

## 4. PHONOLOGY.

*The voice of the Andamanese.*—The voice of the Andamanese, though occasionally deep and hoarse, is usually pleasant and musical. The mode of speech is gentle and slow, and among the women a shrill voice is used in speaking; but though the tendency is towards a drawled pronunciation, they can express their meaning quickly enough on occasion, too quickly, indeed, for a foreigner to clearly follow the minutiae of pronunciation without very close attention. The general tone of the voice in speaking is low.

On an examination of the prevalent vowels and vowel interchanges and tendencies in the languages of the South Andaman (Bojjingiji) Group of Tribes, as described by Portman, it may be said that they relatively speak thus from a close to an open mouth.

Juwai	with closed lips
Bojgyab and Kol	with flattened lips
Balawa	with open lips
Bea	with lips tending to open wide.

It is interesting to note that the above results carry one straight from North to South.

*History of the reduction of the Language to writing.*—The Andamanese speech, as it is now studied, was first committed to writing on a system devised by myself, which was an adaptation of the system, invented by Sir William Jones in 1794 for the Indian Languages, and afterwards adopted, with some practical modifications introduced by Sir W. W. Hunter, by the Government of India as the "Hunterian System". My method of writing Andamanese was subsequently modified for scientific purposes by Mr. A. J. Ellis in 1882, and having so highly trained and competent a guide, one cannot do better than use here a modification of his system, adapted to the needs of a general publication. Portman, unfortunately, has, in his publications, gone his own way to the great puzzle of students.

In this view, there is no necessity to say anything of the consonants used, and as to the vowels, the following table will sufficiently exhibit them in the Bea Language.

## THE VOWELS IN BEA.

ENGLISH	BEA	ENGLISH	BEA
a	idea, cut	o	indolent
ā	cur	ō	pole
â	father	ö	könig (Ger.)
ä	fathom	ò	pot
e	bed	ó	awful
é	fade	u	influence
ê	pair	ū	pool
i	lid	ai	bite
i	police	au	house
...	...	àu	haus (Ger.)
...	...	òi	boil
			boigoli
			jōb
			tō
			pōlike
			tōgo
			būkura
			pūdre
			daike
			chopaua
			chàu
			bòigoli

*Peculiarities of Speech.*—Stress in Andamanese is placed on every long vowel, or on the first syllable of the root or stem. Peculiarities of pronunciation in the South Andaman Languages are as follow :

## BEA

Sibilants tend to become palatals, *s* to *ç* : *ö* and *ô* are interchangeable : final open *ä* and *ê* tend to *a* and *e* : *t* is an indistinct palato-dental.

## BALAWA

*t* is palato-dental and lisped, *çf.* Irish pronunciation of English *t* and *d*. The *a* vowels tend to be drawn out : *a* to become *o*, and *ä* to become *oä*. There is also an incipient *sandhi* in words ending in gutturals : *e. g.*, *rāk*, pig ; *räg-dōamo*, pig's flesh.

## BOJIGYAB

*ch* is palato-dental and tends to *t*, and the *ch* of *Bea* tends in *Bojigyab* to become *s*; *i. e.*, palatals tend to become sibilants.

## JUWAI

Short vowels are not clearly marked: *e* and *a* are interchangeable: final *e* and *é* tend to *i*. Vanishing short vowels are common and are shown thus, *j'rōngap*: *o* is often drawled to *ó*: penultimate *e* is lengthened to *é*, and stressed *é* is drawled to *éa*. There is *sandhi* of final and initial vowels in connected consecutive words. Dental, palatal and cerebral *t* all exist: palatals tend to dentals, *ch* to *t*: *p* tends to soften to *ph* and almost to *f*.

## KOL.

*ä* interchanges with *ö*: *á* tends to *éá*, *cf.* old English pronunciation *gyarden* for *garden*: *e* tends to *é*: final open vowels are uncertain.

A  
GRAMMAR

OF THE

**ANDAMANESE LANGUAGES.**

BEING

CHAPTER IV OF PART I

OF THE CENSUS REPORT

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