

Editor's Notes:

This abstract of Captain Hannay's 1835-1836 journal appeared in several places in the late 1830s. This particular version was published in *Selection of Papers Regarding the Hill Tracts Between Assam and Burmah and of the Upper Brahmaputra* (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1873).

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Abstract of the Journal of a Route Travelled by Captain S. F. Hannay, of the 40th Regiment, Native Infantry, in 1835-36, from the Capital of Ava to the Amber Mines of the Hukong Valley on the South-east Frontier of Assam.

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From the termination of the Burmese war to the present period the spirit of inquiry has never slept, and the most strenuous exertions have been made by the officers employed on the eastern frontier to extend our geographical knowledge to countries scarcely known but by name, and to acquire some accurate information regarding the manners, customs, and languages of the various races of men by whom they are inhabited.

The researches of Captains Bedford, Wilcox, and Neufville, and of Lieutenant Burlton in Assam, dispelled the mist which had previously rested on the whole of the eastern portion of that magnificent valley; and the general direction and aspect of its mountain barriers, the courses and relative size of its rivers, the habits of the innumerable tribes who dwell on the rugged summits of its mountains, or, on the alluvial plains at their base, were then first made the subject of description, founded, not on the vague reports of half civilized savages, but on the personal investigations of

men whose scientific attainments enabled them to fix with precision the geographical site of every locality they visited. The journey of Wilcox and Burlton to the sources of the Irrawaddy river had proved the absence of communication between it and the great Tsanpo of Thibet, but they were unable to prosecute their examination further east; and though their researches had extended to a point not more than twenty miles distant from the meridian on which the labours of the Jesuit missionaries in Yunan had been abruptly terminated, the intervening space and great valley of the Irrawaddy still remained closed against them, and every attempt to enter either from Assam or Manipur was defeated by the jealous vigilance of the Burmese authorities.

It is generally known that the course of the lower portion of the Irrawaddy river, or that part extending from Rangoon to Ava, had been delineated by Lieutenant Wood of the Engineers, who accompanied Captain Symes on his embassy to that court; and that the features of the surrounding country, the size of the towns, its natural productions and population, had at the same time been investigated by the accurate Buchanan. Charts of this portion of the river, extending to Monchabu, the capital of the great Alompra, had at a far earlier period been constructed, but the surveys were avowedly made in a manner not calculated to inspire much confidence in their accuracy, and the attention of Europe was first extensively drawn to this field of inquiry by the publication of Symes, whose exaggerated views of the civilization, power, and resources of the Burmese empire were generally adopted, while the more accurate estimates of his successor, Coxe were treated with comparative disregard.

In the very infancy of our intercourse with the Burman empire, and when the most persevering attempts were made to obtain settlements at various points of the coast, the more remote stations on the upper portion of the Irrawaddy river were not forgotten; and Bamu or Bamo was even then known as the emporium of a trade between the Burmese and Chinese, in which our aspiring merchants were most anxious to share. It is asserted that at the commencement of the 17th century factories were established in that neighbourhood, but the permission to remain was shortly afterwards withdrawn, and the information which it is supposed was then obtained of the surrounding country has never been rescued from oblivion. This is the less to be regretted, as the loss has been fully compensated by the results of recent research; and the journey of Captain Hannay, of the 40th Regiment, Native Infantry, from Ava up the Irrawaddy river to the frontier towns of Bamo and Mogaung, has at length rendered this hitherto inaccessible region almost as well known to us as the more southern districts through which this noble river directs its course. Many geographical points of extreme interest have been determined by the personal observation and inquiries of this meritorious officer. Bamo has for the first time become accurately known; from the same source much valuable

information has been gained respecting the trade carried on between Ava and China in this remote corner of the Burman empire. The habits and localities of some of the principal tribes occupying the 'mountainous tracts bordering on western Yunan have been successfully investigated; the position of the very remarkable valley of Hukoug has been determined; the pyenduren or amber mines have for the first time been examined by the eye of European intelligence; the latitudes of the principal towns between Ava and Mungkhong have been ascertained by astronomical observation with a degree of accuracy sufficient for every purpose of practical utility, and they may now be regarded as established points, from whence inquiry can radiate in every direction with a confidence which the most zealous and enlightened investigators have been hitherto unable to feel in prosecuting their researches from the want of a few previously well-determined positions at which to commence or terminate their inquiries.

To an act of aggression on the part of a Singfo tributary of Ava against a Chieftain of the same clan residing under our protection, are we indebted for the opportunity of acquiring the information now gained, and the feud of two insignificant borderers may prove the immediate cause of a more intimate communication than had ever previously existed between our recently acquired possessions in Assam and the northern provinces of the Burman empire.

The Bisa and Dupha Gams are the heads of two clans of Singfos, occupying the northern and southern faces of the chain of mountains, which forms a lofty barrier between Ava and Assam. The former Chieftain, on our conquest of the latter country, tendered his submission, and was admitted within the pale of that feudatory dependence which many other tribes of the same clan had been equally anxious to enter. He was uniformly treated by the local authorities with great consideration, and was located at the northern foot of the Patkoi pass leading from Assam to the Hukong valley. Between this Chieftain and the Dupha Gam a feud had existed long previous to our assumption of the sovereignty of the country; and the latter, at the close of the year 1835, headed a party, which crossing the mountains from the Burmese province of Hukong, entered Bisa, the residence of the Chief of that clan, and after ravaging and plundering the village, sealed their atrocity with the indiscriminate murder of all the inhabitants that fell into their hands. The circumstances were made known to the British Resident at the Court of Ava, inquiry was demanded, and security required against the recurrence of similar acts of aggression. A deputation from the capital was ordered to the Burmese frontier for the purpose of instituting the necessary investigation, and Colonel Burney, the enlightened representative of British interests at that Court, failed not to avail himself of the opportunity thus unexpectedly afforded of

attaching an officer to the mission, and Captain Hannay, who then commanded his escort, was selected for the duty.

The party, consisting of the newly appointed Burmah Governor of Mogaung, of Captain Hannay, and several Burmese officers of inferior rank, with a military escort, left Ava on the 22nd of November 1835, in a fleet of 34 boats of various sizes, for a part of the country which had been uniformly closed against strangers with the most jealous vigilance. "No foreigners," says Captain Hannay, "except the Chinese are allowed to navigate the Irrawaddy above the Choki of Tsampaynago, situated about seventy miles above Ava, and no native of the country even is permitted to proceed above that post, excepting under a special license from the Government. The trade to the north of Ava is entirely in the hands of the Chinese, and the individuals of that nation residing at Ava have always been vigilant in trying to prevent any interference with their monopoly."

The mission was detained the two following days near the former capital of Amarapura to complete the quota of troops by which it was to be accompanied, and whose discipline, when they did join, was very soon found to be on a par with their honesty.

"They work their own boats," says Captain Hannay, "some of which are covered in, and others are quite open. Their muskets (if they deserve the name) are ranged here and there throughout the boat, and are never cleared either from rust or dust, and wet or dry they are left without any covering. Each man carries a canvas bag, which is a receptacle for all sorts of things, including a few bamboo cartridges. He wears a black Shan jacket and a head-dress or gong-boung of red cotton handkerchief, and thus equipped he is a complete Burman militia man. They appear on further acquaintance to be better humoured than I at first thought them, but they are sad plunderers, and I pity the owners of the fields of pumpkins or beans they come across. I have remarked that whatever a Burman boatman eats in addition to his rice, is generally stolen[?]."

Except at Kugyih, where there are said to be several Christian villages, of which, however, no satisfactory information could be obtained, the progress of the mission was unmarked by any circumstance of interest until its arrival at Yedan, where they entered the first kyook-dwen, or rocky defile, through which the river directs its course. Lower down the extreme breadth of the stream had varied from one to two and a half miles, but here its width was contracted to less than a quarter of a mile, with a proportionate increase in the depth and velocity of the current. During the rainy season of the year, boats shoot through these narrow passes with terrific velocity, and the numerous eddies caused by the projecting rocks add greatly to the danger of the passage. In this part of their course the mission frequently met large rafts of bamboos

descending from the Shueli river, and upon them small baskets of pickled tea, brought from the hills to the south-east of that river. This tea was said to be manufactured by a race called Palong Paon, who are under Momeit. At Tsingu, Captain Hannay saw three native Chinese from Thengyichu or Mounyen, and several others in the service of the noblemen of the Court had accompanied the expedition from Ava with the view of proceeding to the kyouk-tsein, or serpentine mines, near the source, of the Uru river, west of the Irrawaddy. On the 30th of November the party left the village of Yedan Yua, where a perceptible change takes place in the character of the country and river. "The latter," says Captain Hannay, "from covering an extent of miles, is sometimes confined within a limit of 150 yards, without rapids or torrents, as I had expected, but almost as still as a lake. In some places its depth is very great, being upwards of 10 fathoms. It winds through beautiful jungle, in which the pipul, simul trees, and bamboos, are conspicuous, and it has, generally speaking, a rooky bed and banks, which last rise to a considerable height, and composed of sandstone, which varies from dark to a white and yellow colour." At the next stage, or Thihadophya, Captain Hannay mentions a very remarkable instance of the tameness of the fish, which are not allowed to be killed, and are found from about a mile below the village to an equal distance above.

