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ASIATIC

Account of Arakan.* By Lt. ...
mission

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On the north, between Arakan some distance from the sea-coast the hills and forests, who have the British government. Our river, about 130 miles north from a stream called the *Oo-tha-la* and forests to the north-east, far as *Munneepoor*; here live in a constant state of war boundary up to the *Yi-ma* mountains.

* We give the name *Arakan* as a general term, but it is restricted to what is the present day name of the country used in the latter sense.



April 17 1902.



JOURNAL

OF THE

ASIATIC SOCIETY.

*Account of Arakan.** BY LIEUT. PHAYRE, *Senior Assistant Commissioner, Arakan.*

Arakan Proper, called by the natives *Ra-khoing-pyee*, or Ra-khoing country, lies between 20° and 21° 10' N. Lat. on the sea coast; in the interior it extends to about 21° 40'. It is bounded on the west by the Bay of Bengal and the estuary called Naf; on the north, by a range of mountains named *Wé-la-toung*, and by a line not well defined running N. E. through a hilly country to the *Kola-dan* river; on the east by the *Yú-ma* mountains; and on the south it is separated from the district of *Aeng*, and the island of *Rambree*, by various straits and creeks.

On the north, between *Arakan* and the *Chittagong* district, at some distance from the sea-coast, there are several tribes living among the hills and forests, who have hitherto remained independent of the British government. Our authority extends up the *Kola-dan* river, about 130 miles north from the town of *Akyab*, to the mouth of a stream called the *Oo-tha-lang*, but beyond that, stretch mountains and forests to the north-east, hitherto untrodden by civilized man, as far as *Munneepoor*; here live various savage tribes, who appear to be in a constant state of warfare with each other. On the east our boundary up to the *Yú-ma* mountains is only nominal. The tribes

* We give the name *Arakan* as a general term to four districts, which by the natives is restricted to what is the present district of *Akyab*. In this paper the name *Arakan* is used in the latter sense.

for 15 or 20 miles west of that range are independent, and have never submitted to any regular government, neither to that of the *Arakan* kings, the Burmese, or the British.

The boundary above described contains about six thousand square miles, of which from 12 to 1500 on the eastern side, are, from the inaccessible nature of the country, under the controul of the mountain tribes.

In *Arakan* there are three principal rivers; viz. the *Mayú*, the *Kola-dan*, and the *Lé-myo*; these all flow in a general north and south direction, at an average distance of 15 or 20 miles apart, the *Mayú* being to the west, the *Kola-dan* in the centre, and the *Lé-myo* to the east. Their channels are separated by ranges of hills running in the same general direction of N. and S.; the principal rocks are sandstone and shale.

In the upper course of these rivers, or about 150 miles from the sea, the hills are lofty, and so massed together, that the direction of the ranges is not discernible; but as the rivers descend, the country becomes open; then ascend a height; and single ranges of hills are seen, with broad and fertile plains extending from their bases as far as the eye can reach; the plains, dotted here and there with villages, are intersected by innumerable streams, and the bright-green rice fields, alternate with dark forest tracts. The three rivers for the last 20 or 30 miles of their course, are connected together by a vast number of creeks, through which all communication in the delta takes place. The *Kola-dan* in the lower part of its course is called the *Ga-tsha-bha*. The different branches of the *Lé-myo* in its lower course take various names.

The ancient history of *Arakan* presents such a tangled web of fiction, that I shall not attempt to give it in detail. I have not had sufficient leisure to study the subject, and my object being merely to give an account of the present state of the country, I shall only refer to its ancient history so far as is necessary to give a general idea of its condition previous to the British conquest, and to shew what race the present inhabitants belong to. The inhabitants are,

In the Plains.—1. *Ra-khoing-tha*.—2. *Ko-là*.—3. *Dom*.

In the Hills.—1. *Khyoung-tha*.—2. *Kú-mé* or *Kidé-mé*.—3. *Khyeng*.—4. *Doing-núk*, *Mroong*, and other tribes.

The *Ra-khoing-tha* and *Khyoung-tha* are of the same race. Like the Burmans their national name is *Myam-má*, the first appellations here given being merely local, the former signifying inhabitant of *Ra-khoing* country; the latter, or *Khyoung-tha*, being the name given to those who inhabit the banks of mountain streams within the same villages as the hill tribes, and support themselves by hill cultivation. How they came to be separated from their countrymen does not appear; it is rather extraordinary that they should remain so, as they subject themselves in the hills to great hardships, while to procure a subsistence in the plains is a matter of no difficulty. Lately I have seen some instances of their settling in the plains and cultivating land with ploughs. The religion of both these people is Buddhism; they may be said to belong to the Mongolian family, or to be between the Mongolian and Malay race; their written language is the same as the Burmese; in the colloquial there are some provincial differences.

The *Kolas*, or Moosulmans, are of an entirely different race to the preceding, they being of Bengalee descent. The *Arakan* kings in former times had possessions all along the coast as far as *Chittagong* and *Dacca*. Coins are still extant, struck by the viceroys at the former town, with Bengalee and Persian characters on one side, and Burmese on the reverse. While the Arakanese held these possessions in Bengal, they appear to have sent numbers of the inhabitants into *Arakan* as slaves, whence arose the present *Kola* (foreign) population of the country; they form about 15 per cent. of the whole population. The *Arakan* Moosulmans preserve the language of their ancestors for colloquial purposes, but always use the Burmese in writing; they have also adopted the dress of the country, with the exception of the *goung-boung*, or head dress.

The third class in the plains are *Doms*. These form such a minute section of the population, that it is scarcely necessary to mention them. The *Doms*, it would appear, were brought from Bengal to be used as *Phrakyon*, or pagoda slaves. It is a strange anomaly in the Búdhist religion, (as it prevails in Burmah,) that the servitors of the temples are invariably outcasts, with whom the rest of the community will hold no intercourse. In Burmah Proper, pagoda slaves are pardoned convicts, or persons condemned to the employment on account of crimes. The kings of *Arakan* finding in Bengal a number of degraded

castes ready made to their hands, imported them and their families as perpetual and hereditary pagoda slaves. Their duties were to sweep in the vicinity of the temple, clear away the remains of offerings, whether of food, flowers, &c. and also to wash the idol. These people of course are now released from their compulsory servitude, and have become cultivators, but in consequence of their former condition, they are regarded by the people with as much disgust as they would be from their low caste, by Hindoos.*

Since the conquest of *Arakan* by the English, a large number of Bengalees have settled in the town of *Akyab* as shop-keepers, and in the vicinity as cultivators; these are not taken into account. In the interior reside a few Brahmins, some of Munnipooree descent, who were brought by the Burmese as astrologers, and some are descendants of colonists from Bengal, brought by the *Arakan* kings. I am inclined to think, that the Arakanese monarchs were in latter times very Brahminically inclined, and that the Burman conquest by infusing fresh Buddhist vigour, and contempt for *Kolas* generally, followed by our own occupation of the country, has prevented the introduction of Hinduism, which probably would have been brought about in the same manner as it was in *Muneepoor*. The hill people, the *Khyoung-thás*, have already been described; next come the *Kú-mí*, or *Kwe-mí*, tribe.

* The Arakanese have so far adopted the Hindu prejudice against them, that if any *Ra-khoing-thá* has unwittingly eaten with, or drank water from the utensil of a *Dom*, or other low caste Hindu, he is excluded from society until he has undergone certain purifications. Some years ago, when in consequence of inundations on the W. coast of the Bay of Bengal the population was reduced to great distress, a number of Ooryas found their way to this coast, and were purchased by Arakanese, or pledged themselves for service, they became inmates of families, and eat and drank with them; all at once it was noised abroad, that Ooryas were no better than Doms, than pagoda slaves. Numbers of respectable persons, men, women and children were forthwith declared unclean. They were excluded from the villages, the public festivals, and the *kyoungs*, or monestaries. To restore them was no easy matter. In former times the king had only to smoke a cigar after it had been used by an outcaste, and he was deemed restored forthwith; but now the royal line no longer existed in the country. At length it was settled that a meeting should be held of the most respectable men in the country, who agreed to smoke with the unclean; the pipe to be handed last to the European Magistrate, and then a general feast to conclude all. The ceremony was gone through with the half of numerous *Phoon-gyees*, (or priests), and much to the comfort of the outcasts, deemed and held to be sufficient for their restoration to society.

This hill tribe belongs to the same great family of the human race as the *Myam-má*; their languages being apparently of the same structure; their physiognomy alike; they have black strait hair, high cheek bones, oblique eyes, and scanty beards. The *Kúmís*, in short, appear like *Ra-khoing-thás* in a more rude state of existence; the traditions of the latter people refer to the former as already possessors of the country when the *Myam-má* race entered it. The *Kúmís* chiefly inhabit the *Kola-dan* and its feeders. They are divided into several clans, which will be enumerated hereafter.

