

Buddhism by Mahindo, the son of Asoka.¹ In the absence of facsimiles, however, it is not possible to discuss the inscriptions in detail; and I must, therefore, content myself for the present with calling attention to the new and valuable evidence which they seem to afford.

Let me conclude this note by mentioning the suggestion made to me by Prof. Rhys Davids, as to the possibility of the Indians having borrowed their Brähma alphabet from the Sinhalese, who in turn may have got it from the Semitic people then trading in Ceylon, for Ceylon in those olden days is said to have been the centre of Eastern commerce.²—Yours faithfully,

DON MARTINO DE ZILVA WICKREMASINGHE.

3. MAHUAN'S ACCOUNT OF BENGAL.

Netherclay House, Taunton,
Sept. 20th, 1895.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to offer a few remarks on Mr. Phillips's interesting article in the July number of the Journal on Mahuan's account of Bengal.

Cheh-ti-gan. This corresponds precisely to Chittagong (Chatgánw). At that place a traveller proceeding to the interior would transfer himself from a sea-going vessel to a country boat to go up the Meghna, just as the Chinese pilgrim describes. The distance, 166 miles to Sonargáon, is also very nearly correct. Sonārgáon, however, is not "Suvarna-gramma, or Golden Town," but Suvarnakāragrāma, or Goldsmith's Village. The site is not unknown, as Mr. Phillips supposes. It is on the Meghna, about twelve miles east of Dacca. A very interesting account of the ruins and remains at this place by Dr. Wise will be found in the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal, vol. xliii, p. 82.

¹ See Mr. Parker's interesting Report on Archæological Discoveries at Tissamahārāma (Journal Ceylon Branch of the Roy. As. Soc., vol. viii, pt. 1, pp. 70-75), where he has arrived at the same conclusions as I have done here.

² See "Ceylon," by Sir James E. Tennent, vol. i, pp. 571, etc. (Ceylon as known to the Phœnicians).

The Chinese traveller notes that the "Kingdom of Bengala" is thirty-five stages, or 105 miles, south-west from Sonárgáon. This distance and direction bring us, as the crow flies, to the eastern boundary of the Sarkár, or fiscal division, of Sátgáon, and forty miles further in the same line is the site of the famous ancient city of Sátgáon, which if not precisely the capital of Bengal was the residence of one of the provincial governors, and the largest and most important commercial town and trading port in the country. Sátgáon is, I think, beyond doubt the place meant by Mahuan. He is, of course, mistaken in asserting that the people were all Muhammadans, though the officials and leading men were so.

The Tang-ka is the ordinary silver coin now more generally known as the rupee. The Bengalis, however, still use the term *ṭānká* or *ṭáká* for rupee.

As to the cotton fabrics, it is difficult to decide what is meant by *Man-chê-ti* and *Hin-pei-tung-tali*. *Pi-chih* can hardly be for Betteela, as this, according to Yule's glossary, is a Portuguese word, *Beatilha*—"a nun's veil," and Mahuan visited India before the Portuguese came there. If, as appears from Mr. Phillips's note, the *ch* is a transliteration of *t* or *tí*, I would suggest the Bengali and Hindustani *butí*, or in full *butídár*, the name of muslin with flowers worked on it.

Sha-na-keih is apparently the material known to Europeans in the sixteenth century as 'sanés' or 'sahnes,' Persian *صحن* *ṣahn* (see J.A.S.B., vol. xlii, p. 216). A great deal of it was made at Balasore in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was a white cotton cloth of rather coarse texture.

Sha-ta-urh seems to be correctly identified with *Chautár*, and *Mo-hei-mo-leh* with *malmal*, perhaps the *malmali shāhī* or royal muslin made at Dacca.

The word *Kán-siao-su-lu-nai* is given as the name of a class of musicians. I know of no class or caste of musicians so called in any part of Bengal, but I would suggest that

we have here two words indicative of musical instruments. *Su-lu-nai* seems to be the Persian سُرنای *surnái* 'a flute or pipe,' a word in common use in Bengal; and if the Chinese syllables can be so transliterated, the former part of the word would be *khanjari*, the Bengali name for a tambourine. Thus the combined word would be *khanjari-surnái*, or 'tambourine and pipe,' which corresponds to the description of the instruments used. It is noteworthy also that these are the actual instruments used by the musicians in Bengal in the present day (see Dr. Wise's "Notes on Dacca," p. 253).

As to the identification of Gai-ya-szu-ting with Ghiyás-uddin, the Chinese date seems to be wrong, as there are no coins or inscriptions of this king later than A.H. 799, corresponding to A.D. 1396. But the other king may, perhaps, be identified as follows: In A.D. 1415 (=A.H. 817-818) Jaláluddin was king, but his reign did not commence till A.H. 818, the end of March, 1415. In the former part of the year 1415 his father, the Hindu Raja Káns, was apparently still alive. Might it not, therefore, be possible that the Chinese historian has mixed up the two, and made out of Káns and Jaláluddin a joint name, Káns uddin, which he represents by Kien-hut-ding. A Chinese would not be aware of the incongruity of a mixed Hindu and Musulman name. Though Lane-Poole, adopting the modern Arabic custom, writes Ghiyás *ad*-din and Jalál *ad*-din; in India, where Arabic is only known as an ancient classical tongue, the final *u* of Arabic nominatives is still retained in proper names, and we still say Jaláluddin (*i.e.* Jalálu 'd-din), Muníruddin, Ghiyásuddin, not *ad*.—Yours truly,

JOHN BEAMES.

4. EPIGRAPHIC DISCOVERIES IN MYSORE.

The following is taken from *The Academy* of Sept. 21st:—
Vienna, Sept. 3rd, 1895.

Mr. L. Rice, C.I.E., the director of the Archæological Department in Mysore, who, two years ago, discovered the