"If rice is thrown into the water from the boat, a dozen fish, some of them as much as three and four feet long, come to the surface, and not only eat the rice, but open their mouths for you to put it in, and they will allow you to pat them on the head, which I and some of my followers actually did. Some of these fish are apparently of the same species as those called in India guru and ruta, indeed the Hindus who are with me called them by these names. The breadth of head is remarkable, and the mouth very large; they have no teeth, at least so the people told me whom I saw feeling their mouths." This spectacle, strange as it must have appeared, was hardly more so than the adventure of the following morning, when Captain Hannay "was awoke by the boatmen calling to the fish to participate in their meal."

On the 1st of December the expedition arrival at Tsampaynago, which has been before mentioned as the limit beyond which even natives of the country are not permitted to proceed without an express order from the Government. The custom house or thana is on the right bank of the river, and Malemyu, which is close to it, contains about 800 houses, with many very handsome gilded temples.

The Myothagyi, or deputy governor of the town, is also the custom officer, and a tax of 15 ticals per boat is levied on the Chinese coming from Bamo. Old Tsampaynago Myo is situated at the mouth of a small river which flows from Mogout

and Kyatpen, and falls into the Irrawaddy immediately opposite the modern choki of that name.

The sites of Mogout and Kyatpen, where some of the finest rubies of the kingdom are obtained, were pointed out to Captain Hannay as lying in a direction N. 80° E. of Tsampaynago, and about thirty or forty miles distant, immediately behind a very conspicuous peak called Shueu Toung, which he estimated at 3,000 feet high. The Madara river, as well as that of Tsampaynago, flows from the same mineral district, which must greatly facilitate communication with it. The inhabitants of the country were unwilling or afraid to communicate any information regarding these secluded spots, and their exact locality is still a subject of conjecture. The mines are described as in a very swampy situation, and surrounded at a trifling distance by lofty hills. The three places at which the gems are principally sought are Mogout, Kyatpen, and Lounthe, and the principal miners are Kathays or Manipuris, with a few Chinese and Shans. The other most celebrated spot is Momeit, the site of which Buchanan found some difficulty in determining, but which Captain Hannay learnt was not more than two or three days' journey, or between twenty or thirty miles north of Mogout and Kyatpen. While at this place Captain Hannay says "they heard the people who were cutting bamboos in the hills rolling bundles of them down the face of the steep. Having made a road by felling the trees, the woodmen allow bundles of 150 and 200 bamboos to find their way to the bottom, which they do with a noise that is heard at the distance of eight miles. They are then floated down the small river into the Irrawaddy, but tins operation can only be effected during the rains." The party now began to feel the cold excessively, and its severity was greatly heightened by a strong northerly wind, which seldom subsided until the afternoon, and was particularly keen in the narrow passes or kyouk-dwens.

Tagoung Myu, which was reached on the 5th of December, is an object of peculiar interest, as it is said to have been built by a king from Western India, whose descendants afterwards founded the kingdoms of Prome, Pagan, and Ava. Captain Hannay found the walls of the old fort dwindled away to a mere mound, and hardly discernible from the jungle with which they were covered, but adds "that enough is still seen to convince one that such a place did formerly exist. The fort has evidently been parallel with the river, and is on the left bank, which is high and composed of sandstone. About half a mile inland, the remains of the inner walls run north and south, with an opening or gap to the east, in which there is an appearance of a considerable ditch, which I was told is filled with water in the height of the rains.

The whole has more the appearance of an old brick fort than anything I have seen in Burmah, and I should say it had been built by a people different from the present

race of Burmans." About a mile to the south of Tagoung are the extensive ruins of Pagan, which stretch as far as the eye can reach, and here Captain Hannay discovered impressions of Hindu Buddhist images, stamped upon a peculiar kind of brick composition (*terra cotta*), and with inscriptions which he imagined to be written in some variety of the Deva Nagri character.

The Burmese on the spot were unable to explain their nature or origin, and the learning of an aged priest proved equally incompetent to the task of deciphering them. They were subsequently, however, submitted to some Burman antiquarians at the capital by the Resident, whose paper on the subject, and a drawing of the images, appeared in the fifty-first number of the Journal of the Asiatic Society.

At Shnuzi Goung a large pagoda among the ruins of Tagoung, Captain Hannay obtained an extensive view of the subjacent country, and more accurate information of the site of the celebrated mines of Momeit tlian had been practicable at an earlier period of his voyage. From these accounts it appears that the locality which is said to produce the finest rubies in the kingdom is about forty-five or fifty miles east of Tagoung Myu, from whence it can be readied by a foot traveller in three or four days, and by a laden bullock in ten. A drove of these animals was just about to leave Tagoung for Momeit on Captain Hannay's arrival, and from the owners he learnt "that after selling their ngapee (potted fish) at Momeit, Mogout, and Kyatpen, they proceeded to the country of the Palougs, which bounds the district of Momeit on the east, and purchased tea, both pickled and formed into balls, a part of which is brought to Ava." The fish, which apparently forms the staple of the trade, is said to be of a remarkably fine description, and is dried in a manner peculiar to Tagoung.

On the left bank of the river, between Henga Myo and Tagoung, the teak tree first begins to appear, and at Kyundoung, on the opposite side, it is said that timber is found sufficiently large to form a boat from a single tree; it grows principally on the western face of the hills, at whose eastern base Kyundouni; stands. A delay of two days at this village enabled Captain Hannay to ascend to the summit of the first range of hills by the road which leads across them to the valley of the Mu river. He found it a well-beaten track and great thoroughfare, by which the inhabitants of the country, as far west as Wautha Myu, are accustomed to convey their supplies of fish, salt, and oil from Kyundoung, a place apparently of some trade. The bazar contained fifty shops, which were large and supplied with British piece-goods, uncleaned cotton, silk, and cotton Burman dresses, coarse white cloth, and other articles of country manufacture. Besides these," adds Captain Haunay, " I saw three Chinese shops, where spirits and pork were sold. The streets were crowded with people from the interior who had come to make purchases, and amongst them were several Kadus, a race of people of a

different origin from the Burmahs, and scattered over the tract of country between this and Mogaung.

They are most numerous in the districts of Mauli and Mankat, situated on the Meza river,¹ which comes from the north and west, and runs between the Kyundoung range and that called the Theygain range, still seven or eight miles north of our present position. Rice, being the staple of the country, is an article of barter, and is sent in considerable quantities to Ava. Cotton, brought from the interior, is also an article of barter, and a good deal of it is sent to Bamo, but a part of it is made into cloth on the spot, as I saw several looms at work. Yellow and red cotton handkerchiefs of British manufacture sell here for two ticals a-piece, which is about 100 per cent. beyond the price at Ava.”

To this point of their progress no diminution in the volume of the Irrawaddy was perceptible, and the channels proved sufficiently deep for the passage of large boats, from which we may infer that all the principal feeders or affluents which pour their tributary streams into the Irrawaddy were still further north, and had not yet been reached. The first of any importance noticed is the Shueli Khyoung, on the left bank, the northern branch of which flows from the Chinese frontier town of Santafu, called by the Burmahs Mola Santa, and a southern branch from Momeit, the site of the celebrated ruby mines already noticed. The confluence of these streams is represented as occurring at the village of Laha, about 40 miles from the Irrawaddy. Neither branch can be of any magnitude, for Captain Hannay remarks that at the point of junction with the Irrawaddy the breadth of the Shueli is not more than 300 yards, and that it contained but little water,—a satisfactory proof that this stream can have no connection with the Tsanpo of Thibet.

At Yebouk Yua, a day's journey above the Shue Khyoung, two boats passed the party with Chinese in them from Bamo. “They work their, boats which are of the Burman round-shaped flat-bottomed description, and seem to be of a tolerable size, as there must have been at least twenty men in each. These boats are particularly well adapted for the navigation of the Irrawaddy, as they do not draw more than 18 inches of water.”

