



**Notes on Arakan: By the Late Rev. G. S. Comstock, American Baptist Missionary in That Country from 1834 to 1844**

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# NOTES ON ARAKAN:

BY THE LATE REV. G. S. COMSTOCK,

AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONARY IN THAT COUNTRY FROM 1834 TO 1844.

WITH A MAP OF THE PROVINCE,

DRAWN TO ACCOMPANY THEM:

BY REV. L. STILSON,

MISSIONARY COMPANION OF THE AUTHOR.



COMMUNICATED TO THE AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY,

BY BARNAS SEARS, D. D.,

PRESIDENT OF THE THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION, NEWTON, MASS.

WITH NOTES,

BY THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

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# NOTES ON ARAKAN.

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## § 1. *General Description of the Country.*

THE name of Arakan is derived from *Rakaing*, the native appellation of the country, of which Mug authors give several different derivations. Of these, the most probable is one which makes it to be a euphonic change from *Rakak*, sometimes also written *Rakaik*, the name of a fabulous eater of human flesh, supposed to have been applied to the country on account of the reported cannibalism of the savage tribes, who inhabit the mountains of the interior.<sup>1</sup> The province extends from 15° 53' to 21° 30' north latitude, and from 92° 15' to 94° 45' east longitude, and is bounded on the north by the river Naf, and a range of mountains which divide it from Chittagong; on the east, by the *Yomadoong*, or Yoma mountains, which separate Arakan from Burma; on the south, the province comes to a point, called Pagoda Point; and the western boundary is the Bay of Bengal.<sup>2</sup> Its greatest

<sup>1</sup> Formerly, according to Captain Phayre, Senior Assistant-commissioner in Arakan, only the northern portion of the country now called by this name, was known among the natives as the *Rakaingdye*, or Rakaing-land,—a fact of importance with reference to the origin of the population. It has been suggested, with much plausibility, that Rakak is derived from *Yekkha*, for the Sanskrit *Yaksha*, signifying, in popular usage, a monster, half man, half beast, which devours human flesh; and that it was adopted as their national appellation by the Arakanese, from the superior strangers who communicated to them the religion of Buddha. The Buddhist missionaries from India, whose narratives we have, call Arakan *Yekhapura*. See Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, XII. p. 24. [E. E. S.]

<sup>2</sup> The same principal boundaries are assigned to the country by other writers; but its extent in degrees is variously stated, probably, in part, because the measure has been taken sometimes on the line of the sea-coast, and some-

breadth, at its northern extremity, is about ninety miles, and the average breadth is usually estimated at about fifty, or sixty miles. Its area is about sixteen thousand five hundred square geographical miles. The general appearance of the country is hilly, and that of the coast decidedly bold. In many places, however, extensive flats intervene between the hills and the sea-shore, which are generally marshy, and near the sea covered with mangrove trees; similar flats, but not so low, are found on the banks of the rivers and smaller streams, which intersect the province in every direction. The islands of Ramree and Cheduba are more elevated than the main land; and those inundations, which elsewhere during the height of the rains submerge the flats near the large streams, ten or fifteen feet, are scarcely known there.

From the Yoma range of mountains enormous spurs shoot out in every direction, which render the western portion of the province a confused mass of lofty mountains and deep valleys. The highest peaks of the Yoma range, at the northern extremity of Arakan, are five thousand, or more, feet above the level of the sea. They gradually decrease in height till they reach the sea at Pagoda point, where they are only one or two hundred feet high. The principal mountain-ranges run north and south, and their sides are generally steep, and covered with immense trees. Still the Kyens, and other wild tribes, find suitable places upon them for cultivation, and for the erection of their small and rude villages.

The whole coast from Akyab to Sandoway, is studded with islands, some of which are large and inhabited, while others are small and only serve to give variety and beauty to the scenery. Beside the Mayu, the Koladon, and the Leymroo<sup>3</sup> rivers in the Akyab district, which are navi-

times through the interior, and partly because there are border-tribes whose relations to the Government of the province have vacillated between subjection and independence.

The mountains which separate Arakan from Chittagong are called *Weiladoong*. See Journal of R. A. S. of Bengal, X. p. 679. [E. E. S.]

<sup>3</sup> The Burmese pronunciation makes the name of this river *Leimyo*. The same letter, as pronounced in Burma, or in Arakan, appears sometimes to have the sound of *r*, and sometimes of *y*.

The former part of the name *Kola-don*, signifying *foreign*, accords with the fact, that this river takes its rise out of Arakan. S. Ritter: *Erdkunde von Asien.*, IV. I. p. 309. [E. E. S.]

gable thirty or forty miles for vessels of two or three hundred tons, there are the Talak or Dalet, the Aing, and the Sandoway, which are navigable to any considerable distance by native boats alone. Smaller streams abound in the province, and furnish nearly the only means of communication between the different villages.

The soil near the sea-shore is sandy ; but on the numerous alluvial flats, intersected by creeks, lying between the coast or the rivers, and the hills, it is dark clayey mould ; and on the higher lands in the interior, it is red and much mixed with stones. The most productive land yields to the cultivator more than a hundred fold, while much that is cultivated is not half so productive.

I know of no one who has paid particular attention to the geology of the province. The rocks nearest to the primitive in the geological order appear to be mostly slate. The lower hills consist chiefly of sand-stone, mixed occasionally with a stiff clay, and on many parts of the coast coral and shell lime are abundant. Iron is found at the northern extremity of Ramree island, and lime at the southern ; the latter is also found near Akyab and Sandoway. Coal has been discovered in several places, and it is highly probable that the mountains of Arakan contain treasures which a more intelligent and persevering people than the present inhabitants will draw forth.

The botanical productions of the province have never been thoroughly examined and classified. On the mountains, far in the interior, are found the teak, a kind of oak, and other timbers, which would be highly valued, were it not impossible to transport them to any place where they can be used. The jarrul, toon, praing, and many other useful trees, abound in Arakan ; the bamboo, ratan, etc., are also abundant ; the mango, guava, orange, (called by Europeans here sweet lime,) and other fruit trees, and several flowering shrubs are frequently found.

Among the wild animals of the province, are the elephant, rhinoceros, tiger, leopard, bear, deer of various kinds, and the wild hog, which are found principally on the mountains and in the forests ; the wild buffalo, wild cat, a species of raccoon, the wild dog, a kind of civet, with a variety of mon-

keys, and other smaller animals, are found on the hills and in the jungles.—Of birds, a great variety of such as frequent the surrounding countries, are found in Arakan; some of them are highly prized for their splendid plumage, and others for their excellent flavor.—The boa constrictor, cobra capella, and indeed snakes and reptiles of nearly every kind, are common.—Of fish, there is an abundance of all the kinds usually found in tropical seas and rivers. Sharks and alligators abound, and turtle, sole, pomfret, mullet, skait, bumalo, crabs, lobsters of a small kind, shrimps, oysters, and various other species of fish, are not unfrequently taken. The Mugs enumerate more than two hundred kinds of fish; though the markets of the province seldom furnish many that are particularly palatable to Europeans.

§ 2. *Number of the Inhabitants, and their Races; with a Sketch of the History of the Mugs.*

The population of Arakan at the present time (1842) is estimated at about 250,000. Of these, about 167,000 are Mugs, 40,000 are Burmese, 20,000 are Mussulmans,<sup>4</sup> 10,000 are Kyens, 5,000 are Bengalese, 3,000 are Toungmroos, 2,000 are Kemees, 1,250 are Karens, and the remainder are of various races, in smaller numbers. The Mugs are the earliest inhabitants of the country, at least of the plains, of which we have any knowledge. The name of *Mugs*, as applied to inhabitants of this country, originated with foreigners, and I never found an Arakanese who could give any account of it.<sup>5</sup> The people call themselves "*Rakaingthas*," that is, "sons of Arakan." They are evidently a part of the *Myonma* family, to which belong also the present inhabitants of Burma, including the Shans, etc., and the Karens, Kyens, and other numerous hill tribes of Arakan.<sup>6</sup> The traditions of all the branches of this family refer to "the far

<sup>4</sup> In official returns, speaking of the Arakanese, "Mussulman" denotes the *Kummanchees*, or followers of Mohammed, and no others. The Mussulmans and Hindoos of the western peninsula are comprehended under the general term "natives of Bengal," or "Bengalees." [Note by Rev. R. A. Fink.]

<sup>5</sup> Europeans have borrowed this name from India. [E. E. S.]

<sup>6</sup> According to the geographer Ritter, the original form of the family name of all these was *Marama*, which became contracted to *Mranma*, and by the

north " as the original seat of their ancestors ; and the structure of their languages, together with the Mongolian cast of their physiognomy, confirms these traditions, and indicates the Mongolian origin of the family.

When Arakan was first settled by its present inhabitants, we have no means of knowing. The history of the country is carried back in "the royal records" to the remotest antiquity ; but the grossest fiction so abounds in these records, and withal is so intimately blended with the few facts they contain, that scarcely any reliance can be placed upon them. There is a tradition, that Gautama, the last incarnation of Boodh, visited Arakan in the sixth century before Christ ; and that the famous temple of Mahâmuni, the ruins of which still exist about twenty miles north of the town of Arakan, was then built by the reigning king to his honor ; and that the same king caused a brazen image of him to be cast, or rather that such an image was, in the reign of this king, miraculously formed by the *Nats*. That the temple of Mahâmuni is very ancient cannot be doubted, and that the great idol was coeval with it is highly probable ; but there is little reason to believe that Boodhism has flourished in Arakan two thousand four hundred years, or that authentic records of events, which transpired in this country so long since, are now in existence.

An article prepared by Charles Paton, Esq., Sub-commissioner in Arakan, and published in vol. xvi. of the Asiatic Researches comprises, I am inclined to believe, the more important facts in the history of the country ; and from it is taken most of the brief sketch of Mug history, which follows.

