

Memorandum on the countries between Thibet, Yunán and Burmah.

—By the VERY REVEREND THOMINE D'MAZURE, *Vicar Apostolic of Thibet*; communicated by Lieut.-Colonel A. P. PHAYRE, *Commissioner of Pegu*; (with notes and a comment by Lt.-Col. H. YULE, *Bengal Engineers*). With a Map of the N. E. FRONTIER prepared in the office of the *Surv.-Genl. of India, Calcutta, August, 1861.*

The following account of the countries situated between Thibet, the Chinese provinces of Setchuen and Yunán, and the Northern portion of Burmah, is contained in a letter written by the Very Reverend Thomine D'Mazure, Vicar Apostolic of Thibet, residing in the valley of Bonga in about 28° 15' of North Latitude and 96° 30'* of East Longitude.

The country is under the government of Hlassa. The letter is addressed to the Right Reverend Bishop Bigandet, Bishop and Vicar Apostolic in Pegu and Ava.

The Vicar Apostolic of Thibet considers that the Tsanpo river of that country, or as he writes it, Gakbo-dzanbo,† is the upper course of the Irawadi river. Bishop Bigandet's communication, addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel A. P. Phayre, is as follows.

'Rangoon, 15th September, 1860. I have the pleasure to communicate to you the following remarks on the geographical situation of the countries between Thibet, the Chinese Province of Setchuen and a portion of Yunán and Burmah, as well as on the tribes inhabiting them, which have been supplied, at my request, by the Vicar Apostolic of Thibet. On my return from Bhamo in 1857, I felt very anxious to ascertain whether it would be possible to establish a communication between the Missionaries established in those localities and ourselves. The distance between Bhamo in Burma and the Valley of Bonga where our Missionaries have a small establishment, could not be more, in my estimation, than 4° or 4° 25' of North Latitude, and I wished to be informed as correctly as possible on the geographical position of Bonga, the names of the principal rivers, mountains, and

* This is probably Paris longitude. Otherwise it is an impossible position. It does not appear whence it is derived. The letter does not mention the supposed longitude of Bonga.—Y.

† This should be "Yarkiou dzanbo." The Gakbo he describes as a tributary only of the other.—Y.

tribes of those parts. Agreeably to my demand, the following details have been forwarded to me and received here about three months ago. The letter is dated 9th August, 1859,* and runs as follows:

“DEAR MONSEIGNEUR.

“I need hardly state that the items of information respecting the position of places are not based on geometrical mensuration, or astronomical observations. They have been collected on the spot from personal observation, and from the reports supplied by natives of various nations and tribes.

I. “Relying upon the Map of Andriveau Goujon, Paris, 1841, the main chain of the Himalaya is supposed to end in the Province called Khana Deba,† by the 27° and 28° of North Lat. and the 96°‡ of (Paris) Long.

II. “From probable, but not positive, calculations that I have made, as well as from the particulars I have been able to collect, the Chinese towns of Longtchang-fou,§ Teniné tchou,|| ought to be placed one degree and a half farther in an eastern direction, and the distance between the Irrawaddy and the Louts Kiang ought to be nearly double that which is indicated on the said Map.¶

III. “On the same map Tsatsorken (in Thibetan Tsarong),* and the tributary of the Louts Kiang are marked too low in a southern direction. The great bending of the two rivers Louts Kiang and Lantsan Kiang seems to begin above the 28° of Latitude. Bonga, our small establishment, is in one of the valleys of the range of mountains that separate those two rivers, near to the left bank of the Louts Kiang, and not far from the beginning of the bending from N. W. to S. E. in about 28° 15' N. Lat.

* Therefore about ten months on the way.—Y.

† Khana Deba is the name given by Wilcox's informants to a Tibetan chief near the sources of the Brahmaputra. It is derived from Wilcox by the French geographers.—Y.

‡ Add 2° 20' for Greenwich = 98° 20', which agrees pretty well with Wilcox's Map.

§ Should be Yong-chang-foo probably, but may be Loung-chouan-foo the Mowun of the Burmese.—Y.

|| Theng-ye-choo of the Maps, the Momien of the Burmese.—Y.

¶ The Vicar is doubtless forced to this conclusion by the wrong position given to the Irawadi on his maps. In compiling my map of Burma I was compelled to take an opposite view and to move these places and the Chinese-Burman frontier to the westward. See *Mission to Ava*, pp. 266.—Y.

