

infant society the name which has now become historic; it limits the membership to forty persons; and it confers upon the chief and protector, Cardinal Richelieu, the authorization of officers, statutes, and by-laws. Various other names had been proposed, — l'Académie des beaux esprits, l'Académie de l'éloquence, l'Académie éminente, — but finally Académie française was selected, because it was more modest and more appropriate.

The original statutes define in much detail the sphere of the academy, and its methods of procedure. Its purpose is thus stated in the twenty-fourth article. "The principal function of the academy will be to labor with all possible care and diligence to give certain rules to our language, and to make it pure, eloquent, and capable of treating the arts and the sciences." In subsequent paragraphs, provision is made for the distribution of the best French authors among the academicians who are to make a note of such words and phrases as suggest general rules of correct expression, the entire academy being the judge of what is thus presented. The preparation of four works — a dictionary, a grammar, a rhetoric, and a poetry — is projected. At every regular meeting, one of the academicians, in his turn, is to present a discourse in prose, reading it or reciting it as he chooses. He may select any theme, but must restrict himself in delivery to fifteen, or, at most, thirty minutes. The rest of the session is to be devoted to the examination of works which have been presented to the academy, or to the prosecution of the four great tasks already mentioned. Every discourse before the academy is to be referred to two censors, who shall report within a month their observations upon it, and the author, within the following month, shall submit to the commissioners the corrections which he may have made in accordance with their suggestions. Similar steps are to be taken in respect to other works submitted to the judgment of the academy. Brief rules are laid down to make the criticism truly effective. The commissioners or censors are not to keep copies of the papers they examine, nor of their observations upon them; faults are to be pointed out with deference and courtesy. The corrections are to be received in the same spirit; the approbation of the academy will be expressed without praise, and in accordance with a prescribed formula. Works indorsed by the academy, after such scrutiny as has been mentioned, may be published 'by order of the French academy;' but no academician may indicate his membership in the academy on the

titlepage of a work not submitted to the criticism of his associates, or not approved by their action. The rules which the academy prescribes in respect to language or orthography must be followed by all the academicians in prose and verse. All revelation of the confidences of the academy, in criticism or praise, is forbidden under penalty of disgraceful and irremediable expulsion.

By these severe methods, the literary men in Paris, in the middle of the seventeenth century, endeavored to hold themselves and their countrymen up to a high standard of literary excellence. The results have been apparent from that time to this, in the clearness, the fitness, and the grace, which have characterized French writers, not only those of genius and erudition, but those of humbler standing. In later days, other academies in Paris have shared with the French its lofty rank; and perhaps there is less reason now than there was two centuries ago, for such concerted action in the improvement of the French language, and in the promotion of a pure style; yet no one can read the story of those primitive days without admiration for the spirit which conceived this lofty idea of the benefits of literary criticism, severe and considerate, and which upheld the advantages of co-operative efforts in the advancement of letters. Among all the literary clubs of the world, none has attained to such acknowledged authority, none has come so near to immortality, none has had such wide-spread influence, as that which sprang into life at the magic touch of Richelieu two centuries and a half ago.

#### EXPLORATION IN INDO-CHINA.<sup>1</sup>

ON the 12th of December, 1883, I left London for Liverpool, and embarked the next day for Rangoon.

Luckily I was introduced to the Rev. Dr. J. N. Cushing before leaving the steamer, and, as he was the best-known Shan scholar, and had previously traversed part of the country I intended to explore, I induced him to join my party. Having procured the necessary passports, and paid my official calls, I left for Maulmain to make arrangements for the journey.

On the 12th of January I sent my boys on with the luggage to Shwaygoon, a town some sixty miles distant from Maulmain up the Salween River, and followed with Mr. Ross, of the Bombay-Burmah trading company, on the 15th, in a steam-launch. The same day we left in carts for Hlineboay, where we arranged for hiring elephants for both of our parties. Returning to Shwaygoon, I made a boat-journey up the Salween as far as Yembine, to see whether it was practicable to carry a railway in that direction. On my return to

<sup>1</sup> From an article by HOLT S. HALLETT in the *London Graphic*.

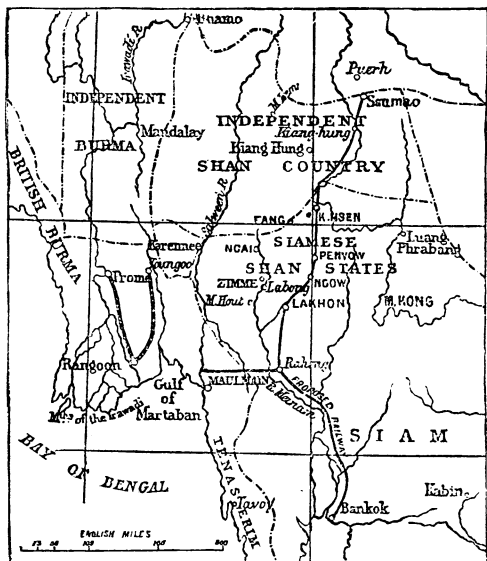
Shwaygoon, on the 20th, I found that Dr. Cushing and the remainder of our party had arrived there. The next day we left with seven bullock-carts, and after a good ducking in the Hlineboay River, owing to our driver missing the ford, reached Hlineboay, where we found that the Burman magistrate had procured fourteen elephants, — six for our party, and