The first king on record, after a long and happy reign,

change of *r* into *y*, was made *Myanma*. From Marama he derives the modern name of Burma. S. Ritter: Erdk. v. Asien., IV. 1. p. 301.

The Burmese refer to Arakan as "the old country." The establishment of the two separate kingdoms of Arakan and Ava, is referred by the Arakanese annals, to about the year A. D. 1061. Idem. p. 323.

The Shans are a peculiar people, scattered over all Farther India, perhaps its aborigines. They live under chieftains of their own, in dependence upon Burma, Siam, Cochin China, or China. Their language is the Siamese. For a particular account of them, S. Ritter: Erdk. v. Asien., III. p. 1229, &c. [E. E. S.]

died A. D. 701.<sup>7</sup> From that time to the conquest of Arakan by the Burmese in 1784, the throne was occupied by one hundred and twenty different kings, some of whom obtained it by violence, and reigned but a few days. Between 1158 and 1168, a part of China, and the whole of Ava, Siam and Bengal, are said to have been made subject to the Arakanese, —a statement of “the royal records,” probably too highly colored, in reference to Siam, and certainly so in respect to Bengal, of which only Chittagong and Tippera ever belonged to Arakan.<sup>8</sup> Some time near the close of the twelfth century, the possessions of the Mugs in China, Ava and Siam

<sup>7</sup> Under this king, whose name, according to Mr. Paton, was *Chanda-sorea-gôta*, Buddhism is said to have been introduced into Arakan. But there are different computations of the date of his reign. A statement of Mr. Paton on Mug authority, that the commencement of the present era of the Arakanese was established in honor of Gautama and that A. D. 1826 corresponded to the year 1188 of that era, seems to imply that Buddhism was generally adopted in Arakan within the first half of the seventh century after Christ. This would give some part of the same century to the reign of Chanda-sorea. On the other hand, if we reckon from the commencement of the history of Arakan B. C. 2658, as fixed by Ngami, a native Arakanese employed by Capt. Phayre to make for him an epitome of the chronicles of his nation, the accession of this king, whom Ngami, adopting the Burmese pronunciation, calls *Tsanda-thuriya*, is brought down to A. D. 146, and his death to A. D. 198. The correctness of this computation, however, depends upon the historical accuracy of the lists of ancient dynasties which Ngami compiled, and is therefore less to be confided in than a date given to the event, as that of Mr. Paton is, according to an era which still continues in use among the Arakanese. It may be doubted, however, whether Mr. Paton is entirely correct in saying, as he does, that Chanda-sorea died in the 65th year of the present Mug era, or A. D. 701, for if the period of fifty-two years is properly assigned to his reign in the native annals, and if Buddhism was introduced by him in A. D. 638, his death must have occurred a few years earlier than A. D. 701.

Mr. Comstock, following Mr. Paton, errs in saying that Chanda-sorea is “the first king on record;” he is only the first of whom we know any thing, after the commencement of the present Arakanese era. With his reign the modern history of Arakan begins. S. Asiatic Researches XVI. pp. 355, 356; and J. R. A. S. of B., XII. pp. 35, 36. [E. E. S.]

<sup>8</sup> In an “Account of Arakan,” published in the J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 687, it is stated, on the authority of “the royal records,” that from the time of *Tsanda-thooveeya*, who is the same as *Tsanda-thuriya*, to the conquest of the country by the Burmese, one hundred and thirty-five kings reigned.

The king of whom Mr. Paton speaks as having ruled over parts of China, Ava, Siam and Bengal, between A. D. 1158 and 1168, had his reign, according to Ngami’s compilation from the native annals, from A. D. 1133 to 1153. His name as given by Ngami was *Gaulaya*. Mr. Paton calls him *Kowalea*. S. J. R. A. S. of B., XII. p. 40. It is proper to state here, that Ngami’s dates, after the time of *Tsanda-thuriya*, are in years of the present Arakanese era. [E. E. S.]

appear to have been wrested from them.<sup>9</sup> In the year 1430, the seat of government was fixed at the present town of Arakan, which was surrounded by a strong wall, measuring about nine miles. "The labor of this work must have been immense, as in many places mounds of earth are thrown up to fill the spaces between contiguous hills, in other places the hills are joined together by a mound faced on both sides with stone work, averaging in height from fifty to one hundred feet."<sup>10</sup> About the year 1730, Chittagong and Tippera seem to have become independent.<sup>11</sup> After this, internal feuds arose, and intrigues commenced on the part of some Mug officers to deliver the country into the hands of the king of Ava. The first king to whom these disaffected officers made overtures, rejected them; but they were accepted by his successor, who sent his three sons, at the head of three divisions of his army, to take the country, an enterprize which proved successful. In 1784, the conquest was completed by the seizure of the king of Arakan, who, with his family, jewels and treasure, together with the famous brazen image of Gautama, which had for centuries been "the idol" of Arakan, were conveyed to Ava. Thenceforward the country continued subject to Burma, although frequent attempts were made by the Mugs to expel their invaders, till it was taken by the

<sup>9</sup> According to Ngami, this extent of empire was lost under a grandson of Gaulaya between A. D. 1167 and 1169. S. loc. cit.

<sup>10</sup> Mr. Paton gives the name of *Jumuwai* to the king who first made Arakan town the capital, and dates the commencement of his reign from A. D. 1404. In the list of Ngami the same person is called *Meng-tsau-mrun*—a name compounded of the honorary prefix, *Meng*, and *Tsau-mrun*, the Burmese form corresponding to *Cho-ma-in*, or *Cho-mwa-in*, according to the pronunciation of Arakan, from which comes *Jumuwai*. S. J. R. A. S. of B., XII. p. 52. The "Account of Arakan" places the accession of this sovereign in A. D. 1385, apparently by mistake, as no other authority than the native annals is referred to, and Ngami's epitome agrees on this point with Mr. Paton's statement. [E. E. S.]

<sup>11</sup> These countries between Bengal and Arakan were, for some centuries, possessed alternately by the Mogul emperors and the kings of Arakan. The flight to Arakan of Suja, one of the brothers of Aurungzeb who refused to own his authority, was the occasion of that emperor's seizing Chittagong and Tippera, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, after which they were only for a short time, again attached to Arakan. S. As. Res. XVI. pp. 363, 364. The name *Tsettagoung*, or according to the Arakanese pronunciation, Chittagong, belongs to the language of the Myanmas,—which is a proof of their early occupation of that country. S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 689. Tippera is a corruption of *Tri-pura*, the name of an ancient Hindu kingdom on the eastern side of the delta of the Ganges. S. Ritter: Erdk. v. Asien, IV. 1. p. 313. [E. E. S.]

East India Company in 1825, with which event Mug history ends.

Most of the Burmese probably, came into the country while it was a dependency of Ava, although many have immigrated since. The Mussulmans are supposed to be the descendants of Bengalee slaves, imported when the kings of Ava held Chittagong and Tippera. They have retained for the most part the language and customs of their forefathers; but have partially adopted the dress of the country. Within a few years past, many Bengalee Mussulmans have immigrated to Arakan, to get higher wages and better living, than they could procure in Chittagong: these constitute the five thousand Bengalees mentioned in enumerating the population of the province. A part of the Mussulman population, one thousand or more, residing principally in Ramree, are the descendants of some people, who came from Delhi, in company with one of the Mogul princes, who having failed in an attempt upon the throne, fled for refuge to the court of Arakan. They were his guard, and as their weapon was a bow, were called *Kamonthas*, or bowmen, which name their descendants still retain. They have adopted the language and dress of the Mugs, and a part of them have become Boodhists.<sup>12</sup>

“The Kyens have a tradition that they are direct descendants of some Burmese refugees, or of the remnants of an army, that was lost in the mountains, when attempting to penetrate to the westward;” and they are found in large numbers throughout the whole Yoma range, only a small portion of them being within British jurisdiction. They are evidently of the Myonma family, and it is probable that their forefathers left their original seat, earlier than those of the Mugs.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> These are probably the descendants of the followers of Suja, Aurungzeb's brother. [E. E. S.]

<sup>13</sup> S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 684. An extended account of the Kyens may be found in Ritter's *Erdk. v. Asien*. IV. l. 279, &c., according to which they have the tradition, that they once occupied the whole of Ava and Pegu, but were at length forced from the plains to the mountains by a race from the north, who came among them peaceably, but afterwards attempted to subdue them; and this may be what is alluded to in the tradition mentioned in the text, of their descent from the remnants of an army lost in the mountains, when attempting to penetrate to the westward. A very important particular in Ritter's

The Toungmroos, who are also mountaineers, are found only in the northern part of the province: they are very slightly affected by the civilization around them, and are said to be revengeful and barbarous. They are descendants of people brought in former times from Tippera, and call themselves *Tripura*; their language appears to be not at all allied to the Burmese.

The Kemees are hill-people, and appear much like Mugs, only in a ruder state. They give no account of their origin, but the traditions of the Mugs refer to them as already in the country, when their ancestors entered it: they undoubtedly belong to the same great family of the human race, of which the Mugs, the Burmese and other kindred people are also branches; and their ancestors probably settled in the mountains of Arakan, before its plains were inhabited.<sup>14</sup>

The Karens are a part of the race of that name so widely spread throughout the Burmese empire, who have been often described by missionaries and others; any further notice of them here is unnecessary.

A few hundred Hindoos and Munnipoorees<sup>15</sup> are also found in Arakan, and a small number of Chinese, Shans, etc. They do not, however, differ from the same people in their own countries, and it is needless to enter into particulars here respecting them.