† Tsatsorgang in Klaproth's map is in Lat. 30° 18', Long. Paris 95° 54' = Gr. 98° 14'. In D'Anville its latitude is 28° 20'. All the latitudes in D'Anville's maps hereabouts are greatly too low, as our knowledge of Assam demonstrates.—Y.

IV. "That country is the south-easternmost limit of the possessions directly subjected to the government of Hlassa. There begins the country called Lokatra by the Thibetans. Lokatra means the *southern tatoed people*. Lokapatra has nearly the same meaning: Kapa means lips.* This last name which the Rev. Mr. Fage never heard mentioned by the Thibetans may be likewise correct, because some of the wild tribes, both men and women, tatoo the lips and chin so as to resemble a beard. This same country is called Loke Patchan by the Chinese.† South of Bonga the tribe of the Louts is met with, and they occupy all the western country as far as that part of the Himalaya where in the maps the Mishmis are located.

V. "In that extent of territory west of the Louts Kiang at a distance of about 30 miles, is to be met a range of high mountains. On the west of that range, is a river rather inconsiderable called Kouts Kiang or Schété Kiang (both names are used by the Chinese). When it enters the Province of Yunan, it is known under the name of Lountchang Kiang, flows east of Teniné, and joins the Irrawaddy below Bhamo.‡ Between the Kouts Kiang and another considerable river that flows in the Irrawaddy, there are several ranges of mountains, the general direction whereof is from south to north. That river is named in the maps Gakbo Dzanbo. Its course through Thibet appears to be very different from what has hitherto been supposed. Its junction with the Irrawaddy must be placed somewhat more in the south. That§ called by the Chinese Kanpoo-tsangbo, is named by the people of Bonga, Dzain, because it flows through the sub-pre-fecture of that name. In that district, according to the Thibetans, is

* This no doubt refers to a passage in Father Giorgi's *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, p. 423, where describing the province of Tak-po which is that to the east of Jigatze (or Teshoo Loombo of our maps), he says it is bounded on the south by the *Lhokaha-patra* or the "Southern Cut-mouths" "quod populi hi meridionales labia gerunt incisa."—Y.

† Klaproth has got the Hlokba or Hlokabadja north of Burmah near the Irawadi, but probably transferred from the Himalaya far to the west, to meet his theories.—Y.

‡ This must be the Shoay-lee of the Burmese, which empties its water in the Irrawaddy about 55 miles south of Bhamo. On leaving the Province of Yunán the Shoay lee flows through mountainous districts, inhabited by Shans, winds through a very extensive flat country in a south-western direction, and finally joins the great river of Burmah. At its mouth, there is an island upon which is a small village called Shoay-lee-wa-youn.—*Note by Bishop Bigandet.*

§ I have no doubt this should be "*this river*"—i. e. the Gakbo-dzanbo of the maps.—Y.

the village of Samé where our two priests MM. Krick and Boury were murdered.

VI. "To me there is not the least doubt, that the great river that flows through the whole length of Thibet, marked on the maps Yarou dzanbo, called by the Chinese Ia-lou-tsang-pou, and by the Thibetans, Yar-Kiou-tsangbo, is the Irrawaddy. I believe that its bending must be brought more to the east. This would agree better with the observations made by the English on the tributaries of the Brahmaputra. The latter cannot possibly be the Yar-Kiou-tsangbo.

VII. "Here is the general aspect of this country ; three principal rivers, the Irrawaddy, with its tributary the Kan-pou-kiang, the Kouts-Kiang, and the Louts-Kiang. These rivers are divided or separated by four principal ranges of mountains. The 1st range is formed by the last and easterly range of the Himalaya, west of the Irrawaddy ; the 2nd lies between the Irrawaddy and the Kouts-Kiang ; the 3rd between the Kouts-Kiang and the Louts-Kiang and the 4th between the latter river and the Lantsang-Kiang. The two first ranges appear to lower their heads beyond the 28° of North latitude owing to the great elevation of the soil in Thibet. The only range well known to our priests is the one near their settlement. Two spurs of that range that are north and south of their habitation are called Dokerla and Dokela.* The latter is visited by innumerable pilgrims from all parts of Thibet, who come to worship the Spirit Kaoua Kerbo, that is to say, the white snow. It takes 7 days of hard travelling, to go from the Louts-kiang, to Kan-pou-kiang, or river of Dzain. The distance in a straight line is very short, but in countries like these, where there is nothing but ascending and descending, the direct distance gone over during one day is very small. East of that extent of territory lies the district called Tsarong, ending at the summit of the chain of the Dokerla, separating the rivers Louts and Lantsang. West of that same district, near to the Irrawaddy,† and close to the Himalaya, is the district of Dzain, where is the village of Samé two days distant from Oua.‡ the last Thibetan village in

* There is a range of snowy mountains called Douk-la Gangri in Klaproth's map, but near the Gakbo, and considerably west of the supposed position of Bonga.—Y.