On the 13th of December the party reached Katha, a town of some extent on the right bank of the river, containing about 400 houses, and a population whose numbers appear to be annually increased by large parties who come from the interior, and take up a temporary abode on the right bank of the river, and on the numerous islands and shoals in its bed, for the purpose of fishing and traffic. At the close of the season they return to their respective homes in time for the resumption of agricultural labour, and a

¹ Original footnote: A small stream not more than fifty yards broad, with but little water.

traveller ignorant of this nomade custom, which appears to be very general in the upper part of the Irrawaddy, would form an exaggerated estimate of the population of the towns and villages in which they are thus temporarily congregated.

"The bazaar of Katha was well supplied with good native vegetables of various sorts, fresh and salt fish, pork sold by Chinamen, dried cocoanuts, sugar-cane, and rice, from the coarsest to the best quality, the latter selling at 15 ticals a hundred baskets." Captain Hannay also saw a small quantity of stick-lac in the bazaar, but it was dear, and of a description very inferior to that which is procurable at Rangoon, and is brought from the Shan territory east of Ava. Even at this remote spot there was a "tolerable display" of British piece-goods, but not nearly to the extent noticed at Kyoundong. Captain Hannay mentions a kyoung or monastery recently erected by the Myothagi of Katha as one of the most remarkable objects of the place. "It is a large wooden building covered with beautiful carved work, and situated near the river. The grounds surrounding it are extensive, and very tastefully laid out with fruit trees and flowery shrubs, amongst which I saw the Chinese rose in great plenty." The river is here confined by lofty banks not more than two furlongs apart, but the stream is very deep, and the spot appears to be a particularly favorable one for obtaining a good section of the river, the velocity of which at Wegyih, a village above Katha, Captain Hannay estimated at one mile and a half an hour, with an average depth of 18 feet. This would give a discharge of about 52,272 cubic feet per second, while that of the Ganges at the same season may be assumed on Rennell's authority at 80,000 feet per second, giving for both a proportion of 1 to 1.53. No satisfactory comparison can, however, be yet instituted between these magnificent rivers, for up to the present moment we are without a single section of the Irrawaddy which could be safely assumed as the basis of a calculation sufficiently accurate for such a purpose.

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

No circumstance throughout this voyage afforded a more gratifying proof of the friendly feeling generally of the Burmese authorities, than the attentions which

Captain Hannay received at every place at which they halted. Houses were erected for his accommodation at the various stages of the route, differing in no respect from those intended for the Myuwuan of Mogoung; presents of fruit, rice, and vegetables, were daily made to himself and followers, and the supposed tedium of his evenings was relieved by a band of singers and dancers, who are found at almost every town and village in the Burman empire.

At Kyouk Gyih these attentions were shown to a very remarkable degree by the Woon of Munyen, "whose civility," says Captain Hannay, "was the subject of conversation with every one in the fleet."

"Every individual has received sufficient rice and fish for two days' supply, and my boat was filled by him with all sorts of provisions, enough certainly to last myself and my followers for a week." The house of this liberal Woon, Captain Hannay describes "as a very neat and comfortable dwelling, with a remarkably clean compound, in which there is a garden laid out with a great deal of taste, and besides many articles of costly Burman household furniture, he has a number of very fine muskets and other arms." The party had now approached within a comparatively short distance of Bamo, and the vicinity of this celebrated mart was shown in more numerous villages than had been seen for several preceding days. From Shuegu My to Balet, distance of three miles, the houses appeared to extend in an uninterrupted line, and Kywundo, the name of a celebrated island in the river, covered with 100 pagodas, is most conveniently situated between these towns, the inhabitants of which hold their principal festivals upon it at particular seasons of the year.

Near this spot is the entrance to the second Kyouk dwen, the scenery of which appears to be very magnificent, and is thus described by Captain Hannay:—"The river passes directly through the hills, which rise perpendicularly on both sides to the height of 400 feet; they are rocky and of irregular and singular forms, having at the same time a sufficient number of trees on them to render the scenery very striking. One part of the range, on the right bank, rises as perpendicularly as a wall to the height of 500 feet, forming a grand and terrific precipice. This Kyouk dwen extends for four miles, and the hills which form it are throughout of a rocky nature. The upper part of them appeared to be sandstone, resting on a base of blue-coloured limestone, mixed with veins of beautiful white marble; and at one spot I saw large masses of compact and foliated primitive limestone, along with calcareous spar in large pieces."

Koungtoun, which the mission reached on the 20th, is said to contain about 200 houses, and is noted for the defence made by its Burmese garrison against a large invading force of Chinese during the last war between these two nations. A ditch surrounds the town, and the remains of a brick redoubt, loop-holed for arrows or

musketry, are still perceptible encircling a pagoda. "This is now all that is to be seen," adds Captain Hannay, "of the old fortification, but the town is still surrounded by a double palisade of bamboos with sharp stakes placed between them." These defences are intended for the protection of the inhabitants against the Kakhyens, a tribe occupying the hills to the east, who frequently come down in small bodies for the purpose of carrying off cattle. Captain Hannay saw a great number of this tribe at Kountoun, where they barter their rice and cotton for salt and gnapee (potted fish), and describes them, with few exceptions, as perfect savages in their appearance. Their cast of countenance forms a singular exception to the general rule, for it is not at all Tartar in its shape, but they have, on the contrary, "long faces and straight noses, with a very disagreeable expression about the eyes, which was rendered; still more so by their lanky black hair being brought over the forehead, so as entirely to cover it and then cut straight across on a line with the eyebrows. These people, though surrounded by Shans, Burmese, and Chinese, are so totally different from either, that it is difficult to imagine from whence they have had their origin."

On the 20th of December the fleet moored at a village about five miles below Bamo, which being a town of great importance and the residence of an officer inferior in rank to the Mogoung Woon, some previous arrangements were necessary to enable the latter to land with the *éclat* due to his rank. On reaching the town late on the following day, they found the left bank on which it stands so precipitous, that they were compelled to cross to the opposite side of the river, and a feeling of jealousy having arisen between the two Woons of Mogoung and Bamo, the former resumed his journey on the 22nd, which compelled Captain Hannay to defer the inquiries he was so anxious to make until his return in April, when he found the people far more communicative than they had ventured to be in the presence of the Mogoung Woon. The information obtained on both occasions will be more advantageously shewn in a connected form than in the detached portions in which it necessarily appears in his journal, and Captain Hannay's first remark solves a difficulty, which, like the Adria of ancient history, has proved a stumbling block to modern investigation. In the course of inquiry into the sites of the principal towns on the Irrawaddy river, that of Bamo naturally held a very prominent place, and some of the native Shans who were questioned on the subject affirmed that it was on the bank of the Irrawaddy river, while others, whose opportunities of acquiring information had been equally good, positively denied this statement, and fixed its position on the left bank of a small stream which flows into the Irrawaddy about a mile above the present town. Captain Hannay reconciles the conflicting statements briefly but satisfactorily, in the following remark :—

“I find that this is a modern town erected on the banks of the Irrawaddy for the convenience of water carriage between it and Ava. The old Shan town of Manmo, or Bamo, is situated two *days'* journey up the Tapan river, which falls into the Irrawaddy about a mile above the new town of Bamo or Zeetheet Zeit, or new mart landing place.”

“This modern town,” says Captain Hannay, “is situated on high unequal ground, and the bank towards the river is from 40 to 50 feet in height, and composed of clay. With the exception of Ava and Rangoon it is the largest place I have seen in Burmah, and, not excepting these places, I certainly think it the most interesting. The novelty of so large a fleet as ours passing up (and no doubt having heard that a European officer was of the party) had attracted a great crowd of people to the river-side, and on landing I felt as if I were almost in a civilized land again, when I found myself amongst fair complexioned people, wearing jackets and trowsers, after being accustomed to the harsh features and party-coloured dress of the Burmans.

The people I saw were Chinese from the province of Yunan, and Shans from the Shan provinces subject to China. Bamo is said to contain 1,500 houses, but including several villages which join it, I should say it contained 2,000 at least, 200 of which are inhabited by Chinese.

Besides the permanent population of Bamo, there are always a great number of strangers there,—Chinese, Shans, and Kakhyens, who either come to make purchases or to be hired as workmen. There are also a great number of Assamese, both in the town and in the villages immediately connected with it, amongst whom are several members of the Tapan or Assam Raja's family. Bamo is the *jaghire* of the Tapan Raja's sister, who is one of the ladies of the King of Ava.

“The inhabitants of this district live in large comfortable houses, which are thatched with grass, and have walls made of reeds. They are generally railed in, and all the villages have bamboo palisades surrounding them. The Palongs of the Chinese frontier are, I am told, remarkably industrious. They are good dyers, carpenters, and blacksmiths, and all the dhas or swords used in this part of the country are made by them.” “I received,” adds Captain Hannay, “great attention from the Myuwun of Bamo, and also from the head Chinese there, They sent me tea, sugar, dried fruits, and vegetables, for which I of course made a suitable return. The annual caravan from China had not arrived, and the supply of Chinese articles in the shops was very small.”