What the population of the kingdom was in its palmy days, we have no means of knowing; but in many places, especially in the Akyab district, are traces of a far more numerous population than it now contains. "The ruins of the ancient temple of Mahâmuni, built entirely of stone, the sites of former cities, shown by the remains of tanks and ruined pagodas, the extensive stone walls at the old capital, certainly tell of a more flourishing kingdom, than what the British found it."<sup>16</sup> It was then said to contain only one hundred thousand inhabitants.

account of this people, is, that their language differs entirely from the Burmese, which is irreconcilable with the supposition adopted by Mr. Comstock, that they belong to the Myanma family. [E. E. S.]

<sup>14</sup> S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 683.

<sup>15</sup> The seat of this race is *Munipür*, a table-land in the northern part of the kingdom of Ava; they are apparently kindred to the Shans, but profess the Brahman religion. S. Ritter: *Erdk. v. Asien*. IV. 1. 359, &c. [E. E. S.]

<sup>16</sup> S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 689, &c.

§ 3. *Agriculture, Commerce, Mechanic Arts, and Professions.*

Nearly all the Mugs, and a considerable portion of the Burmese and Mussulmans, are engaged in agricultural pursuits. Before giving an account of the agriculture of the province, however, it is desirable to say something of its climate. The year may be divided into two seasons, the wet and the dry ; but it is more usual to divide it into three, the rainy, the cold, and the hot seasons. The rains usually set in about the first of May, though the showers for a month after that are seldom severe, and are only occasional. During the months of June and July, especially the latter, it often rains for many days together, and at times literally pours down. The greatest fall during twenty-four hours, that I have measured, was about eight inches, but in one month, July 1841, it was ninety-five inches. In August and September the rains moderate ; during the latter month very considerably, and in October showers are few and gentle. There are occasionally very slight showers out of the months above named. The average annual fall of rain is about two hundred inches. The thermometer during the rainy season seldom varies much from 80° ; while the rains are breaking up in October, and during the first half of November, it rises three or four degrees. The latter part of November and the months of December and January, and a part of February, are delightfully cool, particularly in the morning and evening. On some of the coolest mornings the thermometer sinks below 50° ; but it usually ranges, at the coolest, between 50° and 60° ; during the day it rises to 80°, and frequently from four to six degrees higher. Early in February the heat begins to increase, and continues to do so, until the rains fairly set in. At this season of the year, the thermometer often rises to 95°, and occasionally higher, especially during the month preceding the rains, and the average heat for that month is about 91°. At the same time, nearly all vegetation perishes, and the whole country presents a desolate and saddening appearance. The thermometrical observations here recorded were made at Ramree, where refreshing breezes from the Bay of Bengal, springing up after noon and continuing most of the night, moderate

the heat very considerably, as they do every where near the sea shore ; farther in the interior the heat is doubtless more intense.

A few words as to the health of the province have their most appropriate place in this connection. Changes of temperature are frequent and sudden, and as the natives are thinly clad, much exposed both to the sun and rain, poorly housed, and indulge freely in eating crude vegetables, and other indigestible and unwholesome food, their health suffers not a little. The most prevalent diseases are fevers remittent and intermittent, especially the latter, bowel affections of severe character, enlargement of the spleen, pulmonary diseases, small-pox, and of late years cholera of a fatal sort.

I will now return to the subject of agriculture. All the land in Arakan belongs to the East India Company ; but cultivators procure as much as they wish at a fixed annual rent, and retain the land which they have once leased, as long as they cultivate it, and regularly pay the stipulated rent to Government. " The cultivated rice lands are divided into three classes, which pay at the rate of twelve, ten, and eight rupees per *doon*. The first sort will produce from one thousand to twelve hundred baskets of *ghan*, the rice threshed from the stalk, but not husked, which will sell, on an average, at from ten to twelve rupees for a hundred baskets." The second and third classes of land are less productive, in about the ratio indicated by the diminished rent. " One man with a pair of buffaloes will cultivate a doon of land with ease." <sup>17</sup> Buffaloes are used almost exclusively in cultivating the soil ; they cost from forty to sixty rupees a pair ; about ninety thousand are found in the whole country. Oxen, which cost from forty to fifty rupees a pair, are used in carts, of which there are one thousand in the province,

<sup>17</sup> S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 695. The value of a rupee is about 45½ cents, and a *doon* is equal to 6½ acres. The basket of Arakan contains about one third of a bushel. [Note of Mr. Comstock.]

To what Mr. C. says of the proprietorship of the soil, it may be added, that although the existing Government is recognized as the rightful owner of it, yet in practice, land taken to cultivate is inherited by the cultivator's heirs, as if it were his own, only that it must continue to be occupied and cultivated, and the prescribed rent to be paid to government. The tenure resembles a perpetual lease. S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 693. [E. E. S.]

and sometimes for ploughing, etc. The whole number of cows and oxen in Arakan is about eighteen thousand. The agricultural implements of the Mugs are of the rudest construction, and cost but a trifle : a cart costs but ten rupees, yet few farmers prize them enough to purchase one ; a plough and a drag, both entirely wood, cost but one rupee, which is also the price of a sickle ; these, together with the *dah*, or knife, which every native has, are all the implements of agriculture, except a hoe about two inches wide, and a sort of spade equally narrow, which are used in gardens and tobacco-fields, worth both together about one rupee.

The staple product of the province is rice, of which only one crop is raised in a year. As soon as the rain has sufficiently softened the ground, the farmer, having divided his rice land into little plots, throws up around each a low mound of earth, to prevent the water that falls upon them from running off. Soon after this he commences scratching the ground with his sharp-pointed stick, called a plough ; the land is ploughed two or three times before it is fit for the seed. The seed, which is sown broadcast, usually in the latter part of June, or in July, springs up in a few days, and rapidly arrives at maturity. The harvesting commences in October, and continues through November, and into December, the crop being ready for the sickle earlier in some parts of the province than in others. As soon as the harvest is gathered, the grain is threshed out by buffaloes or oxen, and the dahn, or paddy, either removed to the granary for home consumption, or taken to the numerous vessels, which are waiting to receive it, for exportation. What quantity of rice is annually raised in Arakan, I have had no means of accurately determining ; but some idea of it may be formed from the fact, that the value of rice exported from the Akyab district alone is nearly one million one hundred and fifty thousand rupees per annum. It should be noted here, however, that not more than eight or ten vessels load with rice in any other district.

When the rice crop is gathered in, those who cultivate tobacco prepare the ground for this plant, the alluvial flats near streams being selected for the purpose. The seed is usually sown in November, and as soon as the plants are

eight or ten inches high, they are transplanted. In March, the most forward leaves are cut, and in April or May those remaining are gathered, when the whole crop is cured, and made fit for use in a short time. How much tobacco is raised in Arakan annually, I have not been able to ascertain; but as nearly every man, woman and child in the province smokes immoderately, the home consumption must be large; and several thousand pounds are exported, principally to Calcutta, where Arakan tobacco is highly prized.

Hemp is cultivated, but only for home use; which is rendered considerable by the demand for twine to make fish nets, and the quantity of cord and rope of different sizes required for boats, etc. The seed is sown in November or December, and the hemp is usually pulled in March. Small patches of ground, here and there, are devoted to sugar cane, indigo, cotton, red and black pepper, ginger, turmeric, etc., all of good quality, except the cotton, which is coarse and short. Arrow root grows wild at Cheduba, as does the black pepper in the southern part of the province. A little wheat has been raised; and, it is believed, the soil is capable of yielding in great perfection all that can be expected in a moist and tropical climate. To gardening the natives pay but little attention; nothing can be raised of any value, except in the rains, without a great deal of care and labor, of which the people of Arakan are very sparing; beside that garden land is charged with an annual rent of sixteen rupees per doon. Pumpkins, squashes of different kinds, cucumbers, brinjals, a few melons, sweet potatoes, yams and onions, are the principal vegetables cultivated; the three last are raised only to a very limited extent. A few flowers are also raised, some of which are worn by the men in their ears, some by the women in their hair, and others are offered to the gods. The principal fruits, to which the Mugs pay attention, are the mango, jack, guava, plantains of various kinds, papaia, sweet lime, cocoa-nut, pine-apple, tamarind, and a few others not very abundant; most of those named are of good quality, and in abundance in their seasons.

The natives of Arakan manifest very little skill or energy in agricultural pursuits; manure is seldom used, and indeed

scarcely any thing is done to improve and increase the productions of the soil. The capabilities of the province therefore, are as yet very imperfectly developed. In 1840, there were under rice cultivation twenty-seven thousand six hundred and two doons; occupied by fruit trees etc., one thousand and twenty-nine doons; devoted to miscellaneous products, five hundred and twenty-eight doons; and five hundred and twenty doons of hill cultivation; in all, less than thirty thousand doons; which shows, that not one fiftieth part of the area of Arakan is under cultivation. Of the wild land a considerable portion is mountainous and rocky, or otherwise unfit for tillage; yet there must be in the whole province an immense quantity of the best of land still lying waste.

Next to the agriculture of Arakan, its commerce deserves notice. This is carried on principally from the port of Akyab, where sometimes one or two hundred vessels are taking in their cargoes of rice, together. The whole number of arrivals and clearances in the course of a year has of late varied but little from seven hundred. The vessels are principally from the Madras coast, and vary in size from forty or fifty tons to two or three hundred. The following table shows the value and increase of the rice trade.

Year.	No. of vessels.	Tonnage.	Value of rice exported.
1835-6	374	46,248 tons.	343,086 rupees.
1837-8	504	48,908 "	662,060 "
1839-40	691	68,486½ "	1,124,821 "
1840-1	709		1,141,207 "

This rice is all sold for cash, the only article brought by most of the vessels, though a few import ghee, cocoa-nut oil and mustard oil, cloth and sugar, beside some other articles of no great value, all which are sold to merchants in the town of Akyab, and by them retailed there, or sold to traders from other parts of the province. A few vessels take in cargoes of rice at Cheduba and other places in the Ramree district. Akyab, however, is, and must continue to

be, the great mart for the trade of Arakan, especially in rice. This trade, it is believed, is capable of almost indefinite extension.