The next hill tribe is the *Khyeng*. There is comparatively a small number of this people within our border, that is to say, within the actual bounds of British authority in *Arakan*; only those who live on, and near to the banks of the *Lé-myo* river, are subject to our controul. Eastward of this river, up to the great *Yú-ma-toung* range, there are powerful tribes of this people, who rejoice in perfect freedom, (as long at least as they can defend themselves from the attacks of their neighbours.) They are separated from British authority by pathless mountains and forests, and being to the west of the *Yú-ma-toung* range, the Burmese have no dominion over them; many indeed to the eastward of those mountains are virtually independent of Burmah. The *Khyengs* live in the same primitive style as the *Kú-mís*, their manners and appearance being similar.*

The remaining hill tribes are the *Doing-núk* and the *Mrúng*. They both inhabit the upper course of the *Mayú* river. The language of the first is a corrupt Bengalee. They call themselves *Kheim-bá-nago*. Of their descent I could learn nothing; probably they may be the offspring of Bengalees carried into the hills as slaves, where their physical appearance has been modified by change of climate. In religion

* There is a class of people residing in the Chittagong district, who call themselves *Raj-bunsé*, and in Burmese *Myam-má-gyee*, or "great *Myam-mas*." They pretend to be descendants of the kings of *Arakan*, a flattering fiction which they have invented to gloss their spurious descent. They are doubtless the offspring of Bengalee women by *Myam-más*, when the latter possessed Chittagong, and other districts in Bengal. Their dress and language are Bengalee; but they profess the religion of their fathers, viz. Buddhism. These people are called *Mugs* in Bengal, and being well known in Calcutta as *Mug cooks*. I believe it is pretty generally supposed that the Arakanese are one and the same with them; a terrible insult to the Burma race! All Arakanese are termed *Mugs* by the people of India, from whom Europeans have borrowed the name. How it arose I cannot say.

they are Buddhists. The people called *Mrúng*, by the Arakanese, announce themselves as descendants of persons carried away from Tipperah several generations back by the *Arakan* kings. They were first planted on the *Lé-myo* river, with the view I suppose of cutting off their retreat to their own country; but when *Arakan* became convulsed in consequence of the invasion of the Burmese, they gradually commenced leaving the *Lé-myo*, and returning through the hills towards their own country. For a time they dwelt on the *Kola-dán*; now none are to be found in any part of *Arakan*, save on the *Mayú* in its upper course, and only a few stragglers there. Many still reside, I understand, in the hills on the E. frontier of the *Chittagong* district. By a reference to a few words of their language, given in the appendix, those acquainted with the language of the *Tipperah* tribes will be able to decide whether the tale the *Mrúngs* tell of their descent be true or not.

Having given an outline of the various tribes which now inhabit *Arakan Proper*, I proceed to offer some suggestions as to the original inhabitants. The traditions of the *Ra-khoing-thás* refer expressly to the hill tribes as being in possession of the country when their own ancestors entered it. The *Khyengs* have a tradition that they are direct descendants of some Burmese refugees, or the remnants of an army that was lost in the mountains when attempting to penetrate to the westward. From the *Kú-mís*, I could gather nothing as to their own origin, but I consider both tribes akin to the *Myam-má* race, and distinct from the Malay.* If it be true, as is asserted, that the immigration of the Malay race to Malacca, Quedah, and other districts from Sumatra is an occurrence comparatively of late date, then it is very improbable that they should have come so far north as 21° of latitude in a remote era. The *Khyengs* and *Kú-mís* are probably an offshoot of the *Myam-má* race, who left their original seat earlier than the immediate ancestors of the *Ra-khoing-thás*. The most southern *Kú-mí* tribes who inhabit the *Kola-dán*, represent themselves as being driven further south each succeeding year, in consequence of the encroachments of the fiercer tribes beyond them. These encroachments still proceed.

* To whom the hill tribes in this quarter have been assigned by Pemberton.

The *Ra-khoing-thas*, (whose national name, as before mentioned, is *Myam-ma*, whence the corruption *Bur-má*.) are so called as inhabitants of the country *Ra-khoing*, and this name is said to be derived from the Pali word *Rak-kha-pu-ra*, signifying "abode of demons," which name may have been given to the country by the Bùdhist Missionaries from India. The classic name for the country, and that used in all state papers, is *Dha-gnya-wa-ti*.

The book which the learned refer to, as containing the whole account of their nation, is called *Ra-dza-wang*, or "History of Kings," of which many copies exist, differing from each other in details of the early history, yet preserving alike the main features; there we are told that in *Oo-taya*, the northern division of the world, reigned the king *Ma-ha-tha-gya*, whose younger son, in consequence of a quarrel, was forced to fly his country. He came to the kingdom of *A-the-toing-dza-na*, (supposed to lie north from the city of Ava,) where he married the king's daughter, and had by her ten sons and one daughter. These children departed to seek a home elsewhere; they came to the site of the present town, *Than-dwe*, (*Sandoway* as we usually write it,) which acquired its name from their binding it with an iron chain, so that the country no longer moved as was its wont; the germ of this account may possibly be the tradition of an earthquake or volcano in some remote period. The ten brothers and their sister now acquired the country. In various ways, eight of the brothers were killed, the remaining two brothers and their sister, who is named *Ang-dza-na-de-wi*, pursued their way northwards for *Arakan*. They were accompanied by a *Byam-ha*, which in Burman Budhist writings usually means I believe a celestial being, but here it is interpreted to mean a human Brahman or *Pun-na*;—whence he sprung does not appear. On the road the two remaining brothers were killed, one by a *Bhi-lú*, or human flesh-devouring monster, the other accidentally by a hunter's arrow, discharged at a deer. The *Pun-na* and the lady proceeded alone; on their arrival in *Arakan*, they find the male line of the royal family is extinct. So confused is the account, that *Arakan*, which before was represented as one vast forest inhabited only by *Bhi-lus*, is here said to have a large population, and a queen over it. The *Pun-na* forthwith marries the daughter of the last king, and their progeny fill the throne for several generations. The sister

of the ten brothers becomes the second, or inferior wife of the *Pun-na*. Why this long story of the ten brothers and their sister was given does not appear; they are not of any importance to the after-history, for according to it none of their descendants fill the throne, or exercise any authority; but in this account we may recognize the first entrance of the *Myam-ma* race into *Arakan*, which we may infer, by the story of the town of *Than-dwe*, took place rather by the delta of the *Arawati*, where communication is easy, than by the mountain passes farther north.* Yet the *Ra-khoing-thas* of the present day believe themselves to be descendents from a western people. They confound those who were their religious instructors with their progenitors, and fancy themselves of the same stock as the Hindus. The above abstract of their history contains evident marks of a mixture of genuine national tradition, and the invention of later times, when they had been taught the use of letters, and had been instructed in religion by Buddhist Missionaries from India.

To proceed with the historical abstract, the descendants of the *Pun-na* long governed the country,† but supernatural monsters again prevailed, and the whole population was destroyed. All these events occurred after the manifestation of the Boodh *Ka-tha-ba*, and before the advent of the Boodh of the present period, *Gau-ta-ma*. As this latter person is supposed to have lived B. C. 543, the *Arakan* annals vie with those of India in antiquity!

Arakan then was again made desolate by *Bhi-lus*; at this time *Ang-dza-ná*, the son of the king of *Kapi-la-wot*, (or *Ma-ga-dha*), having left his country and wandered through forests and mountains, arrived at the source of the river *Kola-dan*; there he had intercourse with a doe, which big with young, was carried down the stream in a flood, and cast ashore at the mouth of the *Mee-khyoung*, a mountain stream which joins the *Kola-dan* from the eastward; there the doe brought forth a son. A hill Chief, of the *Toung-mru* tribe, was out hunting, when his dog pursuing the scent of the doe led him to the spot where she lay, and he saw the body of a beautiful child "shining,"

* I refer here to the entrance of the people who now inhabit the plains, not to that of the hill tribes, who though I suppose them to be of the same stock, had come much earlier, and were more rude than the new comers.

† Cities on the east, and ninety-nine on the west of the *Ga-tsha-bha* river are said to have flourished.

as the history has it, in the midst of a bush ; the doe started off, and the hill chief taking up the infant conveyed him home. The child when grown up, marries the chief's daughter ; but not from this union was the royal race of *Arakan* destined to spring. The doe-born youth is named *Ma-ra-ya* ; he becomes the favourite of the *Nats*, who furnish him with magic weapons, and he clears the country of the monsters who ravaged it. By some strange accident, which is not explained, a princess of the *Pun-na* dynasty has been preserved amidst the general ruin ; she is discovered by the doe-born son of *Ang-dza-na*, and they are married. The country once more becomes populated, and the city of *Dha-gnya-wa-ti* is built to the north of the present city of *Arakan*.

