

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Hydrography of South-eastern Tibet: the Dibong River.

SADIYA, 6th May, 1889.

I have only just read General Walker's paper, published in the 'Proceedings' of the Royal Geographical Society for September 1888, or I would, undoubtedly, have noticed earlier what he has said regarding the identity of the Kenpu and Dibong.

Being aware that some geographers at home assume that the source of the Dibong lies *very far* to the northward of this place, I have lost no opportunity, during the six years I have been stationed at Sadiya, of making very careful inquiries about the subject, and I am convinced that this theory is incorrect.

I am personally acquainted with dozens of Mishmis (Chulikattas, Bebejias) residing at different spots on the Dibong (beyond the gorge at Nizamghat), who have repeatedly assured me that they pass in close proximity to its source every time they visit the Tibetan town of Álüpó, which lies on the northern slope of a high range (Himalayas) separating their country from Tibet. This range is known to the Mishmis (in the vicinity where they cross it) as Taséni, and from it the Dibong takes its rise. Taséni can be reached in eleven marches from Nizamghat. They are as follows:—

Nizamghat to Angólí.		
Ángólí	„	Kalidoí village.
Kalidoí	„	Endólí. <i>Note.</i> —The <i>n</i> is silent in Mishmi.
Endólí	„	Étání.
Étání	„	Áhonlí.
Áhonlí	„	Chípá.
Chípá	„	Chéalf.
Chéalf	„	Báthéní.
Báthéní	„	Lámá.
Lámá	„	Ééndon.
Ééndon	„	Táséni mountain } At this spot the Dibong is only ankle-deep.

The route lies all the way alongside of, or in close proximity to, the Dibong. The Dibong then may be said to have a course of about 130, or, at most, 140 miles from its source to the gorge at Nizamghat, and the distance from that spot to the one where its discharge is said to have been measured is about 36 or 40 miles.

I may add that I am in hopes of being able, some day, to trace the Dibong to its source. I solicited permission to do so this year, but, unfortunately, our relations with the tribe of Mishmis, through whose country I should have to travel, have been so strained for some time past that the Chief Commissioner considered it prudent to refuse my request.

Before concluding this note, I feel bound to make the following remarks anent Colonel Tanner's account of the lower course of the Yaro Tsanpo alluded to by General Walker in his paper under notice.

I have very recently seen K. P., and having had an opportunity of closely questioning him (in the presence of some Abor head men who know the whole of the country well from this to a place called Simong), I am convinced that he did *not* descend the river Dibong, for *any distance*, south of Gia la Sindong. In the first place there is no Abor village called Miri Padam. The Abors proper call themselves Padams, but their territory is several days' journey to the eastward of the Dibong. It is quite possible that K. P. heard of these people from those he was amongst. In cross-examination K. P. was asked if he had been to Simong, the

capital of the tribe, lying north-west of the Abors proper (i. e. the Padams), and he said yes ; on being asked to describe the place, he said the village is on a very high hill and close to the Dibong, whereas, as a fact, Simong is not on any hill and is a long way from the Dibong. He was then asked what food the people ate, and replied rice, whereas little or no rice is grown there. The people live on a kind of grain which is grown between stones, and any one having been there could not have helped noticing this fact.

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Obituary.

Major E. A. de Cosson.—We much regret to announce the death, on the 5th of June, of Major de Cosson, at the early age of 39, at his residence, Southfield House, Frome, Somerset. He was descended from an ancient French family, established in the south of France until the Revolution, when his grandfather emigrated, serving first in the army of the Princes and then in the Hompesch regiment of Hussars, which becoming the 10th Hussars in the British army, he came with it to England. In 1873 Major de Cosson, after wintering in Egypt, started for Suakin with his brother, the intention of the travellers being to seek for sport in the country described in Sir Samuel Baker's 'Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia,' but meeting on the way with General Kirkham, of the Abyssinian army, who was returning with a letter from Queen Victoria to King John of Abyssinia, they decided on visiting that monarch and his country. They visited Adowa, Gondar, and Lake Tsana, near which they found King John established with his army.

Major de Cosson obtained from the "King of Kings" a written promise to the British Government that he would endeavour to stop the slave trade in his kingdom.

Major de Cosson's military duties recalling him in haste to England, he rode with one Egyptian servant to Khartum, and thence across the desert to Suakin, enduring considerable hardships on the way. His brother returned by a slower route through the interior of Abyssinia to Massowah. Major de Cosson published an account of his journey in a book entitled 'The Cradle of the Blue Nile.'

The special knowledge of the desert route from Suakin to Khartum gained on this journey, caused Major de Cosson to place himself in communication with the War Office when the relief of Gordon was decided on, and he strenuously advocated the choice of the Suakin-Berber route to Khartoum.

When the Suakin expedition was decided on in 1885, Major de Cosson, who was in the reserve of officers, volunteered for active service, and was attached to Sir Gerald Graham's field force at Suakin in command of the water transport.

He was present at the Battle of Tofrek (M'Neil's zereba), where his horse was shot under him. He was mentioned in despatches, and gazetted Major on his return from the Egyptian campaign.

He published an account of this expedition in a work entitled, 'Days and Nights of Service.' He also contributed occasional articles on Egypt and Abyssinia to the reviews, and in March of last year read a paper on 'Land and Water Transport in the Soudan and on the Nile,' at the Royal United Service Institution.

The deceased gentleman was married on March 11th, 1879, at Weymouth, to Eliza, daughter of George Morant, Esq., late of the Grenadier Guards. He had been a Fellow of our Society since 1873.