† For Irawadi read Tsanpo, which he assumes to be the same.—Y.

‡ There is a village called Wa-loung near Samé in Wilcox's map of the upper Brahmaputra.—Y.

the direction of the Mishmis. Between the two above mentioned districts are the pastures of Dromba where are the sources of the Kouts-Kiang.

“All that country, which forms a part of the prefecture of Sang-Nga-Kien-dzong,* is purely Thibetan. All that lies south of it is peopled with savages formerly paying tribute to Thibet. The limits between the territories of each tribe are generally, according to the custom of the country, the summits of high ranges, impassable on account of the snow during the greatest part of the year. They ordinarily live on the banks of rivers which are to them the best and safest highways.

VIII. “For the names of those wild tribes, known under the general appellation of Lokatra, and the districts they inhabit, I am chiefly indebted to our boys, purchased at Bonga, most of whom belong to those tribes.

The Louts }
Lisou } Chinese names.

Terong.

Renney pang.

Dedze.

Anampae.

Metious.

Dabou dam.

Pang dang.

Lam bem.

Damra.

Kabing.

Mooua.

Apo.

Mandeing.

Telou.

“It is difficult to determine the position of the localities occupied by thoses various tribes: what will be stated on his subject, requires more accurate information. It is the result of the reports made by individuals belonging to those various tribes. Persons

* Sangak-tehoui-dzong is in Klaproth's map, near the sources of the Chodteng chiu, which may be the Kouts Kiang of the Vicar, and very possibly similar in pronunciation, for the relations between Thibetan spelling and pronunciation appear to be complicated.—Y.

acquainted with the loose and always incoherent and disconnected statements made by savages on every subject of inquiry will readily understand how cautious one must be in giving belief to their sayings.

“*Louts or Anong*.—It is certain that below Bonga the valley of the Louts Kiang is occupied by the Louts* (Chinese name) who in their language are called Anong, and in that of Thibet Guia, on an extent of four or five days' journey. They are of a weak temper. They pay tribute both to the Thibetans and Chinese.

“*Lisou*.—The Lisou† occupy the same valley, as far as Yunán. They are said to be of very wicked dispositions.

“*Terong*.—South of the Dromba pastures the first population to be met with on the banks of the Kouts-Kiang, are the Derong, called, in Chinese Kuts, in Thibetan, Kiang or Kiong, and sometimes Tsong, and oftener Bain. Hence in Thibetan the Kouts Kiang is often called Bain Kioung, and by the natives Terong Ouang. In Chinese Kiang means river, which is translated Kiong by the Thibetans, meaning *water*, and Ouang in the native language has the same meaning.

“The Terong are separated from the Louts by one range of mountains. It is one of the most numerous tribes. Up to this the indications are tolerably correct, but the farther we move from Tsarong the less are they to be relied upon.

“*Renney-pang*.—Proceeding in a south-western direction, close to the Terong, are the Renney-pang. In that locality the Kouts-Kiang can scarcely be forded, but is crossed on rafts. That tribe is inconsiderable.

“*Dedze*.—In the vicinity of the two above-mentioned tribes are living the Dedze, called Dijon by the Thibetans. They inhabit high table-lands. They are celebrated for stealing cattle and carrying away the women and children of other tribes. In their country there is a small river called Ain Ouang.

“*Anampae*.—They are probably on the banks of the Kouts-Kiang below the Renney-pang, though separated for a distance of two or three days' journey by a territory wholly uninhabited. Throughout

* The Louts are probably the Nous or Lous of Klaproth's map, giving name to the Nou-kiang, Lou-kiang, or Louts-kiang, as our author calls it.—Y.

† The Lisou are also in Klaproth's map, to the north of Theng-ye-choo.—Y.

their country, there is great abundance of iron mines; the steel is of a superior quality.*

“*Melious, Daboudam.*—In the vicinity of the Anampae, live those two tribes; they speak the same language. They manufacture earthen vessels.

“*Pangdang.*—They are found close to the Dedze. The mountains in that locality have not much elevation, the country is somewhat flat and there is scarcely any snow.