Of this race fifty-five kings reigned throughout a period of 1800 years ; another dynasty then succeeded, which numbered twenty-four kings, whose reigns extended throughout a period of 835 years. Then came the king *Tsan-da-thoo-vee-ya*, who was not of a different dynasty, but in his reign the Boodh *Gau-ta-ma*, having been born in *Ma-gadha*, visited *Arakan* ; the pious king in honour of him built the famous temple of *Ma-ha-mu-ni*, which still exists ; before *Gau-ta-ma* left *Arakan*, the king caused a brazen image of him to be cast ; or rather it was miraculously formed by the *Nats*, being a likeness of the Budh when living, and being for ages after endowed with the faculty of speech, it became celebrated in all Buddhist countries. This image was carried away by the Burmese after their conquest of the country in A. D. 1784, and is still to be seen in *Amerapoorra*, where it is regarded with peculiar devotion.*

The successors of *Tsan-da-thoo-vee-ya* are recorded in regular succession, though the dynasties are frequently changed. One hundred and thirty-five kings extend from *Tsan-da-thoo-vee-ya* to the last king, *Ma-ha-tha-ma-ta*, who reigned when the country was conquered by the Burmese. The *Arakan* kings in the interim, "if they have writ their annals true," carried their victorious arms into the valley of the *Ari-wa-ti*, to Siam, and even to China. The present *Arakan*

* Before their conversion to Buddhism, the *Myam-mas* had probably the same simple religious rites which we see among the hill tribes to this day, *i. e.* occasional offerings of food, flowers, &c. to the *Nats* or Spirits, placed in the open air. Indeed these offerings are still common throughout Burma, though they are disallowed by strict Buddhists.

era corresponds with A. D. 639; from what event it was established is not mentioned, but I have been told that the former era having extended to many hundred thousand years, had become inconvenient for ordinary purposes, and therefore a new one was commenced.

The first king whose reign is calculated in the *Ra-dza-wang*, according to that era, is *Meng-Tsan-mwon*, who ascended the throne in 746, equivalent to A. D. 1385; before his time the number of years each king reigned is entered, but not the year of his ascent according to the era, though of course this is easily ascertained. His grand nephew, *Ta-tsan-phyoo*, who succeeded in 821, or A. D. 1460, had extensive possessions in Bengal. Coins of that date now exist with legends in the Bengalee and Persian character, as well as Burmese, some being struck by the viceroys in Chittagong, others in the name of the king himself. About a century later, the Portuguese appeared and attempted to conquer *Arakan*. I say the Portuguese, though the natives now call them *Angleit*, and I believe them to be no others than the English. But *Ang-leit* is, I think, an interpolation of the copyists of the *Ra-dza-wang* in later times; the invaders are first called *Bho-dau-thwe-pha-laung*, the first word being apparently a corruption of Portuguese, and the second a term of contempt towards foreigners, *pha-laung* being a provincial word for a tadpole. In the latest editions of the history, the white invaders in ships are called *Bho-dau-thwe-aung-leit-pha-laung*—i. e. Portuguese-English tadpoles.* The invasion by the Portuguese occurred in the reign of *Meng-bha*, and the same year a son being born to him, was known afterwards by the name of *Meng-pha-laung*. This king in A. D. 1610, (vide Marshman's *History of Bengal*,) joined with some Portuguese adventurers in invading Bengal, when they took Bulooa and Luckipoor. This event is also recorded in the *Ra-dza-wang*. In A. D. 1666, we learn from the *History of Bengal*, that Chittagong was lost to the Arakanese, they being defeated on the banks of the Tenny river by the Subadar of Bengal. After this defeat, the Arakanese were occupied with feuds at home; the old race of kings was deposed in 1124, or A. D. 1763, and different chiefs, one after another, took possession

* This term *pha-laung* is still frequently screamed after Europeans by children in the streets of *Akyab*, the little rogues then run off laughing heartily.

of the throne. At length the Burmese, on the invitation of *Than-dau-we*, who was the *Myo-thoo-ggee*, or head fiscal officer, invaded and conquered the country. The reigning king at that period was *Ma-ha-ha-ma-ta*, and his son *Re-bhau* is still living in *Amerapoora*.

In various parts of *Arakan* there are traces of a much more extensive population than it contains at present. The ruins of the ancient temple of *Maha-muni*, built entirely of stone, the sites of former cities shewn by the remains of tanks and ruined pagodas, the extensive stone walls at the old capital, certainly tell of a more flourishing kingdom than what the British found it; but we have no satisfactory evidence of the *Arakan* kings having subjugated Burmah and Siam, much less China! Of the conquest of a part of Bengal, we have credible historical evidence. At Dacca, I believe are still to be found the remains of a Buddhist *dze-di*, or pagoda, which can only be attributed to the conquering Arakanese. The name *Tset-ta-goung*, of which Chittagong is a corruption, is Burmese, and the descendants of people of Tipperah brought hence from that country, still survive. There are also some villages of Shan descent, but those people were most probably brought from the Shan population, which is to be found located west of the river *Ara-wa-ti*.

The Burmese established their head-quarters at the old capital. For a few years their government was undisturbed, but at length rebellions were stirred up by an individual called by the English *King-berring*,* who was the son of *Than-dau-we*, the *Myo-thoo-gyee*, who had first invited the Burmese into the country. Many of the Arakanese fled into the neighbouring British province of Chittagong, and thus quarrels arose on the frontier. At length the Burmese having provoked the British government by several acts of aggression, *Arakan* was invaded by the English, who accompanied by a number of the former inhabitants, conquered it with ease, and entered the capital May 1825, since which period it has been annexed to the British Indian empire.

Arakan is divided into 160 circles, of which 148 are denominated *kywn*, or islands, being situated in the low lands, and 12 are called *khyoung*, or stream, being in the hill districts. They contain a total of

* Properly *Khyeng-byan*, lit. "*Khyeng-return*," so called because he was the first-born after his father returned from the *Khyeng* hills. A son of *Khyeng-byan* died in *Akyab*, A. D. 1840.

960 villages. Each of these circles is placed under an officer, designated *kywn-aop*,* or *khyoung-aop*, according to the locality of his charge. The duties of a *kywn-aop* are to collect the revenue, to preserve order in his circle, and to assist the police in the apprehension of criminals; through him are made all statistical inquiries, and to him are referred many disputes concerning land; he is paid 15 per cent. upon his collections. In each circle there are from 3 or 4 to 15 or 20 villages; the revenue collected by the different *kywn-aops* varies from 200 to 10,000 rupees: this great difference results from the rapid increase within a few years of some circles, compared with others, consequent on superior fertility of soil, more convenient locality for exporting grain, and other causes.

The office of *kywn-aop* is not hereditary, but the son of any man who has rendered essential services, generally succeeds on his father's demise.

Next to the *kywn-aop* is the *rawa-goung*, or village head. This officer is elected by the villagers themselves; if there are two or more candidates for the appointment, the villagers meet and sign their names to a document containing the name of him they vote for; these lists are then forwarded by the *kywn-aop* to the officer in charge of the district, (called *myo-woon*,) who appoints him that has the majority of votes, unless indeed there be some good reason for rejecting him. The people generally make a good choice; for the last three and half years I do not recollect more than one instance of such an election being disapproved. The *rawa-goung* collects the revenue of his village, and delivers it to the *kywn-aop*, who carries it to the government treasury. He is paid four per cent. on his collections. A village of thirty houses is entitled to a *rawa-goung*, that is, to a stipendiary one; if a village have a less than that number of houses, they pay their tax to a neighbouring *goung*, but if the villagers, as frequently happens, dislike this arrangement, and elect a *goung* of their own, the proceeding is confirmed, but they must pay him themselves. Their object then is to induce settlers to come among them, whereby their village may be raised to the privileged standard of thirty houses.

Under the orders of the *rawa-goung* is the *rawa-tsa-re rawa-tsa-gan*, or village scribe. He is paid two per cent. on the village

* This is pronounced as one syllable, *Kyok*.

collections. The appointment is usually held by the son or some relation of the *rawa-goung*. His duties are to prepare, under the orders of the *goung*, the village *sa-rang* or register, containing the name of each householder in the village, with the amount of tax demandable from him upon each item.

There are no agents of police in the villages; the village officers being held responsible for the preservation of order and the seizure of criminals.