but, as a male elephant is considered superior, the natives insisted that I, being the head of a party that they wished to honor, should invariably mount the largest male tusker that they were possessed of. The weariness caused by the constant jolting that I suffered for months, joined with the constant wakefulness of my attention, left me nearly prostrate on my arrival at Bangkok.

Our first march was a short one. The elephants, after being unloaded, had their front feet shackled with anklets made of twisted cane, and were led away to their bath, and afterwards turned into the jungle to feed. The elephants had to be bathed and loaded by daylight, so that we might make long marches, and have a good rest in the heat of the day, when we took our breakfast. Before starting, we generally had some Kopp's soup mixed with Liebig's essence of meat, and some biscuits, with coffee, cocoa, or tea. Our breakfast, which we generally took about noon, consisted of soup, chickens, sometimes a duck, curry and rice, and vegetables when we could get them. Tea was always going, both for ourselves and our servants. At times we were so tired of fowls that we purchased cattle and had them slaughtered, as we could not otherwise get a beefsteak. Pork, even from wild boar, was dangerous food. Nearly all the people of a village we passed through in the Muang Fang plain were suffering from trichinosis, and most of the inhabitants in Viang Pa Pow had been taken ill about two years previously.

Our dinners were similar to our breakfasts, with the addition of fried plantains, tapioca, or boiled rice and jam.

Although deer were plentiful throughout the country, we seldom had venison, as we had no time to hunt. Often deer crossed our path right in front of our elephants, a wild boar would rush through our encampment, and jungle-fowl, quail, and hares be

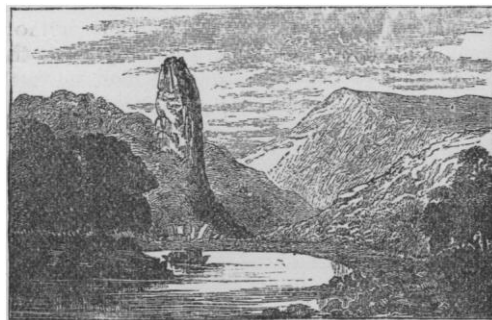


MAP SHOWING PROPOSED RAILWAYS.

eight for that of the Bombay-Burmah party, which wished to accompany us as far as Maingloongyee. As the latter party had not arrived by the 23d, I determined to start, and make short marches until they overtook us. Having secured a guide who could speak Burmese, Talain, and Karen, to come with us as far as Maingloongyee, we mounted our elephants, and I commenced the survey.

Mounting an elephant is no easy matter for a European. A native, with his bare feet and lithe body, just takes hold of the ear of the monster, and scrambles up; but we, with our boots and tight-fitting clothes, in vain attempt to follow their example. The hide is so slippery that we can get no purchase on it, and either have to be half lugged and half bundled up; or clamber from a stage on to the beast's head, and perhaps sprawl over the mahout as we attempt to enter the howdah; or else endeavor to mount by a rope-ladder, whilst the timorous elephant, unused to us and our strange appearance, is edging away, and may, in his fright, floor us with a swing of his trunk, and endeavor to make an end of us with his tusks.

I do not know whether any one before me ever attempted to make a route-survey from the back of an elephant: the difficulty of the proceeding can only be conceived by one who has tried it, particularly if the animal is a tall, long-striding brute. Female elephants are much pleasanter to ride than male ones;



PILLAR ROCK IN THE MEH PING.

met with in our day's ride. Gibbons were nearly the only monkeys that we ever saw, but they were very numerous in the evergreen forests.

Not only were fires lit for our dinners, but owing to the numerous tigers, which were constantly on the prowl at night in the neighborhood of our camps, often a dozen were kept burning all night long by

the Karens, who had charge of the elephants from Hlineboay to Muang Haut. The Shan drivers, who accompanied us on our other journeys, were not so fearful. We sometimes heard of tigers attacking oxen in villages on both sides of our camp, but we were so fortunate as to see no more of them than their footprints.

Our encampments were generally under the shelter of large evergreen-trees, at times upwards of twenty-four feet in girth, a hundred and fifty feet to the lowest branch, and from a hundred and eighty to two hundred feet in height. Our shelter, until we reached Zimmé, consisted of a frail structure formed of a few branches covered over with two waterproof sheets, slightly bent, so as to allow the heavy dew to drop off. Our howdahs, for this stage of our journey, were without covers: so we could not creep into them to escape from the storms that are frequent in the hills, even in the dry season.