The people of Bamo were so strongly impressed with the idea that Captain Hannay's only object was to find a road by which British troops might penetrate to China, that he found it extremely difficult to obtain any information from them regarding the routes into that country. The Chinese themselves, however, proved more

communicative, and from them he learnt the existence of several passes from Bamo into Yunan; but as one of these presents far greater facilities of transit than the others, it is generally adopted for commercial intercourse, and the mode of carrying it on is thus described: "At the distance of two miles² above Bamo the mouth of the Taping or lap an river is situated. This river has a direction N. 70° E. for about two days' journey, when it cuts through the Kakhyen range, and under these hills old Bamo or Manmo is situated. To the latter place the Chinese take their merchandise from modern Bamo by water, and then proceed overland to the chold or ken of Loailong near Mowan, which they reach in three days, and from thence to Mounyen or Tengyechen in the province of Yunan, at which place they arrive in eight or nine days. The road from Bamo to Loailong is through the hills, which are inhabited by Kakhyens and Palongs, after which it passes through the country of the Shans, called by the Burmans Kopyidoung. The road is described as being very good, and quite a thoroughfare. The Tapan Khyoung is not navigable for large boats, in consequence of which the Chinese use two canoes tied together with a platform over them for the transport of their merchandise to Manmo or old Bamo, and for the remainder of the journey it is carried on ponies or mules."

This description of the size of the Tapan Khyoung, which is also called by the Shans Numtaping, completely sets at rest the keenly agitated question of its identity with the Tsanpo of Thibet, and the theory of Klapproth (who on the authority of Chinese writers calls it the Pinglankhyoung, and maintains it to be the prolongation of the Tsanpo,) is shown to have no better foundation than his unauthorized change in the position assigned to the latter river in that part of its course which passes through Thibet. Captain Hannay describes the Taping as not more than 150 yards broad, and with only sufficient water to float a small boat. The Singfos affirm that it is a branch of the Shueli Khyoung (the Lungshue Kiang of the Chinese), from which it separates above Momein, but the accuracy of this report appears highly questionable.

The principal article of trade, which is cotton, is entirely in the hands of the Chinese, who arrive at Bamo in the months of December and January. The greater part of their imports is taken to Ava, as neither the natives of Mogaung nor Bamo could afford to purchase them.

"What they dispose of here," says Captain Hannay, "are copper pots, carpets, and warm jackets." These articles are also taken all over the Burman territories, as far west as the Khyendwen. There are several cotton godowns here belonging to the Chinese, and these are constantly residing in the town—500 of these people—which, with the numerous arrivals from different parts of the country, gives the place a very business-

² Original margin note: In another place it is mentioned as only one mile above Bamo.

like appearance, and there is of course a good bazar." There is a very neat temple built by the Chinese of Bamo, which Captain Hannay visited, and was most politely received by the officiating priest. "On entering his house," says Captain Hannay, "he rose to meet me, saluted me in the English fashion, asked me to sit down, and ordered his people to bring me tea, after which he sent a person with me to show me the curiosities of the temple. Most of the figures were carved on wood, and different from what I have generally seen in Chinese temples; one of them represented the Nursinga of the Hindus. The Chinese of Bamo, although different from the maritime Chinese in language and features, have still the same idea of neatness and comfort, and their manners and mode of living appear to be much the same."

"Their temple and all the houses, which, are not temporary, are substantially built of bricks stained blue; the streets are paved with the same material, and the grounds of the temple are surrounded by a neat brick wall covered with tiles."

"Besides the trade carried on at Bamo by the Chinese, the Shans, Balongs, and Singfos under China, are great purchasers of salt, gnapee, dried fish, and rice, but particularly salt, which is in constant demand, and to procure it numbers of the above-named people come to Bamo, Sambaungya, and Kountoung. The salt, which sells here for twenty ticals of silver for 100 vis, or Rs. 28 for 150 seers, is brought principally from Sheinmaga, above Ava, and from Manbu, which is situated two marches west of Katha. The Shans here are distinguished by their fair complexions and broad good tempered faces. They wear turbans and trowsers of light blue cotton cloth; they greatly resemble the Chinese, and from living so near that nation, many of them speak the Yunan Chinese language. They inhabit the country to the east of Bamo, and their principal towns are Hotha, Latha, Santa, Sanla, Moongsye, Moong Woon, Moong Man, Moong La, and Moong Tye. The people are generally designated Shan Taroup or Chinese Shans."

"Although the Palougs speak the Shan, their own native language is a distinct one. The men, though small in stature, are athletic and remarkably well made. Flat noses and grey eyes are very common amongst them. They wear their hair tied in a knot on the right side of the head, and dress in a turban, jacket, and trowsers of dark blue cloth. They are a hill people and live in the tract of country situated between Burmah and China, but those to the east of Bamo pay no revenue to either country, and are governed by their own Tsobuaa. The Singfo traders I saw at Bamo were very different from those under Burmah, and according to their proximity to either Shans or Chinese, they assimilate to one or other in dress and language."

"The whole of these people," says Captain Hannay, "pay for everything they require in silver, and were it not for the restrictions in Burmah on the exportation of

silver, I think an intelligent British merchant would find it very profitable to settle at Bamo, as besides the easy intercourse with China it is surrounded by numerous and industrious tribes, who would no doubt soon acquire a taste for British manufactures, which are at present quite unknown to them."

The revenue of the district is estimated by Captain Hannay at three lakhs of rupees per annum, and he adds: "If appearance of comfort may be taken as a proof of its prosperity, the inhabitants of Bamo show it in their dress and houses. I have seen more gold and silver ornaments worn here than in any town in Burmah."

On leaving Bamo the appearance of the country became much more hilly, and great precautions were taken to guard against surprise by the Kakhyens who inhabited the different ranges in the vicinity of the river.

At Hakan the escort was reinforced by 150 soldiers from Bamo, and a number of families who were proceeding up the river joined the fleet to enjoy the protection afforded by so large a convoy. The Shans who composed the quota from Bamo were a remarkably fine set of men from the banks of the Tapan Khyoung, and formed a striking contrast in dress and appearance to the miserable escort which had accompanied the party from Ava.

At the village of Thaphan Beng they entered the third Kyouk Dwen, from which a very beautiful view is obtained of the fertile valley of Bamo, bounded on the east by the Kakhyen hills, which are cultivated to their summits. Serpentine and limestone were the principal rocks found in this defile as well as the preceding one; and as the river was here in some places not more than 80 yards broad, with a depth of 80 feet, and its rise is in the rains 50 feet above the present level, the rush of waters must at that season be terrific. The natives indeed declared that the roar at that time was so great as to prevent them from hearing each other speak, and that the defile could only then be traversed on rafts; now, however, it coursed gently along with an almost imperceptible motion.

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

were constantly employed in manufacturing their implements *of* husbandry. Their houses were of a construction totally different from any that had been previously seen, and consisted of a long thatched roof rounded at the ends and reaching almost to the ground. Inside of this, and at the height of eight or ten feet from the ground, the different apartments are formed, the walls of which are made of mat.

“From the outward appearance of these houses,” says Captain Hannay, “it would be difficult to imagine that they were habitations; but inside they are very comfortable, and from the great thickness and peculiar form of the roof, the inmates cannot be much affected either by heat or cold.” The same description of house is built by the Shans occupying the valley of Kubo, and it is probable that the Phwons have adopted this style of building from some tribe of that widely scattered nation.

On the 26th the fleet reached a part of the Irrawaddy, which is considered the most dangerous point in its navigation; it is called Pusku, and the stream is there confined to a breadth of 30 yards, but with no less than nine fathoms of depth in the centre. The rocks bore every appearance of fierce and irregular volcanic action, varying in colour “from brown, yellow, red, and green, to a jet black which shone like a looking glass.” The strata also presented a scene of great confusion, some being vertical, some horizontal, and others twisted, “the whole having exactly the appearance of having been poured out from a furnace.”

The navigation of the Irrawaddy river up to this point had been unmarked by difficulties of any magnitude, and, with the exception of the passes through the Kyouk Dwens, the channel appears to have afforded even at that season of the year an abundant supply of water for the largest class of boats which ply between Ava and Bamo.

Above the village of Namhet, however, they first met a succession of rapids extending for a mile and a half, which were even then considered dangerous; and Captain Hannay remarks that he had seldom seen in the worst season and worst part of the Ganges a stronger current, or more turbulent water, than at the rapids of Shuegyain Man, a short distance above the village of Namhet. On the arrival of the fleet at Tshenbo, which is about ten miles below the mouth of the Mogaung river, the boats by which the party had been conveyed from Ava were exchanged for others of a smaller description, better adapted for the navigation of so small and tortuous a river as that of Mogaung. The one prepared for Captain Hannay's accommodation was of the kind called by the Burmese “loung”; it was paddled by twenty-five men, and formed of a single tree, with the addition of a plank ten inches broad all round the upper part of it.

