed of it by the Burmahs about sixty years ago.

The mouth of the Mogaung river Capt. Hannay ascertained by observation to be in latitude  $24^{\circ} 56' 53''$ . Here they were to quit the Irawadí, which, says, Capt. Hannay, "is still a fine river, flowing in a reach from the eastward, half a mile broad, at the rate of two miles an hour, and with a depth varying from three fathoms in the centre to two at the edge."

The Mogaung river, on which the town of the same name is situated, is not more than one hundred yards wide, and the navigation is impeded by a succession of rapids over which the stream rushes with considerable velocity. The river is difficult and dangerous in other parts, owing to rocks and rapids, and one boat was upset, and a man drowned. The Phwons and Sháns overcome these difficulties better than the Burmah and Kathay boatmen. The banks of the river were covered with a dense and impervious jungle, which extended nearly the whole way to Mogaung. After passing the last rapids at Tapoh, the river expands in breadth to two hundred yards; the stream flows with a gentle current, and "the bed is composed of round stones, which are mostly quartz. Amongst them, however, there are found massive pieces of pure crystal stone, partaking of the nature of talc, and also pieces of indurated clay of different colours. The banks are alluvial on the surface, but towards the base and near the edge of the river the soil becomes gravelly, and in some places has a stratum of beautiful bright yellow-coloured clay intersecting it."

On the 5th January 1836, the party disembarked at Mogaung, and the new Myo-wún was installed in his office; he and Capt. Hannay proceeded hand-in-



hand through a street of Burman soldiers, from the landing-place to the Myo-wún's house, nearly a mile, preceded by people carrying spears, gilt chattas, &c., and chaunting their praises, the women bearing offerings of flowers. A system of unsparing taxation was immediately commenced by the Myo-wún, to enable him to pay his appointment, the enforcement of which created much discontent. A rapid succession of governors, all influenced by the same principle of extortion, had reduced the inhabitants of Mogaung to poverty and distress.

The town of Mogaung is situated at the junction of the Namyeeen or Namyang and the Mogaung or Numkong rivers, and extends about a mile from east to west along the latter, the west end of the town being bounded by the Namyeeen, which comes from the district of Momyeeen, S. 43° W. The town, which is within a ruined stockade, and the houses and villages without, do not consist of more than three hundred houses. Those within the stockade are inhabited by Sháns; those outside by Burmans, Phwons, Assamese, and a few Chinese, who derive a profit from their countrymen who come annually to purchase serpentine. Among them are blacksmiths and carpenters. "If it were not for the Chinese," says Capt. Hannay, "whose quarter of the town looks business-like and comfortable, I should say that Mogaung is decidedly the poorest-looking town I have ever seen since leaving Ava." The paucity of inhabitants and poverty of the town plainly indicated the absence of extensive trade, and Capt. Hannay learnt that, including the profits derived from the sale of serpentine, the revenues of the town and neighbouring villages did not amount to more than Rs. 30,000 per annum, and the Burmah authorities can only enforce the payment of tribute from the Sháns of Khanti, and the Singphos of Payendwen, by the presence of an armed force. In their last attempt on the latter, a Burmah force of one thousand men was detached from Mogaung, of whom nine hundred were destroyed; and for ten years they had been held in salutary dread by the Burmah governors of the frontier. During his stay at Mogaung, Capt. H. obtained specimens of the green mineral so highly valued by the Chinese for its supposed virtues, and called by them *yu* or *yuesh*,\* and by the Burmese *kyouk-tsein*. It is brought from a spot five marches to the north-west of Mogaung; an inferior quality is found in other parts of the country. Serpentine and limestone are the prevailing formations of the base of the highest ranges of hills throughout this part of the country. Steatite is also abundant in the bed of the Irawadí below the valley of Khanti.

One very important object of Capt. Hannay's mission was to cross the Patkoi mountains into Assam, and on his arrival at Mogaung he made arrangements for the journey, but soon found that the authority of the Court of Ava, unenforced by a large body of troops, was held in contempt by these hardy mountaineers, and he was compelled to relinquish the object. It was not without repeated remonstrances and threats of returning to Ava, that the wún of Mogaung would allow him to proceed to the Húkong valley and the amber mines.