“*Lambenn.*—They sell Chinese pans; it is probable they are on the banks of the Louts Kiang close to Yunán.

“*Damra.*—Three days west of the Anampae, dwell the Damra. They are separated from them by a range of mountains.

“*Kabing, Mooua.*—These two tribes dwell near the junction of the Kiang Ouan with another river, larger than the Kouts Kiang and all the others. This must infallibly be the Irrawaddy. The language of the Mooua is the same as that of the Pani who live near Yongpetin, in Yunán. They use European articles, weave cloth, and cultivate cotton. Some Thibetans maintain that the Mooua are the same as the Meneupguebo, the Thibetan name of Burmah. There is no doubt but that tribe is close to Burmah.

“The Kabing appear to be the same as the tribe of the Kakhien to be met with east and north of Bhamo.†

“The Mooua are now probably some Shan tribe living in the same localities as the Kakhien. The latter dwell on the hills and the former in the valleys.‡

“*Apo.*—They are separated by a range of mountains from the Damra on the west. They are said to be very wicked.

* The Kakoos are mentioned below by Bishop Bigandet as celebrated for their *dhas* or swords. See also *Mission to Ava*, p. 146. Y.

† They are very numerous. I have seen hundreds of them at Bhamo whither they come to buy salt and some other articles. They appear of mild dispositions, though the Burmese represent them as cruel and treacherous. If some of them be really so, the ill-treatment they receive from the Burmese is the prolific cause of the evil.—*Note by Bishop Bigandet.*

‡ By their industry and mercantile habits the Shans are far superior to all the other tribes. They are exceedingly numerous, but unfortunately divided into a great many fractions. They are to be met with from the borders of Assam to the gulf of Siam. The Siamese are but one of the many Shan tribes, that is more advanced in civilization than the others, owing to the geographical position of their country on the extremity of the gulf of Siam. The Thibetans may possibly make no difference between the Shans and the Burmese.—*Note by Bishop Bigandet.*

“ *Mendeing*.—They are supposed to inhabit south west of the Mooua.

“ *Telon*.—Where are they? It is said that they live not far from the Dronba, since the Thibetans of Tsarong go and exact tributes from them.

“ This is what we have been able to collect respecting those tribes and the territories they inhabit.

“ Very grateful I would be to you, if you could send me the most accurate particulars respecting the north of Burmah, the course of rivers, the mountains, tribes, &c. &c. With the Chinese and Thibetan notions we may obtain here, something might be done for throwing some light on this part of eastern Asia, which is to Europeans a *terra incognita*. If there be some map of these parts, of a more recent date than that I have mentioned, have the goodness to procure it and forward it to me.

“ I may infer from the above that we are not far from each other, and that there may be a possibility of meeting each other on some future day. We would have to pass in the midst of tribes that are in general of a meek temper and good disposition, except when they are at war among themselves.

“ I will close this long letter with stating a curious fact. The Thibetans, of the province of Tsarong at least, are in great fear of the Burmah King. They say that it is written in their books that he will on a future period make himself master of their country.

“ Your affectionate brother in Christ,

(Signed) J. THOMINE MAZURE,

Vic. Ap. of Thibet.”

‘ As an addition to the above remarks contained in my friend’s letter I will, my dear Col. Phayre, convey to you the following scanty information I received from some Burmans when I was at Bhamo in 1857.

‘ It appears, that at his accession to the throne the present Ruler of Burmah sent an embassy to the Viceroy of Yunân. I conversed with several men that had, from Bhamo, accompanied the embassy. They stated to me that it took them 10 days to proceed from Bhamo to Momien, the first Chinese frontier town. On their way through Yunân they crossed on iron bridges three rivers, the Shoay-lee, the Salween and the Mekon. These bridges were described to me in the

following manner. I saw also a rough sketch of one of them made by a Burmese on the spot. Strong chains are laid horizontally on the stream from bank to bank and planks are placed and well fixed upon them. On each side at a height of about three feet, two other chains are likewise stretched across, and planks are laid vertically to secure the safety of passengers. These chains are carefully greased to prevent their destruction by rust. The bridges were ten cubits broad, men and beasts of burden cross them, and a small tax is levied by the Chinese authorities. I believe that the Kouts Kiang, the Louts Kiang and the Lantsan Kiang are respectively the Shoay-lee, the Salween and the Mekon or Cambodia river.