Before quitting Tshenbo Captain Hannay had a visit from the head priest, whose curiosity to obtain Borne knowledge of European customs and habits could only be

satisfied by the display of the contents of his trunks, and the sight of his watch, sextant, and thermometer, all of which he was permitted to examine by Captain Hannay, who regrets that he had not brought some missionary tracts with him from Ava "to give this inquisitive priest some idea of the Christian religion." Tshenbo, on the authority of this priest, is said to have been formerly a principal city of the Phwon tribe, who were dispossessed of it about sixty years ago by the Burmahs. On the last day of December the mission reached the mouth of the Mogaung river, which Captain Hannay ascertained by observation to be in latitude $24^{\circ} 56' 53''$. Here they were to quit the Irrawaddy which, says Captain Hannay, "is still a fine river flowing in a reach from the eastward half a mile broad, at the rate of two miles an hour, and with a depth varying from three fathoms in the centre to two at the edge."

The Mogaung river, on which the town of the same name *is* situated, is not more than one hundred yards wide, and the navigation is impeded by a succession of rapids, over which the stream rushes with considerable velocity. The smallest boat in the fleet was an hour and a half getting over the first of these obstacles, and the Shan boatmen, who are thoroughly acquainted with the character of the river, "pull their boats close to the rocky points, and then, using all their strength, shoot across to the opposite side before the force of the stream had time to throw them on the rocks." The Burmah boatmen adopted the apparently easier method of pulling their boats up along the edge of the stream, but this proved both difficult and dangerous, one boat being upset and a man drowned. The banks of the river were covered with a dense and impervious jungle, which extended nearly the whole way to Mogaung, and no village served to beguile the wearisome monotony of this portion of the journey until they reached Akouktoung, a small hamlet on the right bank, inhabited by Phwons and Shans. Here they met a Chief of the Laphae Singfos, who had taken up his residence in this village with a few followers in consequence of a feud with Borne neighbouring tribes in his own country to the north. Between Akouk Yua and Tapoh (the next village seen) the bed of the river is filled with rocks and rapids, which render the navigation exceedingly dangerous, the stream shooting over them with such velocity as frequently to rise above the bow of the boat, which, in case of unskilful management, would be instantly upset. The way in which Phwons and Shans overcome these difficulties formed a striking contrast to the conduct of the Burmah and Kathay boatmen. The former, working together with life and spirit, still paid the strictest attention to the orders given by the head boatman; while the latter, "who think," says Captain Hannay, "that nothing can be done without noise, obey no one, as they all talk at once and used the most abusive language to each other." He thinks the Phwons and Shans greatly

superior to the Burmahs or Kathays, meaning by the latter those Manipuris resident in Ava who are Burmans in every thing but origin.

After passing the last rapids at Tapoh the river expands in breadth to two hundred yards, the stream flows with a gentle current, and "the bed is composed of round stones, which are mostly quartz. Amongst them, however, there are found massive pieces of pure crystal stone, partaking of the nature of talc, and also pieces of indurated clay of different colours. The banks are alluvial on the surface, but towards the base and near the edge of the river the soil becomes gravelly, and in some places has a stratum of beautiful bright yellow-coloured clay intersecting it."

On the 5th of January the party'disembarked from their boats, and as the Myo Wun was installed in his new government, the landing was effected with considerable state. "Arrangements," says Captain Hannay, "had been made for our reception, and on first landing we entered a temporary house, where some religious ceremony was performed, part of which was the Myo Wun supplicating the spirits of three brothers who are buried here, and who founded the Shan provinces of Khanti, Assam, and Mogaung, to preserve him from all evil. After which ceremony he dressed himself in his robe of state, and he and I proceeded hand in hand through a street of Burman soldiers, who were posted from the landing place to the Myo Wun's house, a distance of nearly a mile. We were preceded by the Myo Wun's people carrying Spears, gilt chattas, &c., and at intervals during our walk a man in a very tolerable voice chaunted our praises and the cause of our coming to Mogaung. Several women also joined the procession, carrying offerings of flowers and giving us their good wishes."

The Myo Wun appears to have lost no time in availing himself of the advantages of his situation, for on the very day after landing he commenced a system of unsparring taxation to enable him to pay for his appointment. A rapid succession of governors within a very few years, all influenced by the same principle, had already reduced the inhabitants of Mogaung to a state closely bordering on extreme poverty, and the distress occasioned by the exactions now practised was bitterly complained of by the wretched victims of such heartless extortion.

The Shan inhabitants of the town were employed by the Burmese officers to enforce this excessive payment of tribute from the Singfos and Kakhyens of the surrounding hills, which had led to much ill will on the part of the latter, by whom they are stigmatised "as the dogs of the Burmans."

"The town of Mogaung," says Captain Hannay, "is situated at the junction of the Namyun or Namyang and the Mogaung or Numkong rivers, and extends about a mile from east to west along the bank of the last-named river, the west end of the town being bounded by the Namyeeen Khyoung, which comes from the district of Monyeeen

in a direction S. 43 W. The town of Mogaung, strictly speaking, is confined within what is now only the remains of a timber stockade. Outside of this, however, there are several houses, and within a short distance a few small villages are scattered about, but even including all these there are not more than 300 houses. Those within the stockade are inhabited by Shans, and those outside by Burmans, Phwons, Assamese, and a few Chinese. The latter, to the number of 50, reside here, and are under the authority of a Thoogyee of their own nation. They derive a profit from their countrymen who come annually in considerable numbers to purchase serpentine.

Amongst them I saw both blacksmiths and carpenters, and for the first time since leaving Gangetic India, I saw the operation, performed of shoeing horses. The Shans inside the stockade reside in large houses, such as I formerly described having seen amongst the Phwons; the Burmans and others live in the same description of houses as are to be seen in every part of Burmah proper, but all bear signs of great poverty, and if it were not for the Chinese, whose quarter of the town looks business-like and comfortable, I should say that Mogaung is decidedly the poorest looking town I have seen since leaving Ava. There is no regular bazar, all supplies being brought from a distance, and the market people are with few exceptions Kakhyens and Assamese from the neighbouring villages.”

The arrival at so remote a spot of a European officer was soon bruited abroad, and Captain Hannay's time was fully occupied in answering innumerable questions put to him by a crowd of visitors, who examined his sextant with great care under the firm conviction that by looking through it he was enabled to perceive what was going on in distant countries; nor would they believe that the card of his compass was not floating on water until to satisfy them he had taken it to pieces. The paucity of inhabitants and poverty of the town plainly indicated the absence of extensive trade, and Captain Hannay learnt that, including the profits derived from the sale of serpentine, the revenues of the town and neighbouring villages did not amount to more than Rs. 30,000 per annum, and the Bunnah authorities can only enforce the payment of tribute from the Shans of Khanti and the Singfos of Payendwen by the presence of an armed force. In their last attempt on the latter, a Burmah force of 1,000 men was detached from Mogaung, of whom 900 were destroyed, and for ten years they had been held in salutary dread by the Burmah governors of the frontier. During his stay at Mogaung Captain Hannay obtained specimens of the green stone, called by the Burmahs kyouktsein, and by the Chinese yueesh,³ and which he supposes to be nephrite. [“]The

³ Original note in margin: Monsieur Abel Remusat, in the second part of his history of Kotan, is said by Klaproth (Mem. Rel. a l'Asie, tome 2, P. 299) to have entered into a very learned disquisition proving the identity of the yu or yueesh of the Chinese with the jasper of the ancients.—R. B. P. The yu is a silicious

Chinese,” he says, “choose pieces which, although showing a rough and dingy-coloured exterior, have a considerable interior lustre, and very often contain spots and veins of a beautiful bright apple-green. These are carefully cut out and made into ring stones and other ornaments which are worn as charms. The large masses are manufactured by them into bracelets, rinses, and drinking cups, the latter being much in use amongst them from the idea that the stone possesses medicinal virtues. All the yueesh taken away by the Chinese is brought from a spot five marches to the north-west of Mogaung, but it is found in several other parts of the country, although of an inferior quality. Serpentine and limestone are the prevailing formations of the base of the highest ranges of hills throughout this part of the country. Steatite is also abundant in the bed of the Irrawaddy below the valley of Khanti.