Throughout the district there are six police stations, (thanahs,) at which the police ordinarily remain, until information being given by a village officer or other person, of any occurrence requiring their presence, they proceed to the spot. Nearly all communication in the district is carried on by water.

The European functionary in charge of the district is styled a Senior Assistant to the Commissioner of *Arakan*, (by the people *myo-woon*.) His duties are of the same nature as those of a Magistrate and Collector in India; he also tries civil suits, and hears appeals from the native Judge's court. There is also a Junior Assistant to the Commissioner. To conduct all revenue affairs, there is an officer styled *myo-thoo-gyee*, whose office under the Arakan and Burman governments was considered the most important in the country; he then apportioned to each circle the amount of revenue demanded by the government; his duty now is under the orders of the Senior Assistant, to superintend all the *kywn-aops*, and to inspect and report on the annual registers of their circles; the office still carries with it a great deal of importance in the minds of the people. This officer is paid a fixed salary, and resides at the chief town of the district. The revenue business is conducted solely by natives of the country, and the language of the records is Burmese. The judicial officers of the Magistrate's court are Bengalees, chiefly natives of Chittagong, it not having yet been found practicable to introduce the *Arakanese* into this branch of the public service. They are however active and energetic police darogahs.

There is a native civil judge styled *ta-ra-ma-thoo-gyee*, who tries all suits for sums not exceeding 500 rupees. Few cases in *Arakan* are for a larger amount than this. The language of the Civil Judge's court is Burmese. He holds his court at *Akyab*.

The chief town of *Arakan* now, is *Akyab*; it is situated at the S. W. extremity of the district; it was first occupied in the beginning of 1826, and consisted only of a few fishermen's huts called *Tset-twe*, the name by which the present town is still known to the natives. The old capital, which lies about 50 miles distant N. E. from *Akyab*, was abandoned on account of its unhealthiness. The site of *Akyab* was well chosen. It is at the mouth of the principal river of the country, the natural outlet for the produce of a vast extent of fertile land; the soil in the immediate vicinity is of a light sandy nature, unlike that of the interior, which is generally clayey; both the traditions of the people, the appearance of the surface, and the marine remains, proclaim the site to have been but lately redeemed from the sea. Shells are to be found near the surface in the streets of the town, and on the roads of the station; west of the station is to be traced a raised sea-beach, along which a road now runs towards the river *Ma-yu*, and between it and the present sea stretches a plain of more than a mile in extent; here tradition also points out where ships used formerly to be moored.* To the S. W. of the station is a ridge of sandstone rocks running nearly N. and S. some distance inland, and elevated in some places from 25 to 30 feet above the highest tides; to this height the rocks are perforated by marine animals. There is no tradition regarding any convulsion having raised this tract of country. The same effects are visible along the coast for 50 or 60 miles from *Akyab*. In the upper portion of the ridge of rocks above mentioned, no shells are to be found in the perforations, but lower down oyster-shells are still seen adhering to the rock. On the opposite shore of the *Akyab* harbour is a remarkable conical-shaped rock on the top of a little hill elevated above the water about 150 feet. It is stated, that in the reign of king *Thoo-re-ya-tseit-ra*, the water was so high, that this conical rock was only just protruded above the surface, and the king on the occasion of a war-like expedition, deposited there his hair comb as an offering, without moving from his boat; hence the rock is called to this day, *Oo-bee-gyap-toung*, "Head-

* *Akyab*, the name given to the present town by foreigners, is perhaps derived from the name of a pagoda built hereabouts, which was probably a good land-mark in former times, and therefore well known to mariners. The site of the pagoda is called *A-khyat-dau-kun*, "Royal-jaw-bone hillock," from a jaw-bone of *Gautama's* being buried there.

comb placing hill." *Akyab* is a very regularly built town ; the streets are broad, and all run at right angles to each other ; the houses are of flimsy materials, being built only of bamboo and canes of the *nipah* tree, but they are spacious and airy, and being elevated a few feet above the ground, are admirably adapted to the damp climate of *Arakan*. The population of *Akyab* does not exceed 5,000 souls, excluding some villages which form the suburbs.

The whole of the land of *Arakan*, whether forest, cultivated or fallow, is the property of the state ; but as it seldom happens that the state has cause to assert its claim, the great mass of land is transferred by sale from hand to hand, or inherited from generation to generation, like other property. Every man who purposes bringing waste land into cultivation, gives notice of his intention to the *rawa-goung* ; either that officer, or the cultivator himself if he pleases, informs the officer in charge of the district, and the land tax is remitted for two or more years, according to the nature of the soil, and the jungle to be cleared. Cultivation and occupation of land give a prescriptive right to a cultivator as long as he pays the Government demand upon it, but if he abandon it without entering into an arrangement with any body else to keep it in cultivation, or to pay the Government demand, he forfeits his right to it. The cultivator then has the possession, but not the property of the soil. By custom a distinction is made between rice land, and that which has been enclosed for gardens. If a portion of the former be taken for public purposes, a road for instance, the common law of the country gives the cultivator compensation ; but in the case of gardens, the owner is entitled to the value of every tree and shrub they contain ; all produce being *bona fide* his private property. Some cultivators make over their land to others for a year or more, if from any cause they are unable to cultivate themselves ; if their land be very productive, or have any peculiar advantages of position, they receive a rent for it from the sub-tenant which frequently equals the Government demand ; these arrangements among the people are not interfered with ; the former tenant's name remains in the village register, and he is responsible for the Government tax, unless he has formally given notice to the *rawa-goung*, that he is not going to cultivate. On the death of a cultivator, his land is inherited by his heirs in like manner as if it were

his own property ; the law of the people, whether Burman or Mahomedan, regulates the proportion which the heirs receive.

The mode of "settlement" of a village in *Arakan* is as follows :— During the month of February, by which time the crop is cut, and the grain for the most part thrashed out and winnowed, the *ra-wa-goung* gives notice to the cultivators that he is about to measure their lands ; he is accompanied by the village scribe, and the cultivators of the fields in the direction of which he is proceeding ; sometimes the *kywn-aop* is present, but not always ; in extensive circles he cannot personally superintend the measurements in all the villages.* The cultivator whose field is to be measured holds the bamboo, which is 12 feet long, and measures out the length and breadth of his field, which is then written down by the village *tsa-re*, hence the area is deduced and the village register prepared. Thus the *ra-wa-goung* goes through all the lands of the village. In the register is entered the name of each householder, his wife's name, (but the women are not so carefully registered as the men,) each lodger, and formerly every bachelor above the age of 18 years, together with the amount of tax due from them, whether for rice land, garden land, or capitation tax. To make a return of those persons subject to capitation tax, the *ra-wa-goung* must be acquainted with the age and condition of each villager, whether married or unmarried, a householder or lodger. This tax formerly extended to all males above the age of 18, who were deemed capable of manual labour ; but within the last year (1840,) this objectionable tax has been much reduced, unmarried youths wholly exempted from it, and the train laid for its eventual abolition.†

The village register being framed is delivered to the *kywn-aop*, who has received like registers from each village in his circle, and he delivers them into the *yon-dau*, (kucheree,) where they are compared with those of the past year ; if no doubts arise as to their

* The land measure now in use in *Arakan* was introduced from *Chittagong* in 1835. Up to that period the tax was levied not upon the area of cultivation, but upon the ploughs, each plough being estimated as equal to a *doon* of land. A *doon* contains 30,720 square yards, equal to a little more than six and a quarter English acres.

† A poll tax is not necessarily of that hateful nature generally ascribed to it, and certainly it is not so regarded in *Arakan*. We have an instance of a self-governed people voluntarily imposing this tax upon themselves. "In the state of Massachusetts, every male citizen, from 16 to 60, is subject to a poll tax, which is commonly a dollar, or a dollar and a half."—*Goodrich's Universal Geography, Boston edit. p. 340.*

accuracy, they are accepted ; if they appear incorrect, inquiries must be instituted through other channels than the village officers. Supposing them to be accepted, the *kyon-aop* then receives slips of paper, called *kyoung-hlya*, which are bills presentable to each tax-payer for the amount demanded from him, with a specification of the item of taxation for which the demand is made, whether for rice-land, garden-land, capitation, or the extent of his land by measurement, and the months in which each instalment is to be paid. No man can be called on to pay any tax without a bill for the amount, bearing the seals of the *myo-woon* and *myo-thoo-gyee* being presented to him ; the village officer must give a receipt on the back of the bill for each instalment paid. If a tenant be dissatisfied with the measurement of his land, and dispute the amount demanded in the bill, either a new measurement by the village officers is ordered, or, at the request of the tenant, a person unconnected with them is sent to remeasure the land ; the expence of this new measurement falls on the village officer if his outturn be found incorrect, or the cultivator if it be correct. The above process of registry and land measurement is continued yearly. It is not to be supposed that from so rude a people really correct survey of the cultivated area is to be obtained ; all that can be hoped for, is to procure a fair approximation to the actual amount.