Capt. Hannay commenced the march, with the Myo-wún and an undisciplined rabble of eight hundred men, each man occupying a space of six feet, being obliged to carry a banghy containing his provisions, cooking-pots, &c., besides his musket, which was tied to the banghy-stick: so that they were at the mercy of any sudden assailants. The tract of country, during the first two days' march, was hilly, abounding with fine forest trees: it afterwards became more open. The principal rivers flowed from the Shuedoung-gyí range of hills on

\* So Capt. Hannay writes it; but it should be written *yu-shih*, 'yu-stonc.'

the east of their route, and were at this season (January) mere mountain torrents. The whole route from Mogaung to the Húkong valley generally passes between defiles, bounded by the inferior spurs of the Shuédong-gyí range on the east, and numerous irregular hills on the west. The only traces of inhabitants, were a few Kukhyen villages and scattered huts. At Tsadozout, an island in the bed of the Mogaung river, the finest lemon and citron trees were seen, and the tea-plant was very plentiful: the leaf is large, and resembles that sold in Ava as pickled tea; the soil, in which it grew most luxuriantly, is described as "a reddish-coloured clay." At this place, they crossed the Mogaung river for the last time, where it is a mere hill-stream, the bed composed of rolled pieces of sienite and serpentine, with scales of mica in it.

About four miles from Tsadozout, the road passes over a hilly tract, which seems to run across from the hills on the east to those of the west, and is called by the natives, Tsambú-toung (the Mount Samú of the maps); it evidently forms the southern limit of the Húkong valley, and is covered with noble trees, and the tea-plant is plentiful on it.

In eight days from their departure, they encamped on the left bank of the Edikhyoung, about three furlongs from Meinkhwon, or Múngkhúm, the capital of the Húkong valley, where they were obliged to halt for some days, as the men were worn out with fatigue. This interval Capt. Hannay employed in collecting information regarding the valley, which possesses great geographical interest, as the site of the Payendwen, or amber-mines, and as being supposed, at no very remote era, to have formed the bed of an Alpine lake.

"The valley of Húkong or Payendwen," says Capt. Hannay, "is an extensive plain, bounded on all sides by hills; its extent from east to north-west being at least fifty miles, and varying in breadth from forty-five to fifteen miles, the broadest part being to the east. The hills bounding the valley to the east are a continuation of the Shuédong-gyí range, which is high, commences at Mogaung, and seems to run in a direction of N. 15 E." The principal river of the valley is the Numtunae or Khyendwen, which flows from the Shuédong-gyí range, and after receiving the contributions of numerous small streams, quits the valley at its north-western corner, and again enters the defiles of the hills, beyond which its course is no longer perceptible. On the western side of the valley there are but few villages, and these thinly inhabited, the capital itself containing not more than thirty houses; but the north and eastern sides are said to be very populous, the houses in those quarters being estimated at not less than three thousand, nearly all of which are situated on the banks of the Towang and Debee rivers. All the low hills stretching from the western foot of the Shuédong range were under cultivation, and the population is said to extend across to the banks of the Irawadi, in numbers sufficient to enable the Singphos, when necessary, to assemble a force of nine or ten thousand men." Meinkhwon, the capital, is peopled by Sháns; the rest of the inhabitants of the valley are Singphos, and their Assamese slaves. Formerly, the population was entirely Shán, and previous to the invasion of Assam by the Burmese, the town of Meinkhwon contained 1,500 houses, and was governed by the chief of Mogaung. From that period, the exactions of the Burmese officers have led to extensive emigration, and to avoid the oppression to which they were hourly exposed, the Sháns have sought an asylum in the remote glens and valleys on the banks of the Khyendwen, and the Singphos among the recesses of the mountains at the eastern extremity of the valley. This state of affairs has led to general anarchy, and feuds are constantly arising between

the different tribes, which the quarrel of the Bcesa and Dupha Gaums has greatly contributed to exasperate.