One very important object of Captain Hannay's mission was to cross the Patkoi mountains into Assam, and on his arrival at Mogaung he waited some days in considerable anxiety for the Kakhyen porters, who were to convey his baggage and supplies during the remaining portion of the journey. He soon found, however, that the authority of the Burmans, when unenforced by the presence of a large military detachment, was held in the most sovereign contempt by those hardy mountaineers, and after many fruitless attempts to induce the Mogaung Woun to allow him to proceed with even a small party, he was constrained to limit his further researches to the Hukong valley and amber mines. Repeated remonstrances were necessary to induce the governor to proceed even so far, and it was not until the 19th of the month that an advanced guard crossed the river and fired a *feu de joie* after performing the ceremony of sacrificing a buffalo to the Nhatgyee (or spirits of the three brother Tsanhuas of Mogauug), without which no expedition even marches from the town. Even then the dogged obstinacy of the governor induced him to delay his departure, and it was not until Captain Hannay threatened that he would instantly return to Ava if there were any longer delay, that the wily diplomatist could be induced to move.

On the 22nd they crossed the river, and the camp was formed on the northern bank in strict accordance with Burmese custom. Captain Hannay's tent (a common sepoy's pal) was the admiration of every one but its owner, who now for the first time marched with an undisciplined rabble. “The soldiers' huts,” says Captain Hannay, “are composed of branches of trees and grass, and if they wish to be particular, they cover them with a piece of cloth, which is generally some old article of dress. The Myo Wun's station is in the centre of the camp, and in front of him are his own immediate followers, whose huts are formed into a street marked by a double line of spears. At

mineral, coloured with less intensity, but passing into heliotrope. It is therefore prase rather than jade or nephrite.

the head of this street the flags are placed, and also the two small cannon (one-pounders), which are seat with the force, I believe, for the purpose of firing three rounds morning and evening to frighten the neighbouring Kakhyens, and which ceremony, I suspect, will be gone through with as much gravity as if it would have the desired effect. My position is in front and a little to the left of the Myo Wun, and we are completely surrounded by the soldiers, whose huts are in distinct lines, the men of each district keeping together."

On the 22nd they at length set out, and the style of march was as little in accordance with the military experience of our traveller as the previous encampment, "The men, to the number of 800, march in single file, and each man occupies a space of six feet, being obliged to carry a bangy containing his provisions, cooking pots, &co., besides his musket, which is tied to the bangy stick. This is the most common mode of marching, but some of them carry their provisions in baskets, which they strap across their forehead and shoulders, leaving their hands free to carry their muskets; but as to using them it is out of the question, and I should say the whole party are quite at the mercy of any tribe who choose to make a sudden attack upon them." On reaching the encamping ground, however, these men gave proof bow well they were adapted to this mode of travelling, for in an hour after their arrival every individual had constructed a comfortable hut for himself, and was busily engaged cooking the rice, which, with the addition of a few leaves plucked from certain shrubs in the jungle, forms the diet of the Burman soldier on the line of march.

The tract of country through which the party passed on the first two days was hilly, and abounded in a variety of fine forest trees; but on approaching Numpoung, the second encampment, the country became more open, and the pathway led through a forest of very fine teak trees. The principal rivers all flowed from the Shuedoung Gyi range of hills on the east of their route, and are at this season of the year mere mountain torrents, with so little water in them that the path frequently passes over their rocky beds. The whole route from Mogaung to the Hukong valley may be described generally as passing between defiles, bounded by the inferior spurs of the Shuedoung Gyi range on the east and numerous irregular hills on the west. These defiles form the natural channels of numerous streams, which flowing from the heights above, and struggling amidst masses and boulders of detached rock, make their way eventually to the larger stream of the Numkong, which unites with the Namyen at Mogaung. The only traces of inhabitants perceptible in the greater part of this route were a few cleared spots on the hills in the vicinity of some scattered Kakhyen, villages, and a few fishing stakes in the. mountain streams. Near the mouth of the Numsing Khyoung the party met with a few Kakhyen huts, which appear to have been constructed by that

tribe during their fishing excursions, and at Tsadozant, an island in the bed of the Mogaung river, on which the force encamped on the 28th of January, they passed the sites of two Kakhyen villages and found the ground completely strewn with graves for a considerable distance, the probable result of some endemic disease which induced the survivors to desert the spot. The finest lemon and citron trees Captain Hannay had ever seen were found here, and the tea plant was also very plentiful. The leaf is large, and resembles that sold in Ava as pickled tea; the soil, in which it grew most luxuriantly, is described as of a "reddish-coloured clay." Thus far a considerable portion of the route had passed either directly over the bed of the Mogaung river or along its banks; but at Tsadozant they crossed it for the last time, and at this spot it is described as a mere hill stream, with a "bed composed of rolled pieces of sienite and serpentine, with scales of mica in it." The navigation of the river even for small canoes ceases below this spot, and those which had accompanied the party with supplies were left from inability to convey them further.

About four miles north of Tsadozant "the road ascends about 100 feet and passes over a hilly tract, which seems to run across from the hills on the east to those on the west, and is called by the natives Tsambu Toung (the mount Samu of the maps). This transverse ridge evidently forms the southern limit of the Hukong valley, and streams flow from it both to the north and south, the former making their way to the Khyendwen, and the latter to the Mogaung river. "Tsambu Toung," says Captain Hannay, "is covered with noble trees, many of which, I think, are sal, and are of 'immense height and circumference. The tea plant is also plentiful, besides a great variety of shrubs, which are quite new to me. The rays of the sun seem never to penetrate to the soil of Tsambu Toung. It may therefore be easily imagined how damp and disagreeable it is, more particularly as there is a peculiar and offensive smell from a poisonous plant which grows in great abundance in this jungle, and the natives tell me that cattle die almost immediately after eating it."

On the 30th the party descended from the encampment on the northern face of this ridge to the Singfo village of Walobhum, and finally encamped on the left bank of the Edikhyoung, about three furlongs distant from Meinkhwon or Mungkhum, the capital of the Hukong valley, "where," says Captain Hannay, "our journey must end for the present, as besides having no provisions, the men composing the force are so completely worn out with fatigue that I am certain they could not proceed further without a halt of some days." This interval Captain Hannay assiduously employed in collecting information regarding the valley, which had from a very early period been an object of great geographical interest as the site of the Payendwen or amber mines, and at no very remote era probably formed the bed of an Alpine lake, which, like that

of the Manipur valley, has been subsequently raised to its present level by long continued alluvial deposits and *detritus* from the hills which encircle it on every side. The tendency of every such deposition is to raise the level of the water and facilitate its drainage until it becomes so shallow that evaporation suffices to complete the process and render the soil a fit abode for future races of men. The numerous and extensive lakes in the mountainous regions of Thibet and Tartary are doubtless undergoing a similar change, and no great stretch of imagination is necessary to anticipate the period when they will become the sites of extensive towns and villages and present a striking contrast to the rugged magnificence and solitary grandeur of the snowy regions which surround them.

“The valley of Hukong or Payendwen,” says Captain Hannay, “is an extensive plain, bounded on all sides by hills; its extent from east to north-west being at least 50 miles, and varying in breadth from 45 to 15 miles, the broadest part being to the east. The hills bounding the valley to the east are a continuation of the Shuedoung Gyi range, which is high, commences at Mogaung, and seems to run in a direction of N. 15 E.” The principal river of the valley is the Numtunae or Khyendwen, which flows from the Shuedoung Gyi range, and after receiving the contributions of numerous small streams quits the valley at its north-western corner and again enters the defiles of the hills, beyond which its course is no longer perceptible.

On the western side of the valley there are but few villages, and these thinly inhabited, the capital itself containing, not more than thirty houses; but the north and eastern sides are said to be very populous, the houses in those quarters being estimated at not less than 3,000, nearly all of which are situated on the banks of the Towang and Debee rivers. All the low hills stretching from the western foot of the Shuedoung range were under cultivation, and the population is said to extend across to the banks of the Irrawaddy, in numbers sufficient to enable the Singfos, when necessary, to assemble a force of nine or ten thousand men.

“With the one exception,” says Captain Hannay, “of the village of Meinkhwon, which has a Shan population, the whole of the inhabitants of the valley are Siugfos and their Assamese slaves. Of the former the larger proportion is composed of the Mrip and Tisan tribes, with a few of the Laphai clan, who are still regarded as strangers by the more ancient colonists, and can hardly be viewed but with hostile feelings, as this tribe have frequently ravaged Meinkhwan within the last six years, and were guilty of the still greater atrocity of burning a priest alive in his kyaung or monastery.