The cultivated rice lands are divided into three classes, which pay at the rate of 12, 10, and 8 rupees per *doon*. The first sort will produce from one thousand to twelve hundred baskets of *dhan*,* which will sell on the average at from 10 to 12 rupees per 100 baskets. One man with a pair of buffaloes will cultivate a *doon* of land with ease ; the produce will fetch, in ordinary seasons, from 100 to 120 rupees ; the tax payable to Government therefore for this class of land is from 10 to 12 per cent. of the gross produce of the soil ; the profit from the second and the third class of lands is from 1 to 2 per cent. less than the above ; the cultivator thus realizes a handsome profit, and is certainly never distressed to make payment. I have never known a single cultivator a defaulter. The grain market has hitherto been a sure one ; the cultivator receives for his grain cash payment from the ship, which

* The basket of Arakan proper is much smaller than that of the Southern districts ; 100 of rice of the former are equal to about 30 Indian maunds.

anchors alongside the field that has grown the rice. It is principally exported to Madras, Coringa, and Masulipatam. A reference to table B will shew the rapid increase of the *Akyab* rice trade; we there see a population of less than 1,50,000 souls, growing and exporting grain to the value of eleven and a half lakhs of rupees. Only one rice crop is raised in the year. The tax on gardens is higher than that on rice land, being at the rate of 16 rupees per *doon*.

Wages in *Arakan*, compared with those of Bengal, are very high. For ordinary labour the people of the country cannot be hired at a less rate than four annas a-day, or if by the month, six rupees; though for some sorts of work they demand seven to eight rupees a month. In the reaping season, which generally commences in December, many hundreds, indeed thousands of coolies come from the Chittagong district by land and by sea, to seek labour and high wages. They are engaged by the Arakanese cultivators, and are generally paid at a certain rate for the quantity of rice cut down. If they work diligently, I am informed they can earn from four to five annas per diem; in their own country their labour for the same time would not bring them more than six pice, or at the most two annas. The Bengalee labourers are not much employed in ploughing the land; that work is performed in the rainy season (about the middle of June) at the commencement of which they for the most part return to their homes. They are beginning however to seek employment also in ploughing land. One great source of loss to the cultivators, is the frequent occurrence of a murrain among their cattle, by which thousands sometimes perish in a single year. In 1839-40 a sickness prevailed among the cattle, simultaneously with the *cholera* among the inhabitants, by which 16,000 head, cows and buffaloes, were carried off. The cattle are replaced from *Chittagong* and also from Ava. I have been much interested at witnessing the cheerfulness and determination with which a cultivator would set to work at his field by spade, after losing his buffaloes, worth perhaps from 40 to 50 rupees the pair, determined to labour hard in order to replace them as soon as possible.

A measure has lately been sanctioned by government for the whole province of *Arakan*, which is calculated to extend largely the cultivation of jungle tracts, and perhaps eventually alter the tenure of all land in the country. Rules have been passed for grants of large

areas, and they are so liberal in their terms, that they cannot fail to be successful. They confer leases in the first instance for periods varying from eight to sixty-four years, according to the nature of the land; rent free for half the period of the lease, and at a low rate of rent for the remainder. The hereditary right to the soil is declared as long as the grantee fulfils the terms specified; future leases for twenty years are guaranteed at a no higher rate than the average of that paid by adjoining government lands. The people do not yet sufficiently appreciate the advantages to be eventually derived from these grants, but they are gradually becoming more sensible of their value. Numbers of the descendants of those who fled in troublous times from their country, and settled in the southern parts of Chittagong, the islands of the coast, and even the Sunderbuns of Bengal, are gradually returning. Rumours of an attack from the Burmese have prevailed among them for the last three years, and retarded their return, but this alarm has now subsided, and during the N. E. monsoon, boats filled with men, women, and children, with all their worldly goods, may be seen steering south along the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal, to return to the land their fathers abandoned 30 or 40 years before. They have told me, that in their exile the old men used to speak with regret for its loss of the beauty of their country; the fertility of the land, which returned a hundred-fold; the heavy ears of rice; the glory of their ancient kings; the former splendour of the capital; the pagodas, and the famous image of *Gautama* now carried away, with which the fortunes of the country were indissolubly united. Who would have imagined that *Arakan* could inspire such sentiments!

It is a question of interest to consider how far the people of *Arakan* are satisfied with British rule. The mass of them are infinitely better off now as regards personal freedom, wants, and comforts, than they were under the government of their native princes or the Burmese, and they are doubtless sensible of the advantages they now enjoy. During the times of the *Arakan* kings, and the Burman governors, the people were not called upon to pay much in regular taxes, but there were constant calls on them for labour, for service, and for materials to make or repair the houses of the *kywn-aops* and other government officers; besides which, the circles were obliged to furnish the public officers with followers for special duties; the people therefore

had no certainty of the amount that would be demanded from them. *Arakan Proper*, after paying its own expences, or satisfying its local government, was required to furnish subsistence for the royal white elephant; this amounted to 120 viss of silver annually, or about Company's rupees 20,000. All the lands west of the river *Mayu* were set apart for the Tharawadi Prince, the present king of Ava. He appointed to them an officer, who remitted to Ava yearly the tribute due to the prince, which amounted to about 3000 rupees. Neither the *myo-woon*, nor any of the public officers received any fixed salary, but had fees upon all collections and customs, and a share of all fines imposed. Each buffaloe plough paid yearly 15 Burman baskets of *dhan*, equal to $10\frac{1}{2}$ maunds. Each bullock plough paid ten Burman baskets. There was also a capitation tax on each married householder. When the *myo-thoo-gyee*, and other officer was called to the court of Ava, the province had to pay the expences of his journey, as also of the journies of the *myo-woon*, and other officers appointed from Ava, on their coming to assume charge, likewise on their recal. A certain number of men were expected to take to Ava every year a beautiful flower peculiar to *Arakan*, which none but the royal family were allowed without permission to wear in their ears or hair; others were set apart for keeping the royal gardens in order; sixty were always to be at work at Ava, and had to be supported by the remainder of their number in *Arakan*; they were relieved annually.

These various calls upon their industry, the general poverty from stagnation of trade, and the flight of a large portion of the populace, together with nearly all the respectable families, made the condition of the people very wretched, and the contrast is infinitely in favour of the present state of things. But the upper classes do not participate in these congratulatory feelings to the extent that the lower do. They have regained their country, but not the high position they appear to have anticipated. They refer to the power they formerly had under their own kings; their being then allowed to hold slaves, who under our rule have been declared free; also the emancipation of the debtor slaves, who having pledged their persons were bondsmen to their masters, until they could repay the sums advanced.

The upper classes, and the literati, who are much respected, speak with regret of the neglect now shewn to pagodas and religious edifices,

which formerly were repaired by the government ; they declare there is a general decay of *dhamma-wat*, or virtue, among all classes ; less attention to religious duties and ceremonies, which they attribute to the governing power not setting the example ; to this neglect also is attributed cholera and sickness among cattle, which of late, have frequently visited the country. The *phoongyees*, or priests, complain, that people are no longer constrained to respect in their presence the law, " thou shalt not kill," but catch fish in tanks near the monasteries with impunity.