The principal mineral productions of the valley are salt, gold, and amber. Gold is found in most of the rivers, both in grains and pieces the size of a pea. Specimens of coal were seen by Capt. Hannay in the beds of two of the rivers. The only traffic of any consequence carried on in this valley is with the amber, which the Singphos sell to a few Chinese, Chinese Sháns, and Chinese Singphos, who find their way here annually. The price of the common or mixed amber is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ticals a vis, or four rupees per one and a-half seer : but the best kind, and what is fit for ornaments, is expensive, varying in price according to its colour and transparency. The Chinese either pay for the amber in silver, or exchange warm jackets, carpets, straw hats, copper pots, and opium. A few individuals from the Burman territories likewise come here, with cloths of their own manufacture, and also a small quantity of British piece-goods for sale; but as they are obliged on their way hither to pass through the country of the most uncivilized of the Kakhyen tribes, they seldom venture to come. The greatest part, therefore, of British and Burman manufactures which are used in this valley, are brought from Mogaung by Singpho merchants. The prices of British piece-goods (bought at Ava) at Meinkhwon were as follows: common book-muslin, used as head-dresses, Rs. 14 each; coarse broad cloth, used as shawls,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  yards long, Rs. 18 each; good cotton handkerchiefs, Rs. 4 a pair; coarse ones, Rs.  $2\frac{1}{2}$  a pair. The merchants who come here from the Burman territories are natives of Yo. The dress worn by the Singphos of this valley is similar to that of the Sháns and Burmans of Mogaung; but they frequently wear jackets of red camlet, or different velvets, which they ornament with buttons, and those who can afford it wear a broad-cloth shawl. The arms in common use amongst them are the dhú (or short sword) and spear. The women wear neat jackets of dark coarse cotton cloth, and their *thamines* or petticoats are full, and fastened round the waist with a band, being altogether a much more modest dress than that worn by the Burman women. Those who are married wear their hair tied on the crown of the head, like the men, but the younger ones wear theirs tied close to the back of the neck, and fastened with silver pins—both married and single wear white muslin turbans. The ornaments generally worn by them are amber ear-rings, silver bracelets, and necklaces of beads, a good deal resembling coral, but of a yellowish colour, and these are so much prized by them, that they sell here for their weight in gold.

During his stay at Húkong, Capt. Hannay learnt from many Singphos from the borders of China, that the Sginmaekha river (mentioned by Capt. Wilcox\*) rises in the mountains bounding the plain of Khanti to the north, and it is enclosed on the east by the Goulang-sigong mountains, which they consider the boundary between Burmah and China; and that this river is not navigable even for canoes. In this district, gold is very plentiful.

The principal routes of communication between Húkong and the countries around appear to be, one leading across the Shuédong-gyí range to the eastern Singphos; a second winds round the base of the Lye-gnep-bhúm mountain, and leads in sixteen days to Múnglang, the capital of the Kanti country; but the most important, with reference to trade, lies in a south-east direction from the Húkong valley, from which the district of Kakyo-wainmo is not more than eight days' march distant. By this route the Chinese frequently travel, and it affords a very satisfactory proof that intercourse may be held

\* *As. Res.*, vol. xvii. p. 463.

direct with China, without the necessity of following the circuitous route by Mogaung.

The Khantis, or Khumptis, are represented as a fine, brave, and hardy race of men, and are held in great apprehension by the Burmahs, who, about three years ago, attempted to raise revenue amongst them: the force detached on this duty, however, met with such determined resistance, that it was compelled to return, and no subsequent attempt has been made on their independence. They are in constant communication with the Khunúngs, a wild tribe inhabiting the mountains to the north and east, from whom they procure silver and iron. "The former is found in a mine, said to be situated on the northern side of the mountains, to the north-east of Khanti." All the information Capt. Hannay could obtain led him to suppose that this mine was worked by people subject to China, and from the description given, he thinks they are lamas, or people of Thibet. The part of the Chinese territories north-east of Khanti is known at Húkong by the name of Múngfan, and the Khantis have no communication with it but through the Khunúngs.

On the 21st March, Capt. Hannay visited the amber-mines, and has given the first description of their locality. The hills in which they are situated are three miles from Meingkhwon, in a direction S. 25° W. The last mile is through a grass jungle; after which there is an ascent of one hundred feet, where, in a sort of temple, the natives visiting the mines make offerings to the spirits (*ngats*). About one hundred yards from this place, the marks of pits, where amber had been formerly dug, are visible; but this side of the hill is now deserted, and the amber is dug three miles further, the whole intervening tract being a succession of small hillocks, on which the tea-plant is plentiful. The soil is a reddish and yellow-coloured clay, and the earth in those pits, which had been for some time exposed to the air, had a smell of coal tar; whilst in those which had been recently opened, the soil had a fine aromatic smell. The pits vary from six to fifteen feet in depth, being, generally speaking, three feet square, and the soil is so stiff that it does not require propping up. The pits were ten in number; the people digging were a few Singphos; their only implements a bambú sharpened at one end, and a small wooden shovel. Capt. Hannay did not see a piece of amber worth having. He has no doubt that his being accompanied by Burmese officers caused the people to secrete all the good amber they had found. He was told that the deeper the pits were dug, the finer the amber; and that that kind which is of a bright pale yellow, is only got at the depth of forty feet.

