

Major Temple points out that there are spots from Arakan¹ to Mergui in Tenasserim where he is revered as a *nat* or *deva*, and that "his worship is precisely that which is common all over the East to supernatural beings."

I would suggest that instead of Maddra being a corruption of Baddra it is the reverse, and that *Maddra* is the short for Samudra (or Samudda) Devatā. The Chittagonian Hindus, being the chief navigators of that part, on their conversion to Mahomedanism, naturally made him a Pir (Peer) or saint.

I cannot understand the contradictory assertion that "Buddhamaw is a corruption of (Urdu) Budder-makam," though "Buddha" may be a corruption of "Buddar."

March 29th.

R. F. ST. ANDREW ST. JOHN.

To the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society.

PIR BADAR IN BURMA.

Dr. Anderson, "English Intercourse with Siam in the Seventeenth Century," 1890, p. 338, makes the following statement:—

"On the day following [the 28th June, 1687] the ship *James*, the consort of the *Curtana*, arrived in Mergui harbour; and Armiger Gosline, her commander, was ordered to ride near the *Resolution* opposite Mr. White's house, to prevent the crew taking the vessel to the other side of Banda-makhon."

In a long footnote Dr. Anderson remarks on this statement thus: "The Banda-makhon of Davenport is the island that forms the western side of Mergui harbour In the map of the northern part of the Mergui Archipelago, published by James Horsburgh, hydrographer to the Hon. East India Company, Feb. 1, 1830, and corrected at the

¹ I cannot hold myself responsible for the spelling of others. Arakan appears to be the official way of spelling the name.—St. A. Sr. J.

Admiralty up to June, 1871, this small island is called Madramacan. But I could find no native of Mergui who knew it by this name, as it is invariably called Pataw.

“Towards the northern part of the eastern shore of the island there is, however, a locality which the inhabitants of the town of Mergui called Buddha-makhan, and I am disposed to think that Madramacan is a corruption of this word. It is said to have derived its name from the circumstance that a Mahomedan saint called Budhar Udin resided there. The legend about him is that he came from the North by sea, and, being attracted to the northern part of Pataw by its natural beauty, he built a hut on the banks of a small stream, where it enters the sea, and where lies a huge boulder, on which he meditated for forty days, receiving from God whatever he asked for in his prayers. The Mahomedans, in consequence, called the place Budhar Udin's Makhan.

“It is a curious circumstance, however, that the place is revered alike by Buddhists and Mahomedans, and by the Chinese of Mergui. The Buddhists, after the custom of their religion, affix gold leaf to the boulder, whereas the Chinese leave small squares of brown paper ornamented with a representation in gold leaf of their deity, who patronizes seafaring men.

“Colonel Sir Edward Sladen informs me that the promontory at Akyab, known as the Point, is called by the Arakanese Buddha Makan after a Mahomedan saint, Buddha Aouliah, who chose it as a place of residence, and passed the greater part of his hermit life there. The place and its surroundings are regarded as sacred by all creeds and classes of natives residing in Arakan. Buddhists, Mahomedans, and Hindus all come, and either worship or solicit intercession with the unseen powers as a means of deliverance from evil, or success in any proposed worldly undertaking.

“‘One of the large boulders has been hewn out, so as to represent a natural cave, which is said to have been the residence of Buddha Sahib;’ and Sir Edward mentions

that on an immediately adjoining boulder there is a small Mahomedan mosque.

“On still another boulder, more sacred than the rest, a dome has been built, ‘because it contains the footprint of Buddha [? Aouliah], as well as an impression or indenture made by him when he knelt in prayer or went through other devotional exercises.’ ‘Hindus,’ according to Sir Edward Sladen, ‘are said to have been the first who discovered the saint’s supernatural powers. He is by them supposed to exercise an influence over marine affairs and navigation; and in verification of this I have the authority of that accomplished Babu Pratapa Chander Gosha, that Hindus, especially women of the Lower Bengal, on going on a pilgrimage, by river or sea, generally drop a few coppers into the water as an offering to Buddha Udin, saying, *Darya ka panch payse Buddhar Buddahar!*’”

Dr. Anderson then asks: “Is it likely that the Mahomedans have appropriated some legend about Buddha Gautama?” My answer would be: “Most assuredly not.”