After rice, the most important article of commerce is salt, of which large quantities are manufactured on the islands near Kyouk Phyoo, and on Ramree. The annual consumption in the province is about eight million two hundred thousand pounds; and two or three times that quantity is exported to Chittagong on account of the East India Company, by whom this article is monopolized. The manufacturer receives but little more than half a rupee for one hundred pounds, and the whole amount paid for salt annually by the Government is less than one hundred and thirty thousand rupees. The salt is shipped from Kyouk Phyoo, usually in Chittagong vessels, of which twenty-five or thirty are freighted with it yearly; but these bring scarcely any thing for sale, and their crews buy nothing.

Vessels rarely visit Arakan, except those above mentioned as coming for rice and salt. A considerable trade is carried on with Bengal, by large native boats, and with Burma, principally over land. The boats are manned by twenty, thirty, forty or more oarsmen, according to their size, and make only one trip a year; they sail when the wind is favorable, and at other times are propelled by the oar. The overland trade with Burma is carried on through passes in the Yoma mountains, of which the principal one is at Aing, the merchandize being usually carried on the backs of bullocks; but when of little weight, by men. The details of this trade I have not been able to ascertain, nor of that by native boats. A statement of the exports from Akyab to Bengal and Burma during the years 1838-9 and 1839-40, which I have seen, shows their value for the two years to have been five hundred and forty-three thousand two hundred and thirty-one rupees. The principal products of Arakan exported to these countries, were cotton, ivory, beeswax, dried fish, hides and buffaloes' horns; their value was only seventy-four thousand six hundred and fourteen rupees. The other articles included in the statement were cash, British piece goods and birds' skins, from Bengal, gold and silver bullion and teak planks, from Burma, betel

from Penang, etc. The value of exports through the Aing pass to Burma was,

In 1837-38	.	.	134,567 rupees.
" 1838-39	.	.	201,776 "
" 1839-40	.	.	120,671 "

The value of imports to Arakan from Burma was,

In 1837-38	.	.	214,571 rupees.
" 1838-39	.	.	271,976 "
" 1839-40	.	.	221,617 "

The principal articles exported were British piece goods, betel, ngahpee, or small fish partially dried and pounded into pulp, birds' skins and edible birds' nests. The imports were bullion, cotton, silk, pawn boxes, palm leaf books, gold tinsel, etc. The carriers in this trade are principally Burmese and Shans. A small foreign trade is carried on from other parts of the province, of the value of which I have not been able to inform myself.

The natives of Arakan own no vessels, I believe, and none of them are engaged in trade to a large amount. A somewhat extended traffic is carried on within the province, the centres of which are Akyab, Aing, Kyouk Phyoo, and Ramree; perhaps Sandoway also should be included, but I believe its trade is very inconsiderable. The whole stock of many of the petty shopmen is not worth ten rupees, and some, I presume, begin their business with a much smaller capital than that. A few individuals invest two or three thousand rupees in trade; and perhaps the average value of stock on hand at any one time among all the traders in Arakan is about fifty rupees. In the large towns are fish and vegetable markets.

The commerce of this province is evidently far less extensive and valuable than it might be, and speedily would be, were it prosecuted with skill and enterprise.

There are no manufactures, except that of coarse cotton cloths for home consumption. These are made in nearly every house, and constitute the chief clothing of the people.

Mechanics and artizans of every sort are very scarce : a few blacksmiths, whose chief employment is to make and repair the dahs, or knives, owned in their respective neighborhoods ; a few silversmiths employed chiefly in making the uncouth ornaments, universally worn by women and children on their ancles and wrists, and occasionally in making idols ; and a few carpenters and carvers, who make book cases, ornamented with stick lac, colored glass and gold leaf, for the *keoungs*, and carve idols to place upon them, are the principal artizans in the province. A small number are engaged in making the shoe or sandal, usually worn by the Burmese and Mugs ; and a very few in manufacturing umbrellas of paper, coated with Burmese varnish, which are in general use among the natives. A few oil-mills of the simplest construction are found in the province, and three or four saw-pits. The natives generally understand how to make boats, with the necessary rigging, and almost every thing else required by their rude state of society, except the articles above mentioned, for which they are indebted to special artizans.

Astrologers and conjurors are numerous, and there is a sufficient number of musicians, actors, dancers, etc.

The professional men are doctors, lawyers and priests. Doctors require no license, nor is any fixed term of study, or certain amount of medical knowledge, requisite to commencing practice in the healing art. A few medical books, briefly mentioning the symptoms of different diseases, and giving prescriptions for them, are found in the country ; and public sentiment demands that a person have some knowledge of these, before declaring himself a doctor. The principle medicines used are the roots, bark and seeds of different vegetables, which do not appear to be active or thorough in their operation either as cathartics or emetics, nor indeed for any other valuable purpose. Neither bleeding, nor any other surgical operation is ever performed. The doctors cannot be said to be very successful in their practice : most persons who are seized with violent illness, or whose diseases are particularly obstinate, die ; in many cases, probably, for want of a prompt and judicious administration of active medicines ; milder cases are cured, or the

patients recover in spite of the doctor, I hardly know which. From the fact that I have often found doctors in Arakan seeking their living by other means, I judge that the medical profession is crowded ; at the best it is not ordinarily a lucrative business, though a few eminent practitioners secure a good living. Midwifery is practiced only by women, whose knowledge too frequently fails, when most needed ; and the consequence is, that most cases of preternatural labor terminate fatally. The regimen after delivery is not uniform ; some prescribing a cold shower bath three times a day, for several days after confinement, while others immediately place the patient before a large fire, which is kept burning day and night for about a week.

It will be convenient to speak of the lawyers of the country in connection with what I have to say of its courts ; and so of the priests, when its religions are considered. I might have observed, while speaking of the employments of the people, that there are some thousands of fishermen in the province, principally Mussulmans. Their exact number I have not ascertained ; but it must be large as they have twenty-five hundred nets in use.

#### § 4. *Religions of the Inhabitants.*

The Mugs and Burmese are Boodhists, and of course images of Guatama and pagodas erected to his honor are the objects of their worship. The moral precepts to be observed by all the worshippers of Guatama are these five : "Thou shalt not steal : thou shalt not kill, (a commandment understood to forbid the killing of all animals, as well as of men :) thou shalt not violate thy neighbor's wife, or daughter : thou shalt not lie : thou shalt not drink any intoxicating liquors." Were these requirements but obeyed, how different would be the state of society in Boodhist lands ! Other precepts are enjoined upon priests, and all those who wish to acquire the highest degree of merit. But, as Boodhism, in its precepts and practices, has been so fully and frequently described by missionaries and others, it is unnecessary to go into details respecting it here. The days of worship, of which there are four in every month, one at

each quarter of the moon, are observed by very few in Arakan; and the same may be said in reference to all the Boodhist rites. The Mugs are far more parsimonious in expending money in honor of Gautama, than their neighbors on the eastern side of the mountains. While great numbers of pagodas, temples and idols are fast going to decay, new ones are seldom erected. The reason often given for this is, that idolatry flourishes only when supported by Government; and it is true, that many of the pagodas, etc., in Arakan were built by the king and his officers, as is still the case in Burma. The people here, however, frequently give another reason: they say that a man under the former rule had no security for his money, as it was liable to be seized at any time by the officers of Government, so that those who had money preferred to expend it in "works of merit," hoping to reap a corresponding reward in their next state of existence; but that now, as every man is secure in the possession of all he has, the people prefer to invest their money in trade, etc., and make sure of their profit in the present state. Both of these reasons undoubtedly operate, and together, perhaps, go far to account for the decay of Boodhism in this country. I would, however, add another, which is the lack of confidence and interest in the religion of Gautama, clearly discernible more and more among the people. Sects and parties also are multiplying; and many of the more intelligent and thoughtful of the natives acknowledge that they see indications in the signs of the times, that Boodhism is soon to lose its influence here, entirely. The Mugs are more ignorant and superstitious than the Burmese: the worship of Nats is far from being done away with among them; many, who at other times are strictly orthodox, when visited by alarming illness, which bids defiance to the skill of their doctors, turn to those who profess the art of expelling these supposed authors of disease: Nat feasts are very common. A large part of the population have recourse to amulets, to ward off and heal diseases; use charms to protect them from evil spirits; and practice many other puerile and superstitious ceremonies, which are seldom known among the Burmese. On the whole, Boodhism is evidently far from flourishing in Arakan. There are, however, about six hundred *Poongees*,

or priests, in the province, for whom the inhabitants erect comfortable dwellings, called *keoungs*, and to whom they make offerings of rice, vegetables, etc., sufficient for their comfortable support. The priests attend funerals, and perform other religious rites, and teach the children of their parishioners to read and write: they profess chastity, poverty, and severe self-denial; and are greatly revered by the people, insomuch that parents bow down before their own sons, and treat them as vastly their superiors, the moment they assume the yellow robes of the priesthood. When a priest divests himself of his sacred garment, as he is at liberty to do, whenever he chooses, he "becomes a man," and is treated like other men.

The Mussulmans in Arakan profess the same faith as the followers of Muhammed elsewhere; but their practice is very lax and far from orthodox. They have the Koran only in Arabic, which none of them understand, though a few can read it; they are very ignorant of the tenets of their own faith, many knowing only the name of Allah; and the notions and practices of the idolaters around them are adopted by great numbers; indeed, several have entirely renounced the religion of their fathers, and embraced Boodhism. On the other hand, a few mosques are found here and there; Muhammedan festivals are usually observed; and there are, I think, one hundred or more ministers of the Mussulman faith in the province. Still the Muslem prophet has no very strong hold here, and not a few of his followers are ready to acknowledge, that the worship of the Eternal will soon become extinct in Arakan, unless preserved by Christianity. Most of the Mussulman ministers of religion pursue secular callings, and exercise their clerical functions only occasionally.