Formerly, the population was entirely Shan, and previous to the invasion of Assam by the Burmese, the town of Meinkhwon contained 1,500 houses, and was governed by the Chief of Mogaung. From that period the exactions of the Burmese

officers have led to extensive emigration, and to avoid the oppression to which they were hourly exposed the Shans have sought an asylum in the remote glens and valleys on the banks of the Khyendwen, and the Singfos among the recesses of the mountains at the eastern extremity of the valley. This state of affairs has led to general anarchy, and feuds are constantly arising between the different tribes, which the quarrel of the Bisa and Dupha Grams has greatly contributed to exasperate. No circumstance is more likely to check these feuds and reclaim the scattered population of the valley than the establishment of a profitable commercial intercourse with the more equitably governed valley of Assam, with which communication is now becoming more intimate than at any previous period.

Of the mineral productions of the Hukong valley enumerated by Captain Hannay, the principal are salt, gold, and amber. The former, he informs us, is procured "both on the north and south sides of the valley, and the waters of the Namtwonkok and Edi rivers are quite brackish from the numerous salt-springs in their beds. Gold is found in most of the rivers, both in grains and in pieces the size of a large pea. The rivers which produce it in greatest quantity and of the best quality are the Kapdup and the Namkwun. The sand of the former is not worked for this mineral, I am told, but large pits are dug on its banks, where the gold is found as above mentioned. Besides the amber which is found in the Payentoung, or amber mine hills, there is another place on the east side of the valley, called Kotah Bhun, where it exists in great quantities; but I am informed that the spot is considered sacred by the Singfos, who will not allow the amber to be taken away, although it is of an inferior description." Specimens of coal were also found by Captain Hannay in the beds of the Nambhyu and Edi rivers, and he learnt from the natives that in the Numtarang a great quantity of fossil wood was procurable. In its relation to Assam and China, the trade of the Hukong valley naturally attracted a share of Captain Hannay's attention, and from his account it appears that "the only traffic of any consequence carried on in this valley is with the amber, which the Singfos sell to a few Chinese, Chinese Shans, and Chinese Singfos, who find their way here annually. The price of the common, or mixed amber, is 2 ½ ticals a vis, or Rs. 4 per one and a half seer; but the best kind, and what is fit for ornaments, is expensive, varying in price according to its colour and transparency."⁴

"The Chinese sometimes pay in silver for the amber, but they also bring with them warm jackets, carpets, straw-hats, copper-pots, and opium, which they give in exchange for it. They also barter their merchandize for ivory and gold-dust, but only in small quantities. A few individuals from the Burman territories likewise come here

⁴ Original footnote: Specimens in matrice are deposited in the Society's Museum.

with cloths of their own manufacture, and also a small quantity of British piece-goods for sale; but as they are obliged on their way hither to pass through the country of the most uncivilized of the Kakhyen tribes, they seldom venture to come. The greatest part, therefore, of British and Burman manufactures which are used in this valley are brought from Mogaung by Singfo merchants; but I understand that within the last few years several of them have gone to - Assam with gold-dust, ivory, and a little silver, for which they receive in return muskets, cloth, spirits, and opium. The following is a list of British piece-goods now selling at Meinkhwon :—Common book muslin, used as head dresses, Rs. 14 a piece ; coarse broadcloth, worn as shawls, 2 ½ yards long, Rs. 18 each; good cotton handkerchiefs, Rs. 4 a pair; and coarse ones, Rs. 2 ½ a pair. These are the prices of goods bought at Ava, but what similar articles from Assam may cost, I cannot ascertain, The broadcloth, however, that I have seen from the latter place is of a very superior quality. The merchants who come to this valley from the Barman territories are natives of Yo, and the man who is now selling goods here has frequently visited Calcutta. The dress worn by the Singfos of this valley is similar to that of the Shans and Burmans of Mogaung, but they frequently wear jackets of red camlet, or different velvets, which they ornament with buttons, and those who can afford it wear a broadcloth shawl. The arms in common use amongst them are the *dhu* (or short sword) and spear. The women wear neat jackets of dark coarse cotton cloth, and their *thamines* or petticoats are full, and fastened round the waist with a band, being altogether a much more modest dress than that worn by the Burman women. Those who are married wear their hair tied on the crown of the head, like the men, but the younger ones wear theirs tied close to the back of the neck, and fastened with silver pins. Both married, and single wear white muslin turbans. The ornaments generally worn by them are amber ear-rings, silver bracelets, and necklaces of beads, a good deal resembling coral, but of a yellowish colour, and these are so much prized by them that they Bell here for their weight in gold.”

During his stay at Hukong Captain Hannay was visited by many Singfos from the borders of China, from whom he learnt that the Sginmackha river rises in the mountains bounding the plain of Khanti to the north, and is inclosed on the east by the Goulang Sigong mountains, which they consider the boundary between Burmah and China. This river is, on the same authority, pronounced not to be navigable even for canoes, and the most satisfactory confirmation is afforded of the accounts of Captain Wilcox.⁵ Several smaller streams fall into the Sginmaekha from the Shuedoung Gyi

⁵ Original footnote: Although Captain Wilcox (as Res. Vol. XVII, p. 463), relying on the accounts given by Singfos of this river, appear to have formed rather an exaggerated estimate of its size, his conjectures as to the position of its sources are fully verified by the statements made to Captain Hannay.—R.B.P.

hills on the west, and the name of Situng is given to the tract of country through which they flow. In this district gold is very plentiful, and it is found, says Captain Hannay, "over the whole tract of mountainous country above the Sginmaekha. The Chinese visit this locality for the purpose of procuring the gold, and give in exchange for it warm clothing, carpets, and opium."

Of the several routes by which communication is kept up between the inhabitants of Hukong and the countries around, the principal appear to be one leading across the Shuedoung Gryi range to the eastern Singfos; a second, called the Lye gnepbhum road, winds round the base of the mountain of that name, and leads in sixteen days to Munglung, the capital of the Ehanti country, which was visited by Captain Wilcox.

The most important one, however, with reference to trade, lies in a south-east direction from the Hukong valley, from which the district of Kakyo Wainmo is not more than eight days' march distant. By this route the Chinese frequently travel, and it affords a very satisfactory proof that intercourse may be held direct with China without the necessity of following the circuitous route by Mogaung. Among the several races of people inhabiting the valleys through which the principal rivers flow, the Khantis or Khumptis hold a very conspicuous rank. They are represented as a fine, brave and hardy race of men, and are held in great apprehension by the Burmahs, who, about three years ago, attempted to raise revenue amongst them. The force detached on this duty, however, met with such determined resistance, that it was compelled to return, and no subsequent attempt has been made on their independence. They are in constant communication with the Khunungs, a wild tribe inhabiting the mountains to the north and east, from whom they procure silver and iron. "The former is found in a mine, said to be situated on the northern side of the mountains, to the north-east of Khanti." All the information Captain Hannay could obtain led him to suppose that this mine was worked by people subject to China, and from the description given, he thinks they are Lamas, or people of Thibet. The part of the Chinese territories north-east of Khanti is known at Hukong by the name of Mungfan,⁶ and the Khantis have no communication with it but through the khunungs.

From Meingkhwon Captain Hannay obtained a view of the hill near which lie the sources of the Uru river, one of the principal affluents of the Ningthi or Khyendwen: it bore south 35° west from Meingkhwon, and was about 25 miles distant. It is in the

⁶ Original footnote: In the second volume of Du Halde's "China," p. 385, the Pere Regis thus describes the tribe by which this tract of country is inhabited, and its geographical site:-- "The most powerful among the Tartar Lamas are those called by the Chinese Moongfan, who possess a wide territory in Thibet, north of Li-kyang-lu-fu, between the rivers Kincha-kyang and Vu-lyanglio. This country was ceded to them by Usanghey (whom the Manchews made king of Yunan) to engage them in his interest."--R.B.P.

vicinity of this spot that the most celebrated mines of serpentine are situated, and their position is thus described by Captain Hannay.

“A line drawn from Mogaung in a direction of N. 55 W. and another from Meingkhwon N. 25 W. will give the position of the serpentine mine district. The Chinese frequently proceed to the mines by water for two days' journey up the Mogaung river, to a village called Kammein, at which place a small stream, called Engdankhyoung, falls into the Mogaung river. From thence a road leads along the Engdan-khyoung to a lake several miles in circumference, called Engdan Gryi, and to the north of this lake, eight or nine miles distant, are the serpentine mines, the tract of country in which the serpentine is found extending 18 or 20 miles,” There is, however, another more direct route from Earn Mein which runs in a north-westerly direction. The whole tract of country is hilly, and several hot and salt springs are reported to exist near the Engdan Gyi lake, which is said to cover what was once the site of a large Shan town called Tumansye. The natives affirm that it was destroyed by an earthquake, and from the description given of a hill in the vicinity, the catastrophe may have been produced by the immediate agency of volcanic action.

On the 21st of March Captain Hannay visited the amber mines, and his description is the first that has ever been given of the locality from whence the Burmans obtained this mineral.