‘ Here are the names of the wild tribes north and east of Bhamo ; the Kakiens, Shans, Katou, Phoun, Anga Shan, Palaong, Kakou.

‘ The Katou are divided in three tribes called Mokatou, Mein-pekatou, Sanyua Katou.

‘ The Kakiens are likewise subdivided into Marou, Tsinpho, Adzi, Lishi-sonnee ; if these names can be identified with those above described ? The Kakou are celebrated for the dás or large knives they manufacture in great quantities, the blades of which are of the best description. When at Bhamo I saw one of those knives cutting large iron nails without receiving the least blunt.

‘ Those rough and imperfect notes may possibly enable you to make an attempt to elucidate some controverted points respecting the places, countries, rivers, mountains and tribes of Burmah. No one is better fitted for such an arduous task than you, who have paid so much attention to all that has reference to Upper Burmah.

Believe me, my dear Col. Phayre,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) + PAUL BIGANDET.’

Remarks on M. DEMAZURE'S letter.

The reverend writer justly calls the land from which he writes a *terra incognita*. The circle of unknown territory in the interior of Africa is rapidly shrinking, whilst of eastern Thibet we have scarcely added to our knowledge in the present century. This will not, we

may hope, continue so much longer.* Meanwhile it is startling to receive a contribution to the Society's proceedings from this unknown corner of the world ; but these brave Roman Catholic priests penetrate everywhere.

Grateful as we ought to be for this contribution, we must not accept all its geographical indications for facts. To appraise them properly it would be necessary to determine what the worthy Vicar Apostolic has derived from actual observation and information received in the country, and what are merely preconceptions derived from the maps in his possession.

The map which he names, that of Andriveau Goujon, Paris, 1841, we have not been able to find in Calcutta. But there can be little doubt, from the missionary's references, that it is substantially the same in its peculiarities with the map constructed by Klapproth for his Treatise on the Irawadi. Nearly the same is Berghaus's map of Further India 1843, which I also produce. These maps show the country of the Khana Deba, Tsatsorken, and other places named by the Vicar Apostolic.

Now this map of Klapproth's, which I take to be the basis of the missionary's general ideas of the geography of the country in which he lives, was compiled from Chinese sources for a specific purpose, viz. that of demonstrating that the great Tsanpo river of Thibet was identical with the Irawadi, and not with the Brahmaputra as we believe.

I do not know whether anybody on the continent still maintains this view. Thirty years ago it was the subject of earnest controversy, and seems to have become almost a national dispute, Englishmen for

* We see that intelligence has been received of the English travellers now advancing towards Lassa, from Chung-king upon the great Yangtse Kiang on the 28th April, and that they were about to proceed towards Ching-tu the capital of the province of Sechuen. This town is on one of the branches of the great river in Lat. $30^{\circ} 50'$ and Long. 104° . Hence we see that they will pass far to the north of the country of which the Vicar apostolic speaks in this letter, their route probably lying by the great military road through Bathang and Tsando (the latter at least as high as $31^{\circ} 30'$) of which the route is given in great detail in Klapproth's description of Thibet. If, as we trust, they accomplish their great journey, they will be the first European travellers who ever have done so. About 1660 the journey through Lassa from Peking to India was accomplished by the Jesuit Fathers Grueber and Dorville. But they followed to Lassa the same route that was taken by the missionaries Huc and Gabet in their wellknown journey, passing from the neighbourhood of the Wall of China to the great lake the Koko-noor, far to the northward. [I need scarcely add that since this was written Col. Sarel has been obliged to abandon his journey.]

the Brahmaputra, Frenchmen for the Irawadi. Twenty years ago we see that it was an assumed fact in the map of the German geographer Berghaus; though I observe that in later maps he has quitted the position. So possibly it may be warring with ghosts to say any more on the argument. It is certainly an interesting question, if it be a question, whether the river, on whose delta-branches stand our thriving ports of Rangoon and Bassein, does or does not come all the way from the mountains north of Rohilkund; whether its sources are in the mountains of Khamtee, or are fifteen degrees further west. It is a question which reminds us of that of the course of the Niger, which the *Quarterly Review*, if I recollect rightly, tried hard to argue into the Nile, till the Landors solved the problem by descending to the Gulf of Guinea. We are not likely yet a while to find a Landor for the Tsanpo. It is not navigable, and the savages that border Thibet are much more unmanageable than the negroes of the Niger. You will find the matter ably discussed by Wilcox in the 17th volume of this Society's quarto researches, and a resumé of all the available subsequent information on the subject in an appendix to my account of the Mission to Ava in 1855.