The Kyens appear to vary very little from Karens in their religious belief and practice. They have a confused idea of a great self-existent Being, subject neither to disease, old age, nor death, who is the creator of all things; but I never heard that they offer any worship to him. They make propitiatory sacrifices to the Nats, and all the friends of the offerer meet to eat the animal sacrificed, in company, as is supposed, with the Nats. It is said that the Kyens also

sacrifice dogs and eat them, imagining thus to regain some of the religious knowledge which dogs took from their forefathers, by eating their sacred books, written on dried skins! Of a future state, in which there will be a difference between the condition of the good and the bad, they have some vague ideas.<sup>18</sup>

I have learned nothing of the religion of the TOUNGMROOS; but it must be of the rudest kind.

The religious notions and practices of the KEMEES appear very much to resemble those of the KYENS, though their ideas of the great Being, superior to all others, are more vague. They too confine their worship to the NATS, whom they suppose to reside in the mountains, and to have an influence over their health, lives and crops. To propitiate these spirits they sacrifice buffaloes, hogs and fowls, especially at seed-time and harvest. When a KEMEE is ill, a fowl is offered to the NAT supposed to cause the illness, not by killing it, but by sending it loose into the jungle. The KEMEES have no definite ideas of a future state of retribution, though they believe in transmigration. Their mode of providing for the wants of the departed, after their bodies are burned, is peculiar. Near the burning ground they select for every deceased person a small spot of land, where they erect a neat miniature house, in which they deposit a portion of all the goods of the deceased, cooking utensils, spinning-wheels, fishing-nets, tobacco-pipes, etc.; adding a small portion of rice, and even a few fowls in a little cage, with paddy enough to keep them alive a few days.

The religion of the KARENS in ARAKAN is identical with that of the same race in BURMA, and the TENASSERIM province, which has been so often and so fully described, that nothing need be said concerning it here.

#### § 5. *Education.*

While the Burmese held ARAKAN, the MUGS were oppressed and degraded to such a degree that they are far less inquisi-

<sup>18</sup> Some additional particulars respecting the religion of the KYENS may be found in Ritter's *Erdk. v. Asien*. IV. 1. p. 231, &c. [E. E. S.]

tive and intelligent than the Burmese. The proportion of men here who cannot read is far greater than in Burma. Intelligent Burmese have told me that in their country nine out of every ten can read ; but in Arakan, I should think that less than one half of the men can read, and am not sure that one fourth can. Few women learn to read in either country ; not one in a thousand, I should say, among the Mugs. Under the milder rule of the East India Company the Mugs are rising from their degradation, and more of their children are taught. There is still, however, a distressing neglect of the education of children on the part of their parents ; and this remark applies to all classes. I have no returns of the number of teachers and scholars in any other than the Akyab district, and I should hope that they are not a fair criterion of the state of education in the rest of the province ; yet it cannot be vastly more favorable in the other districts. Among the one hundred and thirty-six thousand, or more, inhabitants of that district in 1841, there were only

214 Poongees	with 1,066 scholars.
45 Mug teachers	“ 337 “
119 Muhammedan teachers	“ 404 “
<hr/>	
in all 378 teachers	“ 1,807 “

The mountain tribes have no written language, and have not learned to read Burmese, so that they are of course immersed in the grossest ignorance. But the circumstances of those who can read only Burmese, are not much better, for they have access to no books which teach true science, or any thing scarcely that is true : absurd tales of Gautama, Nats, Beeloos, Nigban, etc., are all that there is to read. A learned man, in the Burmese sense, is one who can repeat Pali by the hour, the meaning of which not one in five thousand understands.

Some of the more intelligent natives here are beginning to perceive the errors and absurdities of their systems of astronomy and geography ; but the great mass most firmly believe that the sun goes in a circuit over the four great

islands, and that night is occasioned by his passing behind Myenmo mount ; that the stars are a sort of spangles stuck upon the sky ; that we live upon the great southern island, which is nearly four hundred thousand miles in circumference, and other things similar, stated in their sacred books.<sup>19</sup> Some of the people profess to be very acute metaphysicians respecting a man's different minds, their several powers, etc. ; others are subtle casuists, and apportion guilt to different acts with the utmost precision. Many of the Mugs are fond of discussion, but they are very apt to jump to conclusions, without having established their premises, and for hours together will reason in a circle, even after their fault has been clearly pointed out to them ; it must be confessed, however, that some are rather able in argument, and shrewd to detect faults in the reasoning of others. Although books are tolerably abundant, and there are not a few men here who consider themselves very learned, and are so considered by others, yet ignorance the most profound reigns throughout the province.

The Government has made some provision for the education of its subjects, which promises to do a little good, and ultimately, perhaps, will prove an essential benefit. In 1838, two schools were established, one at Akyab, and the other at Ramree, the Honorable Company appropriating five hundred rupees per month to their support. The Akyab school has had a head master and a junior master, both of whom were English, with several native teachers, and from eighty to one hundred scholars, but it is now entirely broken up, principally on account of the unfitness and unfaithfulness of the English teachers. The Ramree school, of which a son of the Rev. Mr. Fink is now the head master, is flourishing ; it contains one hundred scholars, the full number allowed by the committee in charge of it, of whom forty study English, thirty-five the vernacular, and twenty-five Oordu. The first English class study grammar, geography, arithmetic, and history, translate from English into Burmese, and vice versâ, are

<sup>19</sup> According to the Buddhist cosmography, our earth consists of four great islands, placed at the cardinal points, encircling the sacred mount of the gods, around which the sun makes its courses. [E. E. S.]

improving their reading and writing, both in English and Burmese, and pay some attention to original composition. In all schools under Government in India, Christian books are systematically withheld from the English classes, and the teachers are forbidden to communicate to their scholars the knowledge of God, or any of the truths of the Christian religion ; at the same time, in some schools, all books in the vernacular languages are heathen, and consequently teach only what is fitted to becloud and degrade the mind of the learner. These restrictions exist in Arakan. A little has been done by individuals, towards educating the people ; but the statement of particulars on this point belongs to the history of missionary labors in the province.

#### § 6. *Domestic Relations.*

Domestic happiness is scarcely known among the Mugs. Marriage contracts are frequently made by parents for their children, while yet very young. Widowers, and young men of full age, however, usually choose for themselves whom they will marry, and seek to secure some return of affection by a regular suit, before the consent of the parents is solicited. Among the Mugs as well as the Burmese, the suitor is always expected to pay a certain price to the parents, and to make a present of clothing and jewelry to his betrothed, according to his ability. After all the preliminaries have been settled, a day is fixed for the wedding, and the relatives and friends of the parties are invited to a feast, at the house of the bride's father, when the bride and groom eat out of the same dish, and are declared to be husband and wife by that act. In many cases marriage has taken place but a few days, before those violent family quarrels commence, which are so common in Arakan. It is not very unusual for the husband, in a fit of rage, to drag his wife about the house by the hair, at the same time kicking or beating her most brutally, even to such a degree, at times, as to endanger her life ; and on the other hand, the wife often uses to her husband the most loathsome and irritating language. One cannot be surprised, therefore, that divorces

are extremely common ; and there is scarcely any obstacle in the way of procuring them, whether both parties or only one of them desire to break the marriage bond. If both parties desire a divorce, they have only to go before a village assembly, and make a declaration of their wishes ; their property is then equally divided, and they separate, probably to reunite as soon as their displeasure at one another abates. Should the husband desire to divorce his wife, he must give up to her all their property, assume the wife's debts, and leave the house with nothing but the clothes he has on. Should the wife desire a divorce from her husband, she has only to tender him twenty-five rupees before some of the village authorities, which in ordinary cases he is bound to accept, or at most, she returns the ornaments given to her by her husband, and restores the money he paid to her parents ; after which the divorce is completed by the wife's breaking a pawn leaf into two parts, eating one of them, and giving the other to her husband. In all these cases, the children are allotted according to their sexes, the boys being given to the father and the girls to the mother. As might be expected, considering the character of parents, the children grow up passionate and vicious. A parent occasionally chastises his child, but only in anger, by stamping upon him, or cruelly beating him with whatever comes first to hand, and the child is usually rescued from the enraged parent, either by the other, or by the neighbors ; if he can manage to run away, and keep aloof till the passion of the parent subsides, he has nothing to fear, whatever may have been his fault.

I might have observed before, that polygamy, although perfectly lawful and respectable, is not generally practiced in Arakan. One of the *Thugees* at Cheduba has three wives living in the same house ; another at Cheduba, beside one at Ramree, has two wives who live in different houses a mile or two distant from each other ; and I have known one man who had three wives living at as many different places, where his business called him from time to time. Beside these, I have not met with a half dozen men who had more than one wife. I presume, however, that the actual number of polygamists in the province is not so very small, and that there would be more, were it not for the inability of

the people generally to buy and support more wives than one.

Parents and children, both married and unmarried, often live in the same house, and not unfrequently three generations constitute but one family. But too many causes of discord exist to permit such a family, or indeed any in Arakan, to be truly and permanently happy.

#### § 7. *Dwellings, Dress, and Mode of Living.*

The houses of all classes in this province are built of bamboo, and covered with leaves. The posts are set in the ground, about two feet, and the floor is usually raised five or six feet above it. In each house is an eating room of considerable size, a small cooking room, one or two sleeping rooms, and frequently a small room or two, in which rice and other things are stored. The average cost of these houses may be estimated at about thirty or forty rupees; and although they are in many respects wretched habitations, yet the natives having never been accustomed to better, appear to be satisfied with them. A full and very decent dress for a man costs three or four rupees, and that usually worn, not more than half so much; the expense of a woman's dress is about the same. Children do not usually wear clothes, till they are six or eight years old. Men, women and children generally have but two suits of clothes a year, and are most of the time very filthy in their dress. The expense of food varies slightly in different places, but I think it is on an average, three or four rupees per month, for a man and wife with three or four children. Of course, many expend for house, clothing and food far more than the amounts mentioned, while not a few spend even less. All the household furniture of a respectable native is, in general, not worth more than five or six rupees.