Butler’s “Gazetteer of the Mergui District,” 1884, is silent on this and all other antiquarian subjects.

In reply to certain questions asked by the Government, the Commissioner of Arracan stated in 1892 as follows: “That part of Akyab town, known as the Point or Scandal Point, is in reality a narrow headland or promontory, which projects into the sea beyond the coast-line, and defines on its western side the mouth or entrance of the Kaladan River. It is called by the Arakanese Buddha-maw, *maw* being the Burmese for a promontory, and Buddha signifying Budder. This is in reality a Burmese corruption of the Urdu original, Buddermaw, or Buddermakam. The promontory itself of Buddermaw forms the apparent termination to a range of hills, which skirt the whole length of the Arakan coast-line, and are traced south of Akyab in the highlands which form the Western Borongo Island. The same range is continued at Ramree and comes to an abrupt termination in the Island of Cheduba.

“At the base of this headland, immediately south of the

town of Akyab, there is a defined line of almost perpendicular tilted rock, the base surface of which is exposed and weather-worn, so as to present the appearance of several huge boulders piled up into a compressed mass and raised some fifty feet above the level of the surrounding country. This is the spot known as Buddermakam, and takes its name from the Mahomedan saint Budder Aulia, who chose it as a place of residence, and passed the greater part of his hermit life there.

“The place and its surroundings are regarded as sacred by all creeds and classes of natives residing in Arakan. Buddhists, Mahomedans, and Hindus all come, and either worship or solicit intercession with the unseen powers, as a means of deliverance from evil or success in any proposed worldly undertaking. One of the large boulders on the ridge has been hewn out, so as to represent a natural cave, which is said to have been the actual residence of Budder Sahib. On another, immediately adjoining, is a small Mahomedan mosque. A dome has been built over a third, more sacred than the rest, because it contains the footprint of Buddha, as well as an impression or indenture made by him¹ when he knelt in prayer, or went through other devotional exercises.

“It seems at first difficult to account for the fact that three such opposite creeds as Hinduism, Mahomedanism, and Buddhism should unite to worship at the same shrine, and believe in the efficacy of offerings to an unseen power, common to all three, under slightly varying designations and conditions.

“The explanation I have arrived at is as follows: Budder Aulia, or, as he is more familiarly styled, Budder Sahib, was a Mahomedan *fakir*, who possessed great supernatural powers, which led to his being regarded almost in the light of a prophet. It is only natural that Mahomedans should reverence the spot where he lived and died, and offer their prayers under a surer hope of their being heard, than if

¹ Who is meant? Buddha or Budder? It is not usual to hear of Buddha praying.—Sr. A. St. J.

offered up elsewhere. Buddhists, in deference to the divine character of the saint Budder, mix him up in their minds with the guardian nat, or minor deity, of the place. They, therefore, worship him regularly, and are profuse in their reverence and religious offerings.

“Hindus are said to have been the first who discovered Budder’s supernatural powers. He is by them supposed to exercise an influence over marine affairs and navigation, so that those who make offerings and invoke his aid perform successful sea voyages, and return in safety with wealth acquired on the journey to their native homes.