When *Khyeng-byan* raised a revolt against the Burmese, (he was the son of the man who first invited them across,) all the most respectable families joined his standard, and finally they fled to the Chittagong district. These men on the breaking out of war between the Burmese and the British, offered their services, through Mr. T. C. Robertson, then Magistrate of Chittagong, to assist in conquering *Arakan*. Some of them were connections of *Khyeng-byan*, and relations of those chiefs who, in the latter times of the kingdom when the regular monarchs were deposed, had one after another seized the throne. Among these men, two of the most distinguished were *Oung-gyau-ri* and *Oung-gyau-stan*, the former a brother-in-law of *Khyeng-byan's*, rendered important services to the army of invasion ; the latter was a nephew of *Khyeng-byan's*, and a man of influence and ability. After the occupation of the country, these men were amply provided for, but appear to have cherished hopes that when the British army was withdrawn, the country would be made over to them, or at least to a native dynasty. Both were impatient of controul, and were convicted of exercising their authority with cruelty. One was removed from his office of *myo-thoo-gyee* on a charge of bribery and corruption, and the other being convicted of severely wounding a police darogah with a *dha*, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

In less than two years after the occupation of *Arakan*, the establishment of a native dynasty was canvassed and plotted for, and these two men, together with nearly all the influential persons in the country, were privy to intrigues to compass that object. In December 1826, or January 1827, a grandson of *A-bha-ya*, a chief who had seized the throne and reigned for nine years before the Burman conquest, returned to *Arakan*. His father, named *Pa-tang-tsa*, had been carried to Ava

by the Burmese. The son of *Pa-tang-tsa*, named *Shwe-pang*, either had made his escape, as he averred, or been permitted quietly to depart the court of Ava, perhaps, hoping thereby to excite troubles in *Arakan*. Certain it is, that on his appearance, most of the headmen of the country were favourable to his claims, and attempts were made in April 1827, to tamper with the native officers and men of the Local Battalion. *Shwe-pang* was subsequently made a *kywn-aop*; the flame was smothered for a time, but the fire remained smouldering. Nine years after, the above named individuals were guilty of exciting a man, named *Kyeet-tsan-we*, to rise in arms; he commenced plundering the country, with the assistance of a band of escaped convicts, and other desperate characters, and some of the ignorant hill tribe, the *Khyengs*. He and his adherents were at length forced to fly into the Burman territory, whence they were brought back in the beginning of 1837, being given up by the Burman government.

This *emeute* was called *dakoity*, (gang robbery,) but the real object of the attempt was to seize the government of the country. The instigators were insane enough to believe, that the British government would be wearied out by their system of ravaging the country, and make it over to them on payment of a yearly tribute! Since this attempt, every thing has been very quiet. The English expedition to China has excited an intense interest among the *Ra-khoing-thas*, and as China is regarded as the first power in the world, the issue of the contest was held to be rather doubtful until the favourable result of certain magical calculations which were resorted to, when it was discovered to have been long ago foretold in certain books, that the English were destined to subdue China. There is in *Arakan* a village named *Ta-rouk*, the same name which the Burmese give to China. On going into the interior in January 1841, I directed my steps to this village first, in order to ascend a hill in the vicinity. The people were impressed with the belief that I was going there to have a mimic fight for the village, and order the inhabitants to come out and make their submission, as an omen for the success of the China expedition!

Within the last four years, great improvements have been made in *Arakan* taxes. It is difficult to account for such an impolitic and unjust system of taxation as existed up to 1836 ever having been proposed or adopted. Boats, nets of all sizes, cattle not used in agri-

culture: all trades, occupations, and callings had separate taxes upon them; these have now been happily abandoned, and other taxes to the amount of nearly a lakh of rupees reduced, without any loss accruing to the state. The grants of land will raise up a new class in *Arakan*, viz. of extensive landholders with an hereditary right to their estates, whose interests will be bound to the British government.

Among the hill tribes I have omitted mentioning two, viz. *Kyan*, and the *Toung-mru*, of which only a few families exist. The former live on the *Kola-dan* among the *Ku-mis*, from whom they differ in some habits, but have the same general appearance. A few words of their language will be found in Appendix D. A few houses of the *Toung-mru* tribe are to be found in the upper course of the *Ma-yu*.

The hill tribes within the British territory, may as regards their relation with the government, be divided into two classes.

1st. Those who live near the plains, and are therefore entirely under the controul of the *Arakan* authorities.

2d. Those residing at a greater distance, and whose country is inaccessible for ordinary purposes.

The first are assessed at the rate of two rupees per annum for each cultivator; the chiefs are answerable for the preservation of order in their clans, and must surrender all criminals to be tried by law. Slaves among these tribes have been emancipated.*

Among the second class, no inquiries are made regarding the number of cultivators, but the chief of the clan pays a fixed sum yearly in token of his fealty. The tribes of this class are not interfered with in their internal arrangements, but of course they are bound to abstain from all attacks on tribes within the British frontier, and indeed beyond it; too frequently it is to be feared they join in the former, or furnish information which leads to them. They still hold slaves, and punish their own criminals in petty cases. It would be

* The chiefs complain of this as a great hardship. In a *Khyeng* tribe, I once met a young *toung-meng*, or chief, who had lost one of his fingers. It appeared that his slaves had one fine morning absconded, and he was obliged to set to work himself for his support in clearing forest land. By his clumsiness, he soon cut off a finger, and now he held up his mutilated hand to me, in dumb appeal for the restitution of his slaves. This young man was all but naked, and a blush was visible in his clear olive cheek, when the *Ra-khoing-thas* with me threw a cloth over him, and he heard for the first time in his life, that he was committing a breach of decency in appearing unclothed.

next to impossible to controul them on these points, as they are separated from the plains by too difficult and dangerous a country to be approached, except by an armed party. The hill tribes pay their quotas in cotton, ivory, and other raw produce. Tribute is paid by all tribes residing within the limits, in which the *Arakan* and Burman governments formerly exercised authority. Some of these know us by name as some dreadful beings, but have never beheld an European.

The hill tribes live a life of danger, struggle, and hardship. The chiefs indeed have an easy time of it, but the women are especially hard worked. The latter are scantily clothed, as much so, however, as precipitous hills and a warm climate render necessary; they are stoutly made, but diminutive in size; the generality not exceeding in height four feet six inches. The *Ku-mis* (men) are not smaller in stature than the Burmese, the *Khyengs* I think are.

The hill cultivation is called in Burmese *toung-ya*. It consists in clearing away the thick forest, and luxuriant shrubs and creepers, which clothe the mountain sides. After the large trees are cut down, what remains of the underwood is set on fire; the stumps of the large trees are left standing. This work is finished in April. The seed, whether rice or cotton, is then put into the ground, small holes being dug or scraped a few inches apart, with a sort of hand hoe. The crop is reaped in October.* What a hard and bitter life must these people live! Each year the same labour must be encountered, the same dense unyielding forest be cleared, and yet they know not whether they shall be there to reap the fruits of their toil, or be carried off in an attack as slaves to some more powerful tribe. Notwithstanding the noble trees which find sustenance upon the mountains, yet the soil is so unfavourable to grain, that it cannot be raised again, the people say, upon the same spot in less than from fifteen to twenty years. I am inclined to think, that this is chiefly in consequence of the rich surface soil, when deprived of its protecting trees and shrubs being washed down the steep hill sides by the heavy rains; it is not until brushwood has again appeared, and the soil been bound again by bamboo roots,

* Besides grain and cotton, the hill tribes grow tobacco and a few esculent vegetables, such as pumpkins, gourds, &c. These are planted in little valleys, or by the side of streams, on soil left dry after the rainy season.

(which spring up very thickly in two or three years after a hill side has been cleared,) that sufficient soil is accumulated to nourish grain. Each returning season, then, brings for these mountaineers the toil and hardship of a new clearing. They are unacquainted with the terrace cultivation of other hill countries; indeed the hills appear too precipitous for it to be practicable. Spots favourable for clearings are by no means plentiful. The people have sometimes to go one, two, or more days' journey from their village, in small parties here and there, to sow their grain. In these separate clearings, they erect temporary sheds, raised from fifteen to twenty feet from the ground, and remain there until the work is finished, when they return to the village, leaving perhaps two or three hands to watch the crop. These people instead of the high raised sheds commonly used, sometimes sleep at night up in trees, where they have made a convenient resting place with interwoven branches, and a few split bamboos bound together with strong creepers, which interlace these forests in profusion. This practice has perhaps given rise to the tale, that some hill tribes had no regular dwellings, but lived in trees, more like apes than men.*

After a village has remained in one site for two or three years, all the culturable spots in the vicinity are cleared and exhausted.† The

* The tree-living *Kukis*, represented to live in the hills and forests east of the *Chittagong* district, have attracted considerable attention. The whole account of their cannibalism and tree-dwelling I regard as fable. There may perhaps have been instances of some of these savage tribes offering human sacrifices. I have had intercourse with very "pretty savages" in the wild country bordering on *Arakan* to the E. and N. E; all of whom had comfortable houses, even the poorest of them far more roomy than the wretched hovels of Bengalee peasants; these savages had intercourse with other tribes beyond them, but had never heard of tree-living and human-flesh-devouring people, though they had plenty of wonderful stories to tell of Amazonian tribes, where male children were destroyed, and of others who by magic could make themselves invulnerable. But these best authority is that of the *Khyoung-thas*, men of Burman race, who live among the hill tribes, and are comparatively civilized. Some of these I have known who had been taken as slaves, and passed to distant independent tribes, and subsequently regained their freedom. These men had never heard of tree-living men. The name *Kuki* was unknown to all, but the same tribes are called by many names. The tale has, I suspect, been received from Bengalee narrators in the *Chittagong* district, and incautiously received as correct. What European can vouch for its truth?