Many of the people who live near streams, have boats which cost twelve or fifteen rupees, and several have those that are worth four times that amount; a few, about twenty I believe, have large boats that cost one hundred and fifty or two hundred rupees, in which they go to

Calcutta, Rangoon and other distant places, to trade. Most farmers own one or two pair of buffaloes, or oxen, though many do all their work with hired cattle. A few cows are kept for breeding, which are milked only where there is a foreign population to whom milk can be sold; in such places, a few goats are also kept. Around most of the houses a few fowls are found, which are raised to sell to foreigners, as Boodhists seldom kill animals, particularly domestic ones.

Beside the above mentioned articles, few of the people of Arakan possess any property of value; nearly all complain of their poverty, and the complaint is to a very considerable degree well founded. Still, most families keep a string of rupees to ornament the necks of their naked children, and also furnish them with silver ornaments for their wrists and ankles; and when the children are ten or twelve years old, an expensive feast, with music and dancing, is made, at the ceremony of boring their ears; considerable expense too, attends the marriage feasts, as well as those made when boys assume the yellow cloth, for the purpose of pursuing the more advanced studies at the keoungs. Feasts are often made on other occasions also, and those who can afford it, sometimes give theatrical entertainments, which consist of an exhibition of puppets on the stage, while the dialogue is recited by players behind the scenes. With these entertainments the natives are delighted, and they often sit the whole night to witness them. Most persons are sure to lay by a sufficient sum of money to ensure them a decent burial or burning,—the latter being the more common, at least in the case of persons of much respectability: this money is expended in gilding and ornamenting the coffin, hiring musicians to attend the funeral, purchasing offerings for the attending priests, and making a feast, a few days after the funeral. Some leave to their heirs a few hundred rupees, and a very small number some thousands; the majority have nothing to leave. On the whole, while it must be acknowledged that most of the inhabitants of Arakan are poor, they seldom suffer for any thing which their habits have rendered necessary to them, and the circumstances of many are yearly improving.

§ 8. *The British Government in Arakan.*

The civil administration of the British Government in Arakan is conducted by a Commissioner, with four Senior Assistants and one Junior Assistant. The Commissioner has a general supervision over the whole province, and his recommendations usually decide the amount of taxes, and all other questions pertaining to revenue, as well as the expenditures for improvements within the province, and almost every point touching its interests. He resides at Akyab, and holds a court there daily for the trial of appeals from the decisions of his Assistants; and in cases of murder, arson and some other crimes, he has original jurisdiction. He usually visits each station of the province, that is, the places of residence of the Senior Assistants, twice a year, to attend to such causes as may be brought before him; his salary is two thousand rupees per month. The Senior Assistants have charge of the four districts into which the province is divided, as will hereafter be mentioned; they attend to the assessment and collection of taxes, try civil and revenue causes, and minor crimes, and are considered chiefly responsible for the peace and prosperity of their districts; their salary is half as much as that of the Commissioner. The Junior Assistant, whose salary is only one fourth as much as the Commissioner's, is employed principally in the department of criminal judicature at Akyab, where a native judge also, has a place in the civil department.

A small number of sail and row boats are attached to the province, for the convenience of civil and military officers, and to transport troops and supplies from place to place. These are under the supervision of a Marine Assistant to the Commissioner, whose salary is four hundred and forty rupees per month.

The medical staff consists of a Civil Assistant-surgeon at Akyab, on a salary of four hundred and thirty rupees per month, one at Ramree whose salary is three hundred and fifty rupees per month, and one at Kyouk Phyo, on a salary of three hundred rupees per month. At Sandoway, the medical officer is a Sub-assistant-surgeon who receives

one hundred and fifty rupees per month. At each of these stations is a native doctor, usually a Hindoo, educated at the Medical College of Calcutta, whose salary is from twenty to twenty-five rupees.

The province is divided, for the purposes of government, into four districts, the Arakan, more frequently called the Akyab, and the Ramree, Aing and Sandoway. Of these, Akyab is far the most populous and important; it contains about one hundred and thirty-six thousand inhabitants, and nine hundred and fifty villages; the Ramree district contains sixty-three thousand inhabitants, and four hundred and twenty-four villages; the Aing, twenty-four thousand inhabitants, and one hundred and fifty-six villages; the Sandoway, thirty-four thousand and fifty-three inhabitants, according to the census taken at the close of 1842, and one hundred and sixteen villages. The town of Akyab, containing five thousand inhabitants, is the capital of the district of the same name. The civil courts of that district are held there, as well as the Commissioner's Court, and there are the head quarters of the Arakan Local Batallion. The capital of the Ramree district is a town of the same name containing six thousand five hundred and eighty inhabitants. The town of Aing, near the foot of the Yoma mountains, was formerly the residence of the Assistant in charge of the Aing district, but a few years since Kyouk Phyoo, which now contains about two thousand inhabitants, was added to that district, and made its capital; this town is also the headquarters of the regiment of Sepoys stationed in the province, and of the Departments charged with the superintendence of the Marine, and of the manufacture of salt. Sandoway, a town of one thousand six hundred and fifty-eight inhabitants, is the capital of the district of that name.

To give an idea of the governmental establishment of the Commissioner and his Assistants, I will describe that maintained at Ramree, with the details of which I have become more particularly acquainted. The arrangements for the administration of government in the other districts, are on a larger or smaller scale, as required by the circumstances of each.

At Ramree, one Writer on a salary of a hundred rupees per month, keeps the treasury and revenue accounts; another whose salary is sixty rupees per month, has charge of the judicial accounts, reports, etc. Both of these are *Eurasians*.<sup>20</sup> An officer called *Myothugee*, receiving eighty rupees per month, with three assistants, who severally receive fifteen, twelve and ten rupees per month, has charge of making up the yearly revenue settlements, preparing revenue suits, etc.<sup>21</sup> In small suits, the witnesses are examined before the *Myothugee*, who reports the evidence, with his opinion, to the Assistant-commissioner. All the revenue officers are Mugs. A *Sheristadar*, on a salary of sixty rupees per month, with three assistants on salaries of thirty, twenty and fifteen rupees, conducts the civil and criminal causes in court, corresponds with natives, and inspects the police reports;—the *Sheristadar* himself examines witnesses before the Assistant-commissioner, but gives no opinion on the causes. A native Record-keeper, on a salary of thirty rupees per month, keeps all the records in the Persian language.<sup>22</sup> A Mug Interpreter whose salary is twenty-five rupees per month, with his assistant who receives fifteen rupees, writes Mug subpoenas and writs, and conducts all the correspondence in the Mug language. A Treasurer who receives thirty-five rupees per month, with his assistant, who receives fifteen rupees, has charge of the receipt, custody and disbursement of all the money which passes through the Assistant's hands. A *Nadhir*, whose salary is twenty-five rupees per month, superintends the serving of

<sup>20</sup> Persons of Indo-British descent. [E. E. S.]

<sup>21</sup> The *Myothugee* and his assistants have under them, in the management of revenue affairs, a class of officers styled *Kywnaops*, of whom there are one hundred and sixty, according to the number of the circles, into which, as Mr. Comstock afterwards tells us, the whole province is divided; and whose business it is to receive the revenue from the hands of the *Raungoungs* or village-heads, who are the direct collectors, and to aid the police officers of the several circles in the discharge of their duties. They are the same officers, afterwards mentioned by Mr. Comstock, as *Thugees* presiding over circles.

The immediate superior of the *Myothugee*, to whom he is amenable, is the Senior Assistant-commissioner in each district. S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. pp. 690, 91. [E. E. S.]

<sup>22</sup> This is to be understood only of the records of civil and criminal affairs; the revenue records are kept in the Burmese language. S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 691. [E. E. S.]

subpœnas and writs, the levying of executions, the infliction of punishments, the receipt of all monies paid into court, for deposit in the treasury, etc. He is assisted by twenty deputies, who receive fees for serving processes, and for all the other duties they perform, paying over one fourth to the Nadhir. Attached to the establishment at Ramree, are four *Vakeels* whose duties are similar to those of Counsellors at Law in America: they manage causes in court, but have nothing to do with preparing the papers; their fee is five per cent. of the amount in suit. There are no licensed attorneys here: any one who knows enough may draw the plaint, and other writings in a suit, and on such terms as he and his employer may agree upon. To complete the list of officers of Government at Ramree, I may mention a *Duftree* whose salary is eight rupees per month, and whose duty it is to take care of the stationery, bind books, make pens, etc.; also six *Chuprassees*, personal attendants upon the Assistant-commissioner, who receive each five rupees per month.

A memorandum of the civil business of the courts, for the three months ending September 30, 1840, shows that a hundred and forty-seven causes, in the first instance, were disposed of by the Assistant-commissioners and native judge, and that a hundred and thirty-nine were pending. Of causes carried up, fifty-one were disposed of by the Commissioner, and a hundred and thirty-eight were pending. In civil causes, the plaintiff's costs are two rupees for stamp paper for plaint, half a rupee for stamp paper for the Vakeel's power of attorney, five per cent. of the amount in suit to Government, five per cent. to the Vakeel, fees for serving processes, and daily subsistence to witnesses. The defendant's costs are similar to the plaintiff's, except that he has not to pay the five per cent. to Government. In most cases, the defeated party in the end, pays all the costs.

