

when I was taking through the press the second edition of my *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts* (see the *Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency*, vol. I, part II, p. 277 ff.), and had occasion to quote the Allahabad record in some introductory passages.

J. F. FLEET.

22nd January, 1898.

3. THE LANGUAGE OF ŞOMĀLĪ-LAND.

SIR,—As an old resident of Şomālī-land, I read with some interest Dr. R. N. Cust's article on "The Language of Somālī-land" in the January number of the *Journal of the R.A.S.*, and should like to make a few observations on it.

Though I have had exceptional opportunities of studying the Şomālī language, I regret to say that my knowledge never went much beyond the elementary stage; but in the course of my political duties under the Aden Residency I have visited all the principal ports on the coast, from the Gulf of Tajūrah to Cape Girdifo (Guardafui), and have conversed with representatives of most of the principal tribes and sub-tribes throughout the country, either in their own homes or in Aden. The Eesa and Gadabūrsī are the tribes I know best, as I lived in their country for two years (1884–86) as British Agent and Vice-Consul at Zayla, but I have always thought the Mijjertheyn (who occupy the extreme north-east horn of the country) to be the most civilized and intelligent of the tribes.

Not having seen the Şomālī Grammar and Dictionary mentioned by Dr. Cust, I am unable to give any opinion on those books, but am glad to hear that some of the Roman Catholic Missionaries have made such good use of their time; for in my day those who were in the Zayla mission seemed to interest themselves more in local politics than in linguistic studies. At that time Father Francis had a small mission for Şomālī boys at Shekh 'Uthmān, near Aden. He acquired a good knowledge

of the language, and used to converse fluently with his boys in their own tongue. I believe he rendered some assistance to Colonel Hunter when the latter was engaged in writing his Grammar and Vocabulary. Monseigneur Taurin Cahaigne, who was then Bishop of Harrar and Vicar Apostolic of the Galla Country, translated a number of religious pamphlets into the Galla language, and had them printed in Roman character. He was for years engaged in compiling a Grammar and Dictionary of the Galla language, but I never heard whether he published the result of his labours.

My endeavours in this line were chiefly devoted to making Şomālī a written language, in order that any natives of the country acquainted with the Arabic characters should be able to read their own language. The partial result of my labours will be seen in a series of papers entitled "Şomālī as a Written Language," published in the *Indian Antiquary* between August, 1887, and April, 1889. On one occasion, when returning to Bombay from Aden, there were some intelligent Mijjertheyn Şomālīs as deck passengers in the same steamer; and finding that some of them were able to read and write Arabic, I explained my alphabet to them as far as it differed from the Arabic, and then showed them a number of colloquial sentences, Şomālī songs, which I had previously written from dictation, and a short story which I had translated into Şomālī from the "Thousand Nights and a Night." They understood every word perfectly, and nothing could exceed their astonishment when they found themselves for the first time in their lives reading their own language.

If this idea were followed up, and Şomālī pupils in the schools at Aden taught to read and write their own language, I feel sure that it would soon have the effect of throwing much light upon its grammar and etymology.

In seeking an origin for the name Berbera, I would suggest the probability of its being simply the Arabic word *barbarah* (which, according to the dictionary, means "talking much, shouting. Sounds, clamours, mixed

noises"). Those who have ever come in contact with Şomālīs will recognize the appropriateness of the name as applied to any of their ports. It may be a comparatively modern nickname given to it by Arabs, and the original name forgotten. An example of such a change is noticeable in the name Zel'a (Zayla), which is Arabic; the true Şomālī name being Audal. The derivation of Būlhār, mentioned by Sir R. Burton, shows how a nickname given in derision sometimes sticks to a place permanently.

The origin of the name 'Şomālī' will probably never be ascertained; but it certainly cannot be what Major Abud suggests, for the Şomālī word *s'o*, 'move' (corresponding to the Arabic *amshī* and the Hindustani *chal*), is rightly spelled with the letter 'ain, which does not occur in the word *Şomāl*. The latter is the name of the nation, and *Şomālī* the adjective, of which Somalis is simply the English plural, and I fail to see what connection there can be between the latter and the Şomālī word *lis*, which is the verb 'to milk.' The phrase 'Go and bring milk' would be translated *S'o wa āno ī-ken*.

Being myself totally ignorant of all the Dravidian languages, I will not venture to contradict what the Rev. Frère Evangeliste de Larajasse says in the concluding paragraph of his Notes, but I think it extremely improbable. Philologists, however, might easily determine the point by adopting the system of comparative vocabularies, which I did in my paper on "The Aborigines of Sokotra" (*Indian Antiquary*, July, 1890).

Whatever be the origin of the Şomālī race, it is certain that their country, or at least the extreme western portion, was at some remote period occupied by a Christian race; for in the year 1885 I discovered, at a place near the coast and about half-way between Zayla and Rās Jibūtī, traces of substantial stone buildings and numerous graves marked by well-cut stone crosses three or four feet high; and on each cross were cut a number of circular concave marks about two or three inches in diameter, and arranged in straight lines; sometimes two parallel rows. What the

meaning of these is I am unable to imagine. In the immediate neighbourhood were many large mounds of sea-shells, indicating that the ancient inhabitants had subsisted largely on shellfish.—Yours faithfully,

J. S. KING, Major.

9, Salisbury Road, Southsea.

February 7, 1898.

To the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society.

4. TWO PROPOSED CORRECTIONS IN THE "CATALOGUE OF PERSIAN MSS. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM" OF DR. C. RIEU.

As the admirable work of Dr. Rieu must at some time or other appear in a second edition, it seems worth while to place on record anything that is likely to render it even more free from error than it is already. I therefore send the following note on two points which have cropped up in my reading, as I think they should be considered by Dr. Rieu in preparing any future edition.

I. *Kūkaltāsh Khān*.

In vol. i, p. 62, in the article on Add. MS. No. 16,868, *Tuhfat-ul-Hind*, Dr. Rieu tells us that the work was written by desire of Kūkaltāsh Khān for the use of Prince Mu'izz-ud-dīn, Jahāndār Shāh. Dr. Rieu identifies this nobleman with the Kūkaltāsh Khān (Mīr Malik Husain) who was made Khān Jahān, Zafar Jang, in 1086 H. (*Ma'āşir-i-Ālamgīrī*, 142), and died in 1109 H., aged eighty-four (lunar) years (*Tārīkh-i-Muhammadi*). His biography appears in *Ma'āşir-ul-umarā*, i, 798–813, and in it there is nothing to show that he ever served at Multān or had anything to do with Jahāndār Shāh.

I suggest that the patron of the author of the *Tuhfat-ul-Hind* is to be found in another nobleman with the same titles, who was Jahāndār Shāh's foster-brother and intimately connected with him, not only while that prince