“We set out at 8 o'clock,” he says, “in the morning, and returned at 2 P.M. To the foot of the hills the direction is about south 25 west, and the distance three miles, the last mile being through a thick grass jungle, after which there is an ascent of one hundred feet, where there is a sort of temple, at which the natives, on visiting the mines, make offerings to the ngats or spirits. About a hundred yards from this place the marks of pits, where amber had been formerly dug for, are visible; but this side of the hill is now deserted, and we proceeded three miles further on to the place where the people are now employed in digging, and where the amber is most plentiful. The last three miles of our road led through a dense small tree jungle, and the pits and holes were so numerous that it was with difficulty we got on. The whole tract is a succession of small hillocks, the highest of which rise abruptly to the height of 50 feet, and amongst various shrubs which cover these hillocks, the tea plant is very plentiful. The soil throughout is a reddish and yellow-coloured clay, and the earth in those pits, which had been for some time exposed to the air had a smell of coal tar, whilst in those which had been recently opened the soil had a fine aromatic smell. The pits vary from 6 to 15 feet in depth, being, generally speaking, three feet square, and the soil is so stiff that it does not require propping up.”

“I have no doubt,” Captain Hannay adds, “that my being accompanied by several Burmese officers caused the people to secrete all the good amber they had found, for although they were at work in ten pits, I did not see a piece of amber worth having. The people employed in digging were a few Singfos from the borders of China and of this valley. On making inquiry regarding the cause of the alleged scarcity of amber, I was told that want of people to dig for it was the principal cause, but I should think the inefficiency of the tools they use was the most plausible reason, their only implements being a bamboo sharpened at one end, and a small wooden shovel.”

“The most favorable spots for digging are on such spaces on the sides of the small hillocks as are free from jungle, and I am told that the deeper the pits are dug, the finer the amber; and that that kind which is of a bright pale yellow, is only got at the depth of 40 feet under ground.”

A few days subsequent to this examination of the amber mines, Captain Hannay visited the Numtunae or Ehyendwen, which flows through the valley about five miles north of Meingkhwon in this part of its course, and at this season of the year the stream, as might have been anticipated, is small, but in the rains Captain Hannay estimates that its breadth must be 300 yards from bank to bank, and it is navigable throughout the year for large canoes. An island in the centre of the bed was covered with the skeletons of large fish, which had been destroyed by the poisonous quality of the fallen leaves of overhanging trees; the natives eat the fish so killed with impunity.

After waiting several days at Meingkhwon in anticipation of the return of some messengers who had been sent into Assam, and suffering extreme inconvenience from the difficulty of procuring adequate supplies for the force, the Myowun began seriously to think of returning to Mogaung. All expectation of prosecuting the journey into Assam had been relinquished, and the Dupha Gaum having voluntarily come into the camp, was received by the Burman governor with a civility and distinction extorted by his apprehension of the numerous Singfos ready to support their redoubtable Chieftain, whose influence is said to extend to the frontiers of China. On the 1st of April the ceremony was performed of swearing in the different Tsobuas (tributary Chiefs) to keep the peace, which is thus described by Captain Hannay :—

“The ceremony commenced by killing a buffalo, which was effected with several strokes of a mallet, and the flesh of the animal was cut up to be cooked for the occasion. Each Tsobua then presented his sword and spear to the spirits of the three brother Tsobuas of Mogaung, who are supposed to accompany the governor of the above-named place, and to inhabit three small huts, which are erected on the edge of the camp. Offerings of rice, meat, &c., were made to these ngats or spirits, and on this being done each person concerned in taking the oath received a small portion of

rice in his hand, and in a kneeling posture, with his hands clasped above his head, heard the oaths read both in the Shan and Burmese languages. After this the paper on which the oaths were written was burned to ashes and mixed with water, when a cup full of the mixture was given to each of the Tsohuas to drink, who before doing so repeated an assurance that they would keep the oath, and the ceremony was concluded by the Chiefs all sitting down together and eating out of the same dish." The Chieftains to whom this oath of forbearance was administered were the Thogyee of Meingkhwon, a Shan, the Dupha Gaum, a Tesan Singfo, the Panwah Tsohua, a Laphae Singfo, the Situngyen Gaum, and Wing Kong Moun, Mirip Singfos, and Tare-poung-moung, a Tesan Singfo, all of whom by this act virtually acknowledged the supremacy of the Burman authorities and their own subjection to the kingdom of Ava.

The new governor having succeeded by threats and the practice of every art of extortion in raising as large a sum as it was possible to collect from the inhabitants of the valley and surrounding hills, announced his intention of returning to Mogaung, and on the 5th of April no intelligence having been received from Assam, Captain Hannay left Mingkhwon on his return to Ava, with a very favorable impression of the Singfos he had seen, who appear to possess great capabilities of improvement, and whose worst qualities are represented as the natural result of the oppressive system of government under which they live. One of their Chieftains, in conversation with Captain Hannay, furnished a clue to the estimation in which they held the paramount authorities around them by the following remark:— "The British," he said, "are honorable, and so are the Chinese. Among the Burmans you might possibly find one in a hundred who, if well paid, would do justice to those under him. The Shans of Mogaung," he added, "are the dogs of the Burmans, and the Assamese are worse than either, being the most dangerous back-biting race in existence."

On the 12th of April Captain Hannay reached Mogaung, and some boats arriving shortly afterwards from the serpentine mines, he availed himself of so favorable an opportunity of acquiring some additional information regarding that interesting locality. He found the boats laden with masses of the stone *so* large as to require three men to lift them. The owners of the boats were respectable Chinese Mussalmans, who were extremely civil, and readily answered all the questions put to them by Captain Hannay, who learnt "that, although the greater number of Chinese come by the route of Somta and Tali, still they are only the poorer classes who do so; the wealthier people come by Bamo, which is both the safest and the best route. The total number of Chinese and Chinese Shans who have this year visited the mines is 480."

"I have made every inquiry," adds Captain Hannay, "regarding the duties levied on these people, both on their arrival here and on their purchasing the serpentine, and I am inclined to think that there is not much regularity in the taxes, a great deal depending on the value of the presents made to the headman, formerly the Chinese were not allowed to go to the mines, but I understand the following is now the system carried on in this business.

"At particular seasons of the year there are about 1,000 men employed in digging for serpentine; they are Burmahs, Shans, Chinese Shans, and Singfos. These people each pay a quarter of a tical a month for being allowed to dig at the mines, and the produce of their labour is considered their own.

"The Chinese who come for the serpentine, on their arrival at Mogaung, each pay a tax of from 1 ½ to 2 ½ ticals of silver for permission to proceed to the mines, and 1 ½ ticals a month during their stay there. Another duty is levied on the boats or ponies employed in carrying away the serpentine, but this tax varies according to circumstances, and on the return of the Chinese to Mogaung, the serpentine is appraised and a tax of 10 per cent. taken on its value. The last duty levied is a quarter of a tical from every individual on his arrival at the village of Tapo, and there the Chinese deliver up all the certificates they have had, granting them permission to proceed to the mines."

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

That portion of the route between Meingkhwon and Beesa in Assam which Captain Hannay was prevented visiting, will probably in a short time be as well known as the territory he has already so successfully explored, and the researches in which he is now engaged, extending from Beesa in Assam to Meingkhwon in the Hukong valley, will complete the examination of a line of country not surpassed in interest by any which our existing relations with the empire of Ava have afforded us an opportunity of visiting. His labours have filled the void necessarily left in the researches of Wilcox, Burlton, and Bedford, and have greatly contributed to dispel the doubt and uncertainty which they had not the opportunity of removing. While the

officers of the Bengal presidency have been thus successfully engaged in geographical inquiries on the north of Ava, the south and western districts have been explored with equal zeal and intelligence by those of the Madras presidency; and the spirit of honorable competition, which has already stimulated the researches of Drs. Richardson and Bayfield, and Lieutenant MacLeod, with such marked advantage, bids fair in a comparatively short time to render the whole empire of Ava better known than the most sanguine could have ventured to anticipate. Did the results of such journeys and investigations tend only to an increase of our geographical knowledge, they would even then be most valuable; but to suppose that the consequences of this intercourse between intelligence and ignorance are so limited, is to take a most inadequate view of the subject. The confidence inspired by the visits and conduct of a single individual⁷ has already opened a communication between Yunan and Maulmein, and the caravans of China have commenced their annual visits to the British settlements on the coast. The journey of Captain Hannay will in all probability lead to a similar result between Assam and the northern districts of Yunan, and the time may not be very distant when British merchants located at Bamo will, by their superior energy and resources, extend its now restricted trade to surrounding countries, and pave the way for ameliorating the condition and enlightening the ignorance of their numerous inhabitants.

⁷ Original margin note: Dr. Richardson of Madras.