Over every one or two thousand inhabitants, more or less, called circles, are appointed Thugees, who assess and collect the revenue, and exercise a general supervision. Under them are *Roogoungs*, or village-heads, varying in number according to the population of the circles, also *Roosayas*, or

village-clerks.<sup>23</sup> The Thugee receives fifteen per cent. of the amount of the taxes he collects, the Rooagoung four per cent., and the Rooasaya two per cent.

To prevent and to aid in punishing crime, police officers, twenty-five in number, are established at convenient and important points, throughout the province. The whole police force, including that in charge of the jails at Akyab, Kyouk Phyou, Ramree and Sandoway, and forty-five men attached to the guard-boats, numbers more than eight hundred men, who are disciplined and well armed. The highest police officer, the *Darogah*, receives thirty rupees per month, and the common police men, five rupees. The greatest check to the efficiency of the police force, is the disposition, almost universal with the natives, to take bribes: many criminals are in consequence not apprehended, or if arrested, escape unpunished. Still, the police establishment is a restraint upon crime, for criminals in most cases are known, and must either suffer punishment, or pay well for exemption. During the three months ending September 30, 1840, two hundred and thirty-seven cases of crime were disposed of by the Assistant-commissioner in Arakan, and thirty-one cases were at that time pending.

When the East India Company took possession of the province, taxes were imposed upon nearly every body and every thing in it. Conjurors and astrologers, of whom there are from four to six hundred, and prostitutes, unhappily numbering as many as eighty or one hundred,—almost, if not quite all of whom are Bengalees, and drummers and dancers were taxed, as well as the various classes of persons pursuing laudable occupations. Boats and nets, forests, shops, and other means of income were also taxed. But a few years since, all these taxes, except that on fisheries, were discontinued, and a capitation tax was established, one rupee less than that which had been levied. This measure relieved the people at once of a taxation of nearly one hundred

<sup>23</sup> The Burmese pronunciation gives to these village-clerks the title of *Rawa-tsares*, which is another instance of an *r*-sound in the Burmese, for the sound of *y* in the pronunciation of Arakan. S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 690. [E. E. S.]

thousand rupees, and has been highly conducive to the interests of the province. The only tax imposed by the Burmese and now retained, beside that on fisheries, is one of four rupees per annum on all married people, and of two rupees on widowers; the old and infirm being exempt, and the hill tribes being taxed at only half that rate. The following abstract of the assessment of the province for the year 1839-40, shows the amount of the taxes then paid by the people, as well as the revenue derived from other sources:

	<i>Rupees.</i>
Mug house tax, . . . . .	245,540
Hill " " . . . . .	11,086
Rice land assessment, . . . . .	295,731
Hill " " . . . . .	8,325
Miscellaneous cultivation, . . . . .	8,659
Orchards, . . . . .	16,508
Fisheries, . . . . .	6,620
	<hr/>
	592,469
Deduct 21 per cent. for collecting,	124,418
	<hr/>
	468,051
 Edible birds' nests, . . . . .	 2,766
Tawree licenses, <sup>24</sup> . . . . .	2,935
Bengal shrub <sup>25</sup> " . . . . .	1,355
Opium " . . . . .	3,076
Gunjah <sup>26</sup> " . . . . .	327
Profit on the sale of opium, . . . . .	2,121
Fines and forfeitures, . . . . .	3,174
Escheats, . . . . .	1,241
Premium on drafts, . . . . .	720
Stamp paper, . . . . .	5,637
Port dues, . . . . .	9,336
Fees on civil suits, . . . . .	1,212
Ferry funds, . . . . .	2,490
Miscellaneous, . . . . .	3,364
Hill Circles, not systematically assessed, . . . . .	1,456
	<hr/>
Total net revenue,	509,761

The revenue of the province is increasing from year to year, and is already sufficient to meet its ordinary expenses,

<sup>24</sup> i. e. Licences to sell palm-wine? [E. E. S.]

<sup>25</sup> i. e. Licences to sell an intoxicating liquor made from the sugar-cane? [E. E. S.]

<sup>26</sup> i. e. Licences to sell hemp for smoking? [E. E. S.]

while at the same time the mode of assessing it is such that it bears equally and not severely, upon all ; and setting aside the opium licenses and grog shops, and the sale of opium, the sources of revenue seem liable to little objection. The same cannot be said of the road tax, if tax it can be called, being irregular and unequal. When a road or bridge is to be made or repaired, the people in its immediate vicinity are ordered to do the work, so that one village is subject to a heavy road tax, while another has scarcely any burthen of this sort, and a similar inequality often exists in the same village. The people of Arakan are also occasionally forced to furnish laborers and supplies, as needed by Government, in a manner which in many countries would be considered extremely arbitrary ; but such a course may be unavoidable here.

The people generally are well pleased with British rule, and often contrast the security of property and life which they now enjoy, with the extortions and violence so common in former days. As far as the intentions and efforts of the English functionaries are concerned, little complaint is made by the people, but they still suspect the native officers, from the highest to the lowest, of bribery and injustice, and I fear in very many cases, with good reason. Still, that a very decided change for the better has been manifest since the province fell into the hands of the East India Company, no one can deny. At that time, agriculture was limited by the wants of the inhabitants, and commerce was unknown. Now, there is rice grown for exportation, which gives employment annually to six or seven hundred thousand tons of shipping ; a considerable trade in salt is carried on ; and commerce in several other articles is begun. The effect which these changes must have to increase the wealth and happiness of the people of Arakan is apparent ; and the rice exported to the Madras coast furnishes most desirable relief to the inhabitants of that part of India, sometimes actually saving them from starvation ; the trade in salt, too, confers substantial benefit upon the people of Chittagong, Dacca, etc. Gang robberies and other acts of violence and bloodshed, so frequent in former days, are now

almost unknown ; taxes are for the most part moderate and uniform ; trade is unfettered. The Yoma mountains are so distinct and indisputable a line of demarcation between the Company's territories and Burma, that border difficulties are scarcely possible. These and other causes combine to give the people confidence in the stability and protection of the Government, and the consequence is a marked improvement in the condition of the inhabitants, and a rapid increase of the population.

"Numbers of the descendants of those who fled in troublous times from their country, and settled in the southern part of Chittagong, the islands of the coast, and even the sunderbuns of Bengal, are gradually returning. During the northeast monsoon, boats filled with men, women and children, with all their worldly goods, may be seen steering south along the eastern coast of the bay of Bengal, to the land their fathers abandoned thirty or forty years before."<sup>27</sup> Individuals and families are also constantly coming in from Burma, and numerous Bengalee immigrants from Chittagong are every year settling in the Akyab district. The ratio of increase by births I have had no means of ascertaining. In the Ramree circle, containing seven thousand six hundred inhabitants, the births for the year ending December 16, 1837, were,—of males, one hundred and twenty-eight,—of females one hundred and fifty-nine, that is, two hundred and eighty-seven in all. The deaths during that year were a hundred and thirty-three, of which thirty-nine were of persons five years old, or under, twenty-five of those between five and ten years of age, and sixteen of those between ten and twenty. It is to be remembered that the census is taken by native officers, who, though very correct in their returns of taxable inhabitants, are very lax and careless in giving the number of the old and infirm, and of bachelors, women and children. These are always rated, as I think, far too low. Probably the present population of the province is not far from three hundred thousand. Very liberal measures have recently been sanctioned by Government, which are

<sup>27</sup> S. J. R. A. S. of B., X. p. 697.

adapted greatly to extend the cultivation of wild lands ; and a better quality of rice and cotton has been introduced. These improvements will conspire with other causes already mentioned to increase the population, wealth, and happiness of the province.

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## NOTE ON THE ACCOMPANYING MAP.

The coast from Chittagong to Sandoway, including numerous creeks, is a very carefully reduced copy, from the best charts yet published. For that part below Sandoway, as no regular and accurate survey has yet been made, a tolerably correct map by Pember-ton and others has been mainly followed. For sundry additions and corrections in that part I am indebted to notes by Captain A. P. Phayre and Rev. Mr. Abbott. To the former gentleman, I am also indebted for the best sketch of the Koladon, above the mouth of the Mee river, and for the source of the Mee river. In filling out the interior, a score of maps have been consulted, some of which were drawn by Europeans, and others by natives. Consultation with natives who are familiar with the numerous creeks and islands, has served to correct some mistakes as to names, and in some cases as to the positions of small rivers; yet I seldom trust to their judgment for distances. It will of course be understood, that no accurate survey of the interior beyond the deep waters of the creeks has ever been made.