The idea that the Irawadi was the debouchement of the Tsanpo was first started by D'Anville. It was maintained by Dalrymple, the author of the *Oriental Repertory*. And it was revived by Klaproth, who supported his view by citations from Chinese geographers and state papers, by arguments from physical geography, and by maps based on Chinese sources. He insisted that the great river of Thibet passed through Yunán and entered the Burmese territories at Bhamo, there joining a river flowing from the north to form the Irawadi which passes by Ava.

Since Klaproth wrote, Bhamo has been several times visited by European travellers, (by Col. Hannay, Dr. Bayfield, Dr. Griffith, Kincaid the American missionary, and as we see here by Bishop Bigandet), and it is well ascertained that the river which enters at Bhamo from the Chinese frontier is an inconsiderable one. The upper Irawadi was also visited in 1827 by Wilcox, not far from its sources in the snowy mountains of Khamti. It was indeed ascertained both by him and by Col. Hannay that there was an *eastern* branch joining with the western, according to the latter about Lat. 26°. And, as this has been seen by no European eye, it *might* of course prove to be

the continuation of a great Thibetan river, though such evidence as could be got was against the supposition. We shall see if M. De-Mazure throws any light on this presently.

The Tsanpo in Thibet has been reached by only one traveller in modern times, at least only one who has narrated his journey, viz. Turner, on his Embassy in the days of Warren Hastings. Turner was told by the Thibetans that the river entered Assam. So says Father Giorgi who wrote on the authority of the Catholic missionaries in Thibet in the last century.* The measured discharge of the Dihong in the month of January is 56000 feet per second, probably more than twice the low water discharge of the Ganges at Benares, and considerably more than the low water discharge of the Indus at Attok, (a river which so singularly resembles it in its course, on the assumption that the Tsanpo and Dihong are the same)†. This alone is almost enough to decide the question. For if the Dihong is *not* itself the Tsanpo, the Tsanpo must limit the basin that feeds the Dihong in a manner quite irreconcilable with the enormous discharge of the latter.

With a philologist who has a theory to maintain, it is said that vowels go for nothing and consonants for very little. With a geographer who has a theory to maintain, we may say that latitude goes for very little and longitudes for nothing.

Klaproth, not aware indeed of the discharge attributed to the Dihong, at least when his theory was started, tried to provide for the difficulty we have just alluded to by carrying the southern turn of the Thibetan Tsanpo a degree and a half to the eastward of its position in D'Anville's maps and by carrying the Dihong's mouth forty miles to the westward of its *known* position, besides twisting its direction in a way for which there is no foundation in fact.

* "Seseque tandem in [Gangem exonerat." *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, p. 343, Major Dalton, long resident in upper Assam, stated at the Society that the general belief of the people near the Dihong was, that it came from Thibet. The Dihong and the (eastern) Brahmaputra are the only rivers of Assam which they admit to come from Thibet. Major Dalton believes both the Dibong and the Subanshiri, great as their volume is, to be derived entirely from the Himalya and not from Thibetan sources.

† Wilcox mentions the traditions of a great and destructive flood on the Dihong in the last century, analogous to the Indus "cataclysms" of 1841 and 1858. Major Dalton at the Society's meeting mentioned a more curious Assamese tradition, viz. that some centuries ago there was *no* Dihong, but that it appeared by sudden irruption into the valley.

Now, this is the kind of preconception with which our worthy Vicar Apostolic starts, and we must try to eliminate this preconception from all his statements which it affects.

It will be seen that he is describing a succession of parallel rivers, separated by parallel chains of mountains just as they have fixed themselves in his mind from his French map. His own position at Bonga he states to be in a valley of the mountains between the Lantsang Kiang (which is well known as the Chinese name of the Me-kong or great river of Cambodia), and the Louts Kiang, which is without doubt the Loo-kiang or Noo-kiang of our maps, the Salwen of Tenasserim. Bonga, he says, is near the great bending of these two rivers and in about $28^{\circ} 15''$ latitude as well as he can judge.

Westward of the Louts Kiang, at a distance of 30 miles, is a range of high mountains, and west of those "a rather inconsiderable river" called the Kouts Kiang or Schete-kiang, which he describes as known in Yunân under the name of Loungchang-kiang, as flowing east of Tenine (or Theng-ye-choo,) and joining the Irawadi below Bhamo.