“The legend states that, on one occasion, two Hindus, by name Manich [? Manik] and Chand, were returning by sea from Bassein to Chittagong, and put into Akyab to take in water. They anchored off the rock known as Buddermakam, and proceeded to a small tank near the sacred rocks. Here they met the *fakir*, and were asked by him to hollow out the cave, which was to form his future habitation. They pleaded poverty and the losses they had sustained in their trading adventure. The *fakir* said, ‘never mind, do as I bid you. If you are poor and without merchandize, load the soil from this sacred spot, and before your journey’s end you will be rewarded.’ The brothers did as they were bid. The cave was constructed, a well dug, and they proceeded on their journey towards Chittagong. The *fakir*’s words came true. On proceeding to unload their goods, they found in their place nothing but gold and the most valuable of gems.

“Miracles are performed to this day, it is believed, by virtue of the powers still exercised by the *fakir*. Sick people are cured by coming and bathing in the water of the sacred well. Others, who cannot come themselves, obtain relief as soon as the votive offering has been made on their account at the shrine, and the saint or *fakir*, or minor deity, has appeared, or has made intercession, or exercised supernatural agency, as the case may be.

“Amongst Burmese and Arakanese, the most common form of offerings made to the *nats* or minor deities consists

of food or strong drinks. Here, at Buddermakam, it has been found that the sacrifice of a goat on the spot is the most efficacious of offerings, and it is the one which is most prominently made by those who have any great favour to ask, or any impending calamity from which they would seek deliverance.

“There is, I am told, at Sandoway, a singular group of large boulders, similar in appearance to those at Buddermakam, and similarly named and held in reverence. It is, no doubt, due to Budder Sahib’s connection with navigation and sea journeys that his fame has extended along the whole coast-line as far south as the Malayan peninsula, and probably further. This will account for the shrine near Mergui called Maddra-makam. Maddra is undoubtedly a corruption of Buddha or Budder.

“From the description given of each, I conclude that the two shrines are in all respects identical, both as regards nature of site, general appearance, and universality of worship.”

It will have been noticed by the reader that the description given by Sir Edward Sladen and the official note just quoted are identical in many respects. They must have, in fact, an unacknowledged common origin in some older work, which I suspect is Sir Arthur Phayre’s, if only it can be unearthed.

In the “List of objects of Antiquarian and Archæological interest in British Burma,” 1892, p. 3 f, we find—“No. 8. District: Akyab. Locality: Southern side of the Island of Akyab and near the eastern shore of the Bay. Name of object: Buddha-makam Cave. Any local history of tradition regarding it: A cave and mosque constructed in memory of one Buddha Auliya, whom the Mussulmans regard as an eminent saint. The tradition regarding it is that, some 120 years ago, two brothers, Manik and Chand, traders from Chittagong, while on their homeward voyage in a vessel laden with turmeric, touched at Akyab for water and anchored off the rocks, now known as the Buddha-makam rock. During the night Manik had a vision, in

which he was requested by the saint to construct him an abode near the locality, being told that in order to enable him to do so all the turmeric in his vessel would be transformed into gold. Next morning the brothers, observing the miraculous transformation of their cargo, dug a well and constructed the present cave. Custody and present use: Worship by Buddhists, Hindus, and Mussulmans. Present state of preservation: It is in good condition and is kept in repair by a respectable Mussulman."

In the entries regarding Sandoway and Mergui in this very perfunctory compilation there is no reference to any cave as place sacred to Badar Aulia.

In Forchhammer's "Report on the Antiquities of Arakan," 1892, p. 60 f, we find the following information, together with a photograph, No. 88, plate xlii.

"There are a few modern temples in Akyab which are interesting inasmuch as their architectural style is a mixture of the Burmese turreted pagoda and the Mahomedan four-cornered minaret structure surmounted by a hemispherical cupola. The worship, too, is mixed. Both temples are visited by Mahomedans and Buddhists, and the Buddermokan has also its votaries.