With a view to fixing points in the map as to latitude, I have always improved every opportunity, when visiting different parts of the province, to take a meridian altitude of some heavenly body, and thereby to determine the latitude of the place. But my travels have been too limited to enable me to add much to the map, from personal observation. With care, I have obtained among others, (not important to be mentioned,) the following latitudes:

Chitsa's Village, . . .	21°	6'	30''	N. Lat.
San Kwan's " . . .	20°	32'	00''	"
Taroke, . . . . .	20°	34'	00''	"
Arakan, . . . . .	20°	35'	00''	"
Tonko, . . . . .	20°	15'	30''	"
Cruda, . . . . .	20°	18'	00''	"
Sandoway, . . . . .	18°	28'	19''	"

The following latitudes and longitudes are given in the chart of D. Ross, corrected and published in 1839:

Akyab,	. 20° 8' 12'' N. Lat.	. 92° 56' 00'' Long.
Kyouk Phyoo,	19° 26' 23'' "	. 93° 35' 00'' "
Ramree,	. 19° 5' 35'' "	. 93° 54' 00'' "
Sandoway,	. 18° 28' 40'' "	. 94° 56' 30'' "
Arakan,	. 20° 35' 00'' "	. 93° 3' 30'' "
Aing,	. 19° 49' 35'' "	. 94° 4' 30'' "

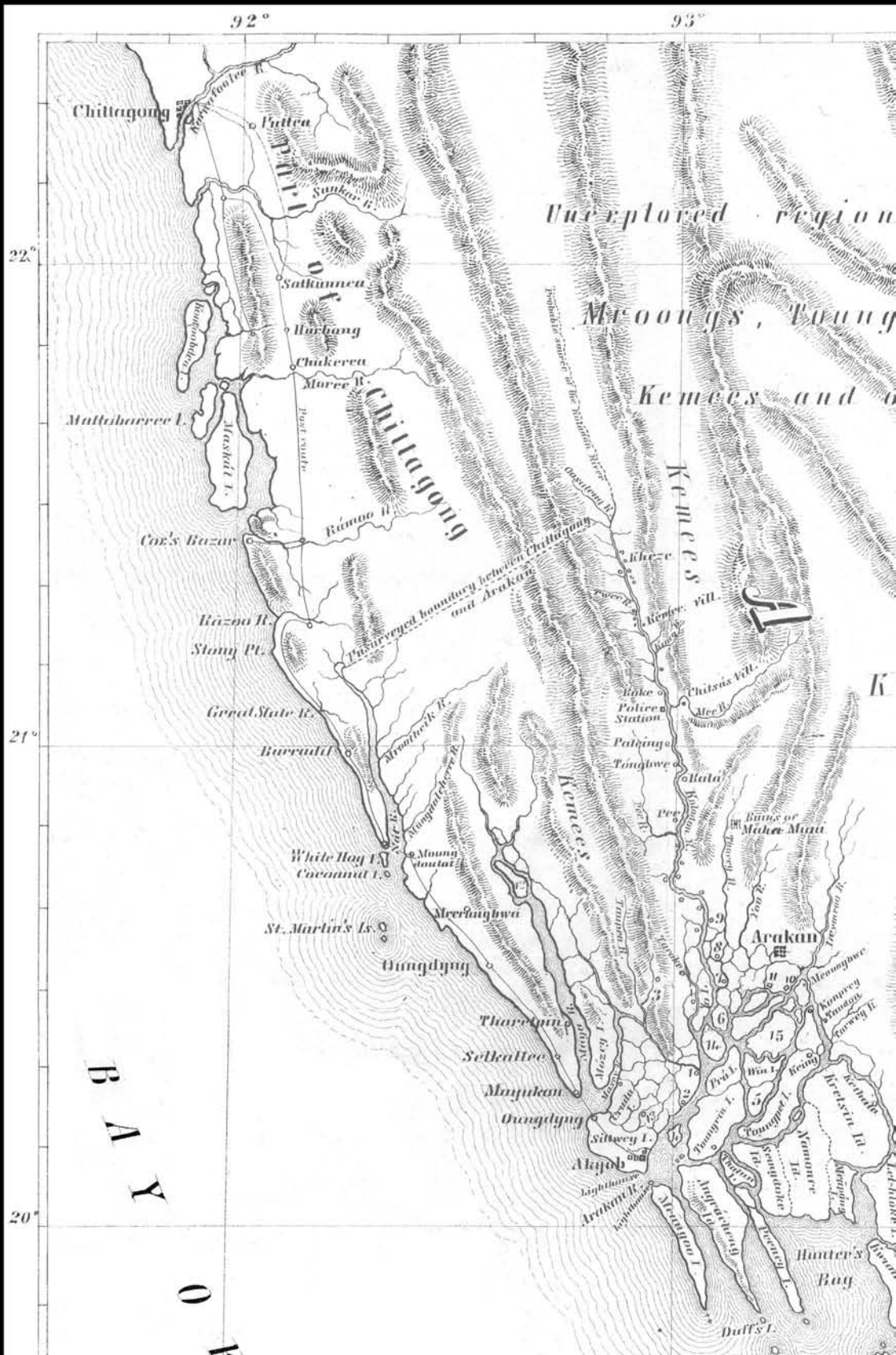
On the whole, much care has been taken to render every part of the map as correct as possible; but that it contains no error, it were folly to pretend, since only a minor portion of the province has yet been surveyed, or even visited, by Europeans. It is believed that the coast and all the principal inner waters are very correctly laid down, and that the whole gives a more accurate representation of Arakan than any map yet published. It was drawn in compliance with the special and urgent request of our departed friend, Rev. Mr. Comstock, and was designed to accompany his Notes on Arakan.

*Explanations of the Orthography of the Map.*

- á* . . . . . *a* in *America*, and sometimes *a* in *father*.  
*ã* . . . . . *a* in *name*.  
*ó* . . . . . *o* in *note*.  
*ei* . . . . . *ei* in *vein*, in all cases.  
*ey* . . . . . *ey* in *they*.  
*ai* . . . . . *i* in *find*, in all cases.

L. S.

*Akyab, May 26, 1845.*



93°

94°

95°

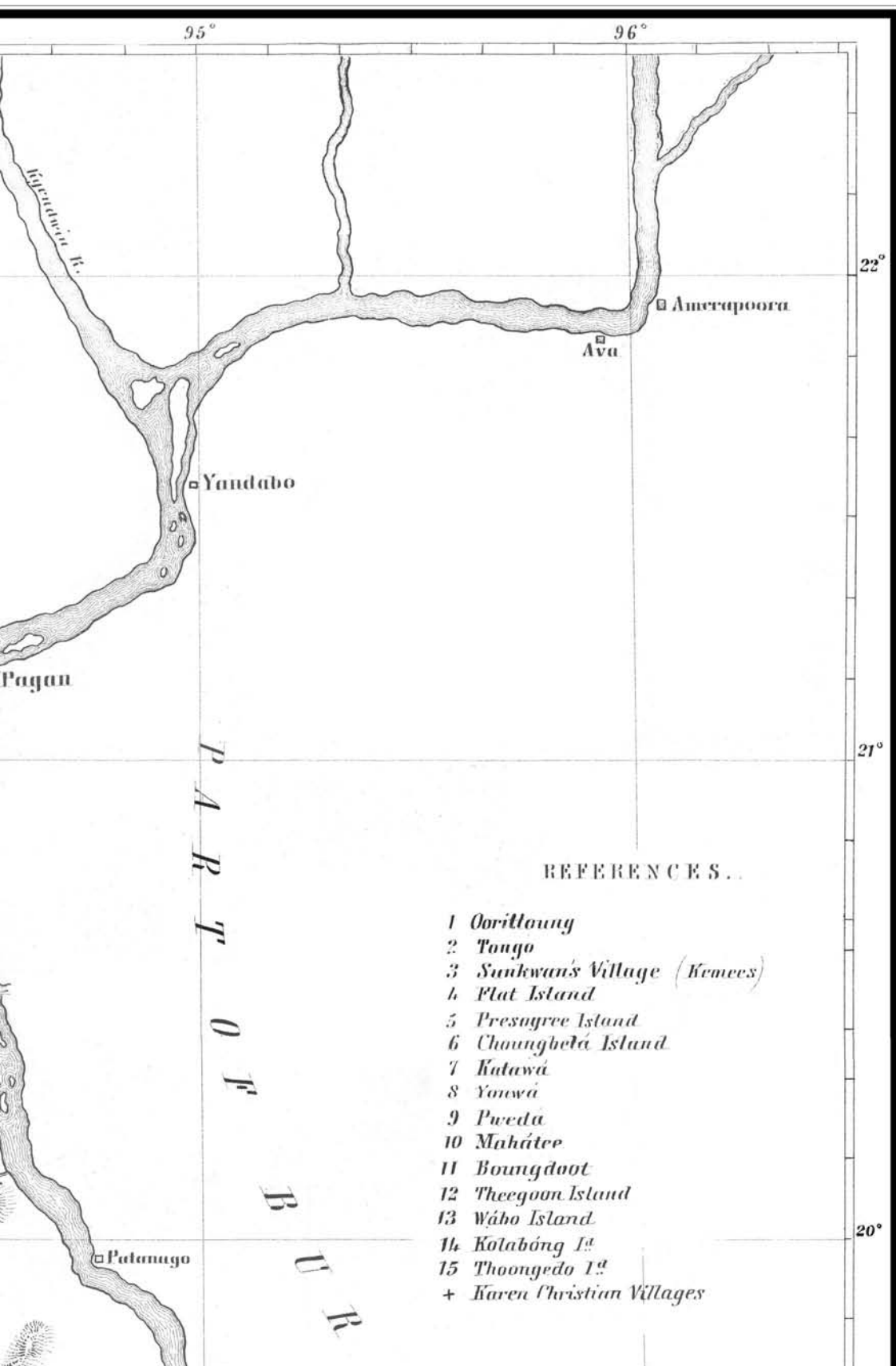
explored region inhabited by

Mroongs, Toungmroos Kyens

Kemecs and other tribes



P A R T O F



#### REFERENCES.

- 1 Oorittoung
  - 2 Tougo
  - 3 Sunkwan's Village (*Kemecs*)
  - 4 Flat Island
  - 5 Presagree Island
  - 6 Choungbetá Island
  - 7 Katawá
  - 8 Yonwá
  - 9 Pweda
  - 10 Mahátee
  - 11 Boungdoot
  - 12 Theegoon Island
  - 13 Wáho Island
  - 14 Kolabóng I<sup>a</sup>
  - 15 Thoongedo I<sup>a</sup>
- + Karen Christian Villages



MAP

OF

The Province





18°

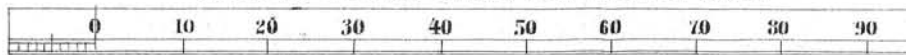
MAP  
OF  
The Province  
OF  
ARAKAN.

Compiled from the best authorities.

By L. Stilson  
1845.

17°

Scale of British Miles, 21  $\frac{3}{16}$  to an Inch.



16°

J.H. Bufford & Co's Lithography, Boston.

92°

93°

ply, Boston.