This is so precise, that it is difficult not to accept it as derived from actual information. There can be no doubt that the description of this Kouts Kiang in the lower part of its course applies exactly to the Shweli, a tributary of the Irawadi, which it enters in Lat. 24° nearly. It is variously described by the British officers who passed up the Irawadi in 1837 at from 300 yards to 600 yards wide at its mouth, full of shoals and discharging little water. The width however indicates that at times it carries a large body of water. It is mentioned by the Chinese geographers quoted by Klaproth under the name of Loung-chuan-kiang, probably from its passing near Loung-chuen the Mo-wún of the Burmese. It is on a small tributary of the Shweli that the celebrated ruby mines of Ava are found, and near its banks in former days stood two important cities; that of Mweyen or Mauroya, the most ancient capital of the Burmese kings of sacred Indian descent, and supposed to be mentioned by Ptolemy as *Maureura metropolis*; and Maulong the capital, in later times, of a Shan kingdom.

Just a doubt remains whether this identity of the Kouts Kiang and the river Shweli is not suggested by his map rather than got from

local knowledge. Such a lengthened course of the Shweli is indeed given conjecturally in the map of Klaproth who brings it down from a combination of several of the rivers of Thibet. Just above the town of Theng-ye-choo, he gives it the Chinese name of Khiu-chy which perhaps corresponds to the Kouts of our missionary.

But supposing that this is not the case, that this is really the Shweli which flows down from the latitude of Bonga, the course of the river is a very singular one; it so far justifies the theories of Klaproth's map, and it forces us to carry the eastern source of the Irawadi much nearer to the western one than we have placed it hitherto, on the information given to Hannay that they were eight days' journey asunder.

Proceeding westward, the Bishop says that "Between the Kouts Kiang and another considerable river that flows into the Irawadi there are several ranges of mountains, the general direction whereof is from south to north. That river is named *on the maps* Gakbosdanbo. Its course through Thibet appears to be very different from what has hitherto been supposed. Its junction with the Irawadi must be placed somewhere more in the south.* That called by the Chinese Kanpoo Tsangbo"—this I have no doubt is mistranslated, and should be "*this*," viz. the Gakbo-tsangbo of the maps—"called by the Chinese Kanpoo Tsangbo is named by the people of Bonga Dzain, because it flows through the sub-prefecture of that name. In that district, according, to the Thibetans is the village of Samé where our two priests Messrs. Krick and Boury were murdered."

He then goes on to allude to the Yaro-tsanpo of our maps and to express his conviction that *there is not the least doubt* that this great river is the Irawadi. It is curious that this is just the same expression as is used by the Chinese geographers quoted by Klaproth. "There is no manner of doubt," say the Editors of the grand Imperial Geography,† that this great navigable river that flows through the kingdom of Mian or Ava is the Yaroo-dzangbo of Thibet. But this sort of assertion rather implies an absence of argument, and does not carry conviction to a reader. The Vicar goes on to give reasons however, and a very good specimen of circular logic his reasoning is.

* Qy. North?

† Klaproth, *Memoire sur les sources du Brahmaputra*, etc. p. 281.

“ I believe that its bending must be brought more to the east. This would agree better with the observations made by the English on the tributaries of the Brahmaputra. The latter cannot possibly be the Yarkiou-tsangbo.”

Now observe his reasoning.

‘ 1st. There is no doubt that the Yaro-dzangbo is the Irawadi.

‘ 2nd. Its bending must be brought more to the east’ (i. e. to enable it to be the Irawadi.)

‘ 3rd. The Brahmaputra cannot possibly be the Tsangpo’ (i. e. because the Yaro-Tsanpo’s bending goes so far to the east, where we have just obliged it to go).

But just let us get rid of this notion and all his information will fall into place, and leave little difficulty remaining.

The Lantsang-kiang, and the Luts Kiang or Loo-kiang we are already familiar with on the maps. The Kuts Kiang we will admit to be the Shweli running into the Irawadi. We have then, he says not one, but *several* mountain ranges running from south to north, and we come to the river which the Thibetans call Gakbo, and the Chinese call Kanpoo. The Gakbo you will find, as I have said, in Klaproth’s map forming an imaginary junction with the Kuts-kiang or Shweli. In a map of Berghaus’s published in Perthes’s Gotha Hand Atlas (1860) you will find it doing duty as a tributary of the Yaro-tsangpo. In the original authority for the Thibetan geography, or at least in the nearest form to the original which is accessible to us and not biassed to meet theories, that is to say in D’Anville’s Atlas, the river is found, under its Chinese name of Kenpoo, in a position which identifies it either with the Dibong or with the (eastern) Brahmaputra.