"The Buddermokan is said to have been founded in A.D. 1756 by the Mussulmans in memory of one Budder Auliah, whom they regard as an eminent saint. Colonel Nelson Davies, in 1876, Deputy Commissioner of Akyab, gives the following account in a record preserved in the office of the Commissioner of Arakan, and kindly lent to me: 'On the southern side of the island of Akyab, near the eastern end of the Bay, there is a group of masonry buildings, one of which, in its style of construction, resembles an Indian mosque; the other is a cave constructed of stone on the bare rock, which superstructure once served as a hermit's cell. The spot where these buildings are situated is called Buddermokan, Budder being the name of a saint of Islam, and *mokan*, a place of abode. It is said that 140 years ago [*i.e.* 1736 A.D., be it noted], or thereabouts, two brothers named Manick and Chan [?Chand],

traders from Chittagong, while returning from Cape Negrais in a vessel loaded with turmeric, called at Akyab for water, and the vessel anchored off the Buddermokan rocks. On the following night, after Chan and Manick had procured water near these rocks, Manick had a dream that the saint Budder Auliah desired him to construct a cave or a place of abode at the locality near where they procured the water. Manick replied that he had no means wherewith he could comply with the request. Budder then said that all his (Manick's) turmeric would turn into gold, and that he should therefore endeavour to erect the building from the proceeds thereof. When morning came Manick, observing that all the turmeric had been transformed into gold, consulted his brother Chan on the subject of the dream, and they conjointly constructed a cave and also dug a well at the locality now known as Buddermokan.

“ ‘There are orders in Persian [*? i.e.* in the Persian or Urdu character] in the Deputy Commissioner's Court of Akyab, dated 1834, from William Dampier, Esquire, Commissioner of Chittagong, and also from T. Dickenson, Esquire, Commissioner of Arakan, to the effect that one Hussain Ally (then the *thugyi*¹ of Bhudamaw Circle) was to have charge of the Buddermokan in token of his good services rendered to the British force in 1825, and to enjoy any sums that he might collect on account of alms and offerings.

“ ‘In 1849 Mr. R. C. Raikes, the officiating Magistrate of Akyab, ordered that Hussain Ally was to have charge of the Buddermokan buildings, and granted permission to one Ma Min Oung, a female *fakir*, to erect a building. Accordingly in 1849 the present masonry buildings were constructed by her. She also redug the tank.

“ ‘The expenditure for the whole work came to about Rs. 2000. After Hussain Ally's death his son Abdoolah had charge, and after his death his sister Mi Moorazamal, the present wife of Abdool Marein, pleader, took charge. Abdool Marein is now in charge on behalf of his wife.’ ”

¹ Thū-gyī (Bur.), a head man. For Bhudamaw read Buddhamaw.—St. A. St. J.

Burmese corruptions of Musalman names are always difficult, and those just given are, as stated, impossible. All I can suggest for Marein is that it is a mistake for Karen (=Karim) and that the pleader's name was Abdu'l-Karim, "the servant of the Generous"; or possibly, by metathesis, for Rahim, which would make his name Abdu'r-Rahim, "the servant of the Compassionate." Ar-Rahim is the second and Al-Karim is the forty-second of the ninety-nine "Names" of God. See Hughes' "Dictionary of Islam," p. 141, Herklot's "*Qanoon-e-Islam*," p. 24 ff., and my own "Proper Names of Panjabis," p. 43 ff. There is no "Most Comely Name of God" at all like Marein. Moorazamal may be merely a misprint of Murazamat, a possible designation for a woman.