All expectation of prosecuting the journey into Assam being relinquished, the Dupha Gaum having voluntarily come into the camp at Meingkhwon, where the redoubtable chief was received by the Burman governor with a civility and distinction extorted by apprehension, the Myo-wún began to think of returning to Mogaung. On the 1st April, the ceremony was performed of swearing-in the different tsobuas (tributary chiefs) to keep the peace (this was by swallowing the ashes of the paper on which the oath was written, mixed with water), which was a virtual acknowledgment of their subjection to the kingdom of Ava; and on the 5th, the new governor, having raised by every art of extortion as large a sum as possible from the people of the valley and surrounding hills, returned towards Mogaung. Capt. Hannay left Meingkhwon, on his return to Ava, with a very favourable impression of the Singphos he had seen, who appear to possess great capabilities of improvement, and whose worst qualities are represented as the natural result of the oppressive system of government under which they live. One of their chieftains, in

conversation with Capt. Hannay, furnished a clue to the estimation in which they held the paramount authorities around them by the following remark. "The British," he said, "are honourable, and so are the Chinese. Among the Burmans you might possibly find one in a hundred, who, if well paid, would do justice to those under him. The Sháns of Mogaung," he added, "are the dogs of the Burmans, and the Assamese are worse than either, being the most dangerous back-biting race in existence."

On his return to Mogaung, he had an opportunity of acquiring further information respecting the serpentine mines. He found boats laden with masses of the stone, so large as to require three men to lift them. The owners were respectable Chinese Musulmans, who were extremely civil, and readily answered all his inquiries. At particular seasons of the year, there are about a thousand men employed in digging for serpentine; they are Burmahs, Sháns, Chinese Sháns, and Singphos. These people each pay a quarter of a tical a month for being allowed to dig at the mines, and the produce of their labour is considered their own.

"The Chinese who come for the serpentine, on their arrival at Mogaung, each pay a tax of from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ticals of silver, for permission to proceed to the mines, and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ticals a month during their stay there. Another duty is levied on the boats or ponies employed in carrying away the serpentine, but this tax varies according to circumstances; and on the return of the Chinese to Mogaung, the serpentine is appraised, and a tax of ten per cent. taken on its value. The last duty levied is a quarter of a tical from every individual on his arrival at the village of Tapo, and there the Chinese deliver up all the certificates they have had, granting them permission to proceed to the mines."

On the 9th of April, no intelligence having been received of the messengers sent into Assam, Capt. Hannay determined to return to Ava, and, embarking on a small boat, he reached Bamo in eight days, and arrived at Ava on the 1st of May. The time occupied in returning from Meingkhwon to Ava was only eighteen days, while the journey to that frontier post was not completed in less than forty-six of actual travelling—a very striking proof of the extreme difficulty of estimating the distance between remote points, by the number of days occupied in passing from one to the other, unless the circumstances under which the journey was made are particularly described.

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#### HINDU MUSIC.

PERHAPS there is no amusement in which both Mohamedans and Hindus so much delight as in music. It accompanies all the festivals of the latter, all their processions, whether solemn or gay, many of their religious ceremonies, and is almost every where daily resorted to, as an evening recreation for the social circle. Live where you may in India, if it be within the vicinity of a hamlet or even of a single hut, you are perpetually stunned with the clash and clangor of cymbals, trumpets, drums, together with the din of numerous other instruments, as various in form as in power. The great charm of their blended harmonies, to the ravished Indian, seems to be in proportion to the quantity and not the quality of sound. It is quite astonishing to see the extraordinary excitement often produced in the usually phlegmatic Hindu, by that harsh minstrelsy, which he is accustomed to think the perfection of melody. The effect is electrical. His eyes, which were before relaxed into a languid expression of half-consciousness, become suddenly kindled with a blaze of enthusiasm.\*

\* From the *Oriental Annual* for 1839.