The mention of it by the Vicar Apostolic as the river on the banks of which the priests Krick and Boury were murdered identifies it with the latter, and this murder of two missionaries becomes thus in fact the basis of a geographical connection between British India and Thibet. For these gentlemen were murdered about the month of August, 1854 (as we know from the reports of the British officers in Upper Assam) at a village called Simé* (the Samé of the Vicar Apostolic) near the banks of the eastern or real Brahmaputra, where

* This village is entered from native information in Wilcox’s map, dated many years before the murder of the abbés.

they had halted for some time to acquire the Thibetan language before penetrating into Thibet by that route from Assam.* This fact therefore should satisfy M. De Mazure that his theories about the Irawadi are all wrong. Not only so, but if he is right about the Kuts Kiang being the same as the Shweli, you will observe that between this Kuts Kiang and the Kenpoo, which we have identified with the Brahmaputra, he mentions *no river*, so that his evidence, so far as it goes, is against the derivation of any supply to the Irawadi from the mountains of Thibet, excepting what enters by this river Shweli. If again his identification of the Kuts Kiang with the Shweli is only a deduction from his maps, I would say that it is highly probable that this Kuts Kiang is *not* the Shweli, but is the unseen eastern branch of the Irawadi called in our maps the Shu-mai-kha.

Indeed every attempt to construct a map which shall combine with the data ascertained by Wilcox in his journeys, those furnished by M. de Mazure, including the most liberal estimate of the "seven days hard travelling" which he places between Samé and Bonga, ends in something like a conviction that his river Kuts-kiang is really the eastern branch of the Irawadi, the Shumai Kha of our maps. To make room for the Shweli in this position the Loo-kiang and its parallel rivers must be moved considerably further to the eastward than any maps represent them. But then Bonga will be carried very much beyond any possible seven days journey from Samé in such a region. We do not seem to be in a position to solve the difficulty, but could communication with M. de Mazure succeed in removing his erroneous views about the Irawadi, then he might supply most valuable information.

The Vicar says, "The spurs of the range that are north and south of their habitation are called Dokerla and Dokelá. The latter is visited by innumerable pilgrims from all parts of Thibet who come to worship the Spirit *Kaoua Kerbo*, that is to say the *White Snow*." We find this mountain under the name of *Kawa Garbou Gangri* in Klaproth's map, but in Lat. 28° 45' and to the *north* of the position which is assigned by the missionary to his establishment.

East of the country traversed in passing from Bonga to the Ken-

* See "Official and interesting correspondence &c. regarding the melancholy and brutal massacre of the Rev. Messrs. Krick and Boury, Priests of the Society of Foreign Missions, Calcutta—R. C. Orphan Press, 1855."

poo he describes the district of Tsarong, or Tsatsorken, terminating on the Dokerla north of their establishment. And between the district of Tsarong and the Dzaing are the pastures of Dromba.* “All that country” the paper says, but evidently in English we should say “all *this* country” viz. of Dromba, in which are the sources of the Kuts-kiang, is purely Thibetan,” and all south of it is peopled with savages. These are probably the Mishmis and other tribes adjoining the upper Brahmaputra.

I can add nothing of any use regarding the wild tribes catalogued in the latter part of the letter. The indications are nearly all too vague, and Bishop Bigandet has anticipated the few remarks that could be made.

It should be noticed that when this paper was read, I was under the impression, derived from high authority in matters geographical, that the Abbés Krick and Boury had been murdered, not on the upper Brahmaputra, but near the banks of the Dihong. Accidentally Major Dalton, the officer who made the official investigation into the crime, and by whom the murderer was convicted, was present at the meeting and corrected this impression. It need scarcely be said that the assumed position on the Dihong would have been much more difficult to reconcile with the Vicar Apostolic’s statements. Several passages in the present comment have been altered in accordance with this correction.

Letter to the Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, on some Recent Statements touching certain of the Gupta Kings and others.
—By FITZ-EDWARD HALL, Esquire, D. C. L.

SIR,—With many other well-wishers of India, I hail it as an encouraging sign, that the natives of this country are beginning, here and there, to evince an intelligent interest in the history of their

* This should perhaps be Dromla. There is a range of mountains called Douroungla in this position in Klaproth’s map. *La* I believe in Thibetan signifies a mountain pass.