† I know two cases, one beyond the British territory, where tribes had a wide range of territory, and jealously guarded against any clearing being made in it by other tribes. They have thus kept their villages on the same site for more than twenty years, or crops, for so they reckon time. One of these villages was perched upon a rock almost inaccessible, it was therefore a favourite position, one not easily surprised.

people must then look out for another home ; their village is abandoned, and forth they go, men, women, and children, two, three or more days' journey, to build their bamboo huts near some spot where they may raise food ; men and women may on those occasions be seen toiling up the steep hills, their conical baskets on their backs, fastened by a strap passing round the forehead ; in some their children sleeping contentedly, others containing their worldly goods. I have entered deserted villages, in which perhaps half the people's property, such as it was, had been left, until they could return and take it away at leisure ; there were baskets of rice, *dhan*, pounding mortars, cotton spinning and weaving machines. I have even seen spoons, the bowl rudely cut out of wood, and a bamboo handle lashed on. The cotton cloths these people weave are really excellent, the threads are coloured with various vegetable dyes, blue, red, yellow, &c. and are frequently woven into very handsome patterns.

The houses of the hill tribes are built entirely of bamboo in the walls, the supports, and the flooring. They are roofed with leaves of the same plant. The houses are raised on platforms, and from the steepness of the hills, oneside may be from twelve to fifteen feet above the ground, and being supported by bamboo props, not more than two inches in diameter, they look very slight ; but last well, with trifling repairs, for three years, the general period for which they are required. The chief's house usually consists of a spacious hall, extending right across the dwelling, in which the feasts are held, and where is always a large hearth of plastered mud, on which a whole ox might be roasted ; on either side of the hall are separate rooms for the different members of the family, the unmarried sons and daughters. The houses of the people of course are not on such a large scale as the chief's, but they are spacious ; two families sometimes live together, in which case they ordinarily cook and eat separately.

The villages consist of from twenty to forty, or fifty houses, which are built as regularly as the nature of the ground will admit. The rapidity with which these people will run up a bamboo hut is surprising. Journeying in the hills, I have come to halting ground for the night, fifty *Ku-mis* with their *dhas* leap into the bamboo forest, which resounds with the sharp strokes of the *dha* in rapid succession, and forth they come, dragging the slender stems after them in bundles of eight or ten.

These are cut to the required size for the platform and roof supports, split and crushed for the walls and floor; the leaves formed into slate-like pieces, bound with battens; thin strips are cut to tie the whole fabric together, and in less than an hour, out of the confused rush of fifty dark forms, each has found his proper place and work, and there stands a comfortable house, which will shelter one from a severe storm, should it appear.

The villages of the remoter tribes are generally built on the tops of hills not easy of access; in these situations there is a scarcity of water for six months in the year, and the people are obliged to descend daily to the lowest dells for that necessary of life. These villages are invariably stockaded, and the ground in the vicinity thickly studded with sharp bamboo spikes, to prevent the approach of foes; they are as hard as iron, and to bare-footed men are a great hindrance, especially in the night time. The tribes somewhat within our border, have abandoned or neglected this system of stockading their villages, and unfortunately some of them have suffered severely; but no tribe within our border has attacked another so situated since April 1837.* Different clans of *Ku-mis* attack each other; there is a feeling of jealousy between clans of the same tribe living upon different streams, and those clans of *Ku-mis* living beyond the British frontier, consider those within as fair game. Their native arms for attack and defence are spears, bows, arrows, and square leathern shields, about three and a half feet long, by two feet broad. Even the most distant tribes now possess muskets and ammunition, which are conveyed up the *Kola-dan* by petty merchants, and thence passed from tribe to tribe far into the interior. They use poisoned arrows in the chase, but I think not in war.

One grand necessary of life—salt, the remote tribes have great difficulty in procuring. The *Ku-mis* of the *Kola-dan* procure it and salt fish from *Akyab*; among them it is plentiful. The tribe living higher up the *Kola-dan*, beyond the British frontier, receive a good deal from Cox's Bazar, through the *Khy-oung-thas*, living in the hills east of *Ramoo*. Some tribes further removed, and isolated by savage feuds, cannot procure salt at all times, so content themselves with an

* When a terrible slaughter was made of a *Khyeng* village on the *Le-myo*, by a *Kumi* chief of the *Kola-dan*.

alkali, which they have the ingenuity to obtain by the combustion of bamboo. Powerful outside clans frequently force supplies of salt and gunpowder from their inner and weaker neighbours.

The great art of war among the *Arakan* hill tribes is, to fall on the enemy by surprise. If they are discovered before reaching a village of attack, they effect a retreat. An open advance in day-light is utterly inconsistent with their ideas of warfare. Before starting on an expedition, they send trusty spies to ascertain the best mode of approach; numerous are the feasts and ceremonies practiced to propitiate the spirits of the mountain; then they march, four, five, or six days' journey, and burst upon the devoted village an hour or two before dawn. These attacks are sometimes made through revenge, the consequence of feuds existing for many years; but generally the great object is to take prisoners who may be made slaves, women, and children therefore are captured; the men are generally slaughtered without mercy; they would be too troublesome to keep. The prisoners are sold from tribe to tribe. I have sometimes been fortunate enough to recover *Khyeng* women and children, poor creatures who had been carried from their original homes amidst the *Yu-ma* mountains, about two hundred miles. This appeared a very world of distance to them, in a mountainous country, where communication is so difficult. The *Khyeng* women have their faces tattooed in a remarkable manner, and being the only tribe who follow this custom, they are easily recognized amidst other people.

I need scarcely remark, that none of the hill tribes are acquainted with the use of letters. A few words of their languages will be found in Appendix D. They are the same as those published in the "Comparison of Indo-Chinese languages," by the Rev. N. Brown of Sudya, in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* for December 1837. Separate clans of *Ku-mis* and *Khyengs* differ from each other in their words for some objects.

On the tribe called "Lung-khe."

On the upper course of the river *Kola-dan*, and generally located to the west of that river, beyond the British frontier, there exists a tribe called by the *Ku-mis* and *Ra-khoing-thas*, *Lung-khe*. They

are sometimes called *Boung-ju* and *Boung-jwe*. It is this extraordinary variety of names given to one and the same people, that leads to so much confusion, and causes so much difficulty in attempting to classify the different tribes. Another difficulty is, the inability of these people to give any connected account of themselves. The most that can be done, is to treasure up what they incidentally let fall, and draw inferences from it; to gain a knowledge of them by direct questions is almost hopeless, for they will give different answers to the same questions day after day, not I conceive from any wish to deceive, but from ignorance, and inability to reflect.

In my inquiries concerning the *Lung-khes*, I learnt sufficient to make it appear probable, that the *Lung-khes* and *Boung-jwes* were originally separate tribes, who had been conquered and reduced to slavery by a third. Their present *toung-meng*, or chief, is named *Leng-kung*, and he describes himself as belonging originally to a very powerful tribe to the N. E. of his present seat; his clan in that tribe is named *Hlaing-ji-u*, *Hlaing-chou*, *Hling-ju*, and *Hleng-tchyo*.* Several generations back, a portion of his clan coming from the N. E. subdued the *Lung-khes* and *Boung-jwes*, and though still retaining intercourse with his ancestor's nation, yet his dialect, he states, has become changed. The nation from which he is descended, is called by the *Ku-mis*, *Tsein-du*, or *Shin-du*, a corruption probably of the clan-name *Hling-ju*, but as the *Ku-mis* use the term for the whole people, I shall adopt it with the same signification in this paper. I could not discover from the *Lung-khe* chief, that they had any generic name for the whole people. In speaking of the *Tsein-dus*, he used the term *Que-sak*, which he said signifies in his tongue, "upper people," or people living in the upper country; while he and those of his clan, who separated, as above described, are called by the *Tsein-dus*, *Que-tang* or *Que-plang*, i. e. "people living lower down;" referring either to the course of streams, or to the diminished elevation of the hills. The *Ku-mis* have a great dread of the *Tsein-dus*.

I must proceed to narrate how I first met the *Lung-khe* chief, for he formerly lived in independence beyond the British frontier.

* I heard these four pronunciations given for the clan-name, by *Leng-kung* and his brother.