Dr. Forchhammer next goes on to describe the "Budder-mokan" thus: "The interior is very simple—a square or quadrangular room. There are really two caves, one on the top of the rocks. This has an entrance in the north and south sides; the arch is vaulted and so is the inner chamber. The exterior of the cave is 9 ft. 3 in. wide, 11 ft. 6 in. long, and 8 ft. 6 in. high; the inner chamber measures 7 ft. by 5 ft. 8 in., height 6 ft. 5 in.; the material is partly stone, partly brick plastered over; the whole is absolutely devoid of decorative designs. The other cave is similarly constructed, only the floor is the bare rock, slightly slanting towards the south entrance; it is smaller than the preceding cave. The principal mosque stands on a platform; a flight of brick and stone stairs leads up to it. The east front of the temple measures 28 ft. 6 in.; the south side 26 ft. 6 in.; the chamber is 16 ft. 9 in. long, and 13 ft. wide. The ceiling is a cupola; on the west side is a niche, let 1 ft. into the wall, with a pointed arch and a pilaster each side. [This must be the *mihrab* that is obligatory in every mosque.] Over it hangs a copy in Persian [? character not language] of the grant mentioned above. A small prayer-hall [if meant for Muhammadans this is (?) an *idgah*], also quadrangular, with a low cupola, is pressed in between the rocks close by. All the buildings are in

good order. The curiously-shaped rocks capped by these buildings form a very picturesque group. The principal mosque has become the prototype for many Buddhist temples. This pagoda is the most perfect type of the blending of the Indian mosque and the Burmese turreted spire."

I cannot quite follow Dr. Forchhammer in mixing up the terms "temple," "mosque," and "pagoda" in one and the same building. But I am quite of one mind with him as to the extreme architectural value of the old mosque at Akyab, and have long pitched on its dome and central spire as the connecting link between ancient *chaitya* architecture and the modern Burmese spired pagoda. From this point of view this building is certainly one of the most important old structures in Burma, and one of the most worth preserving.

I have now allowed such witnesses as I can procure from the Burmese side to tell their story, each in his own way, and the evidence amounts to this: There is a supernatural being worshipped along the Burmese coast by seafarers from Akyab to Mergui at certain spots specially dedicated to him. These spots, so far as yet known, are at Akyab, Sandoway, and Mergui. To the Buddhists he is a *nat*; to the Hindus a *deva* or inferior god; to the Muhammadans a saint; to the Chinese a spirit. His worship is precisely that which is common all over the East to spirits or supernatural beings, believed in by the folk irrespective of their particular form of professed belief, and it points, in just the same way as do all other instances, to the survival of an old local animistic worship in "pre-religious" days. As in all other similar cases, one of the contending professed religions has chiefly annexed this particular being to itself, and he is pre-eminently a Muhammadan saint, legendarily that saint best known to the bulk of the Muhammadan seafaring population, namely, Pir Badar of their own chief town Chittagong.

In that remarkably accurate work Beale's "Oriental Biographical Dictionary," 1881, there is an entry, Pir

“Badar,” at p. 216, which explains the matter under discussion. Pir Badar or Badar is the great saint of the Chittagonians, Badru'ddin Aulia and Badr Sahib, under the various corruptions above given, being merely variants of his title of the ordinary sort.

Beale says of this saint: “Pir Badar, a celebrated Musalman saint, whose tomb is at Chitagun in Bengal, and is evidently of great antiquity. There is a stone scraped into furrows, on which, it is said, Pir Badar used to sit. There is also another bearing an inscription, which, from exposure to the weather and having on it numerous coats of whitewash, is illegible. There is a mosque near the tomb with a slab of granite, bearing an illegible inscription, apparently from the Kuran. At a short distance is the masjid of Muhammad Yasin, with an inscription conveying the year of the Hijri 1136 (1724 A.D).”

Unfortunately there is not a word about Pir Badar in the “Statistical Account of Bengal,” vol. vi. Chittagong, etc. Clearly, in quoting the foregoing extracts, we have not yet dug up all the information procurable from books, records, and reports about Pir Badar himself in his own native town, nor about “Buddermokan.” What is wanted as to Pir Badar is a specific account about him, his date, doings, miracles, worship, and so on; and what is wanted about “Buddermokan” is the source from which Sladen’s and the official account came, and details about his cult at Akyab, Sandoway, and Mergui, and at other places along the coast, should it happen to exist at any other spots than those already cited.

Perhaps readers of these notes, interested in such things, and possessing information on the point, will kindly add to that herein collected.

R. C. T.