In October 1838, the village of *Hleng-kreing*,* a powerful *Kumi* chief of the *Kola-dan*, was attacked by the *Lung-khes*. The attack took place in the dead of the night, and the surprise was complete. Between thirty and forty persons were killed in the village, and thirty-eight women and children were carried into slavery. This attack was headed by *Leng-kung*, a young man of 23 or 24 years of age. A party of the *Arakan* Local Battalion was sent in pursuit of the *Lung-khes*, but they abandoned their village, and fled with their captives into the hills, where it would have been useless to follow. In December of the same year, I proceeded up the *Kola-dan*, to make inquiries regarding the assailants, and found they had abandoned the site of their village, and gone westward with their prisoners, putting themselves under the protection of a *Kyung-tha* family, living within the hill boundaries of the *Chittagong* district.† Being assured of this by persons whom I sent to ascertain the fact, I addressed the Magistrate of *Chittagong*, who recovered no less than thirty-three women and children that had been captured in *Hleng-kreing's* village; these were restored to their homes; one among them being the chief's daughter; two had been killed in retreat, and three sold to the *Tsein-dus*.

Shortly after their recovery, *Leng-kung* himself, and his elder brother *Leng-hung*, came down to *Akyab* to answer for their misdeeds. *Leng-kung* so far from denying that he headed the attack, gloried in it, averring, that "thirty years before, *Dha-boing-gyee* had attacked his tribe, killed a number of men, carried off several captive, and dug up his grandfather's bones,‡ plundering the grave of the various implements of war and state, which are always buried with a chief." This sacrilege the young man declared he had been brought up to avenge, and his eyes gleamed with delight as he told of his success! An elder brother accompanied him to *Akyab*, but the younger, from his superior energy and ability, possessed all authority in the tribe. From *Leng-kung* I

* This chief is generally called *Dha-boing-gyee*, a title of one of the officers of state under the *Arakan* kings, which he has assumed.

† This *Ky-oung-tha* family, the present head of whom is named *Thak-tang-phyoo*, emigrated from *Arakan* about 60 years since.

‡ The *Lung-khes* and *Tsein-dus* bury their dead, differing from the *Ku-mis* in this respect, who burn them.

learnt the following particulars regarding the *Lung-khes* and *Tsein-dus* :—

“ The *Lung-khes* subject to me, amount to three hundred houses ; they are all my slaves, except the immediate members of my family ; we live in bamboo houses like the *Ku-mis* ; we receive iron from the *Tsein-dus*, and salt from the *Ku-mis* ; our cultivation in the hills is *toung-ya* like theirs ; our language and that of the *Tsein-dus* is nearly alike ; we possess cows, pigs, goats, cats, and fowls ; we bury our dead ; the corpse is placed in a sitting posture, with a pipe in its mouth, food by its side, and *kung* ;* besides these a *moung*, (Burman gong,) sword and spear, together with the feathers worn in the hair by men of rank.

“ We worship four *Nats*, (spirits,) who are called *Que-sing*, *Sur-par*, *Put-ten*, and *Wan-chung* ; *Sur-par* is the head *Nat* ; he lives in the sky, and so do the others. There are cities in the sky where the dead men live ; there are many countries there, where trees bear food ready cooked, and clothes, and all things necessary. If men do not worship the *Nats*, when they sicken they die ; we worship once or twice a-year in the village, by sacrificing a buffalo, or pig, and drinking *kung* ; we do so to benefit ourselves, our wives, and children, and that no sickness may arise ; in the cultivation we have another sacrifice of goats and pigs to the *Nats* of the earth and water ; there are no names for those *Nats* ; for them we kill a fowl and throw it into the water, and leave meat or rice exposed on the ground. All men sacrifice for themselves, but we have *tsha-yas*, (instructors,) who at festivals are the first to bring the *kung*, and adjure the spirits. What they say I do not understand ; only a *tsha-ya's* son can succeed him. They have nothing to say to marriages or funerals. In marriages, the father and brother of the damsel are presented with clothes, brass ornaments, cattle, &c. A great feast takes place. I (*Leng-kung*,) gave the value of thirty cows for my wife. A son can marry his father's inferior wife, after the father's death. A chief can marry as many wives as he pleases. When a woman of rank dies, a cow is killed and eaten, and the people drink and dance ; she is buried in a grave lined with stones, and sometimes valuables are buried with her ; not always ; we do not practice witchcraft, but other people around us do. A man's life when he dies,

* An intoxicating drink.

goes to the sky ; all men, whether good or bad, go there. Our fathers who have gone before, we see in dreams, and they see us."

I learnt from *Leng-kung* some particulars respecting the *Tsein-dus* nation. It consists of the following clans :—

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>Tjin-dza</i> ,* | 8. <i>Ting-lhoul</i> , |
| 2. <i>Za-tang</i> , | 9. <i>Ti-a-dai</i> , |
| 3. <i>Keng-lot</i> , | 10. <i>Rul-bu</i> , |
| 4. <i>Lhon-shin</i> , | 11. <i>Boi-kheng</i> , |
| 5. <i>Til-teng</i> , | 12. <i>Chung-ngla</i> , |
| 6. <i>Rwol-lweng</i> , | 13. <i>Hlaing-ju</i> . |
| 7. <i>M'lhul</i> , | |

This last clan the *Lung-khe* chief originally belonged to ; there are still some villages of it, he said, remaining among the *Tsein-dus*.

The *Tsein-dus* observe the same ceremonies in burying their dead that have been mentioned above. Their country is very extensive, fifteen days' journey, my informant said, from one end to the other.† There are several hundred villages of them. The village sites are not moved periodically like those of the *Ku-mis* and *Lung-khes*, for much of their cultivation is in elevated plains, and comparatively broad valleys, which admit of continued cultivation ; they work with hoes or spades, not ploughs ; they have not so much cotton and rice as the *Ku-mis*, but a greater variety of vegetables, as yams, pumpkins, &c. They manufacture their own salt from brine springs existing in their country ; the salt, said my informant, "is like stone, white and somewhat bitter in flavour ;" to obtain it, they boil the brine in iron vessels, which they obtain from the province of *Yan* in Burmah. No salt is obtained from bamboo ; in fact my informant declared positively there were no bamboos in the *Tsein-du* country, a statement scarcely credible ; the houses are built entirely of plank ; the roofs are of plank for great men, but the poorer classes use grass ; men chiefly perform field labour ; the wives of very poor men only perform out-door work. The religious notions of the *Tsein-dus* correspond with those of the *Lung-khe* chief.

* The head of this clan is *Van-u*, whose sister named *Terh-rhal*, *Leng-kung* married.

† I have been informed that *Kumi* tribes bordering on the *Tsein-dus* have heard from them of white foreigners far to the North, to whom some of their clans paid tribute. The country these clans paid to, they called *A-syn*. It can scarcely be Assam ; they may probably mean Cachar. But it is certain that they are acquainted with the fact of Europeans having possessions to the north of them.

The *Tsein-dus* receive from the province of *Yan*, ponies and horned cattle. When *Leng-kung* and his brother first arrived at *Akyab*, they were dressed in handsome silks procured through the *Tsein-dus* from *Yan*. The former wore also a tiara of dark feathers, his distinguishing mark as chief.

Since writing the above, I have received accounts of the death of *Leng-kung*, supposed to have been caused by poison administered to him; such is the story of the hill people. Certain it is, however, that the *Tsein-dus* marched to revenge his death, and plundered a *Khyoung-tha* village on the *Chittagong* frontier in May last. Endeavours are now being made to recover the *Khyoung-tha* prisoners from the *Tsein-dus*. On the death of *Leng-kung*, his tribe dispersed; his imbecile brother will not be able to keep the people together, and they will probably become incorporated in other tribes.

I abstract from various Tables furnished to me by the author of the above interesting report—returns, as follow, showing the high progressive prosperity of *Arakan* within the few past years:—

The Revenues of Arakan were,

| | <i>Rupees.</i> |
|--------------------|----------------|
| In 1832-33, | 2,48,569 |
| 1833-34, | 2,80,304 |
| 1834-35, | 3,10,168 |
| 1835-36, | 2,87,016 |
| 1836-37, | 3,26,293 |
| 1837-38, | 3,35,731 |
| 1838-39, | 3,80,287 |
| 1839-40, | 3,79,809 |
| 1840-41, | 3,79,697 |

Since 1837-38, taxes on forest produce, huts, boats, houses, sugar presses handicraftsmen, bachelors, &c. &c. (which prevailed as part of the ancient revenue system of *Arakan*), had been abolished to the extent of 97,341 rupees a-year; the beneficial effect of this measure is shewn in the enhanced revenue, and trade of the province. In 1834-35, the number of square-rigged vessels which cleared out from *Akyab* was 140; in 1840-41 it was 709; in the first named year the tonnage was 16,000 tons; in the last noted 82,111 tons. In 1834-35, rice to the extent of 4,25,040 maunds valued at rupees 1,73,636 was exported from *Akyab*. The rice in 1840-41, were from the same port 26,54,298 maunds, and



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