Mr. Colquhoun has noted, in his most interesting work 'Amongst the Shans,' that Shamanism, or Nat worship, is not only the sole religion of most of the hill-tribes in Indo-China, but has been absorbed into the worship of the followers of Buddha. 'Nat' is the Burmese for the elf-folk, fairies, gnomes, and demons of our nursery lore. So real is the worship—or, rather, the belief in the power—of these beings, that all good and evil that occurs to mankind is put down to their direct influence or action. Wherever one goes, little doll-houses are found placed on small platforms of bamboo, with a few leaves, fruit, rice, flowers, or perhaps all together deposited in them, to keep the Nat, or Pee, in good temper. Their baneful influence is more feared than tigers; and every precaution was taken at all our halting-places to propitiate, appease, and ward them off. Mystic crosses of bamboo were stuck up at the paths leading to the camp; and, on sauntering round, many traces were seen of devotion to the Pee.

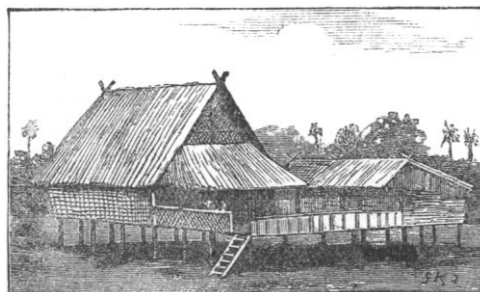
One peculiarity of the good and evil Pee, is that they are ancestral spirits, who become good or evil spirits after the decease of the human form which they inhabited. If a king or other ruler or nobleman dies whilst passing through the forest, his spirit must, of necessity, haunt the place where he died. No merit-making can arise from procuring religious services over his corpse. The disembodied spirit wanders about in his desperation, and endeavors to cause the death of all who pass his way. If he succeeds, the deceased's spirit has to become his companion and subject. Thus a clan, with its chief, is formed to entrap and kill all unwary passengers through the forest. No one dying in the forest has the privilege of returning home to join the household spirits: they are forever destined to be Pee Pa, or evil spirits of the jungle. The Pee Ka are wizard spirits of horse form, who are re-enforced by the deaths of beggars and very poor people, whose spirits were so disgusted with those that refused them aid in food and shelter, that they resolved to return and haunt their stingy and hard-hearted neighbors.

Leaving the British guard-house on the 28th, we arrived the next day at the Shan guard-house at Meh

Tha-wa, on the Thoungyeen River, which here forms the British eastern frontier.

We clambered over the hills and spurs in the usual crow-flight of the Karens, and, descending into the valley of the Meh Nium or Maingloongyee River, reached Maingloongyee on the 5th of February. Here we put up at the house of one of our largest Burmese foresters, called Moung Hmoon Taw, who has worked the forests in the basin of the Meh Nium for many years. Having procured a relay of elephants, I left the town on the 13th, and, crossing by a route to the south of that taken by previous travellers, reached Meh Lyt valley, and ascended the main range to the plateau upon which the Lu-a village of Baw-gyee is situated.

From Baw we descended the hills to Muang Haut, a town on the Meh Ping River, and, hiring boats, arrived at Zimmé on Feb. 23. The scenery on the Meh Ping is very beautiful. Between Zimmé and Muang Haut the river generally hugs and twirls about the spurs to the westward that spring from the haunches of a magnificent round-topped hill called Loi Pah Kung, or the Cloud-Capped Mountain. This hill



SHAN HOUSE AT KIANG HSEN.

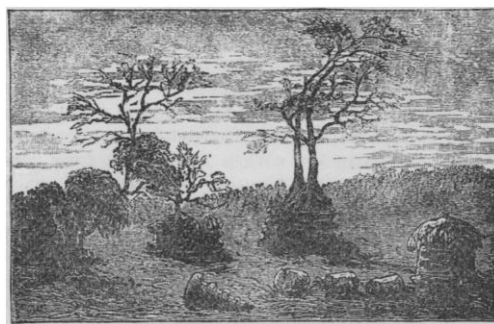
dominates the whole range: its summit must be about ten thousand feet above the sea. Another striking feature is the Hill of the Tiger Head, called so from the resemblance the precipice that forms its eastern face bears to its godfather. The banks of the river for many miles below Zimmé are fringed with villages, the houses being embedded and often hidden in gardens of palm, cocoanut, mango, tamarind, orange, and other trees. Farther down stream the villages become less frequent, and are often screened from view by the plume-like bamboos that fringe the banks. The lights and shades on the foliage, and the deep, cave-like recesses between the clumps, together with their elegant and ever varying form, crested at times by the crimson blossoms of the lepan, poukbin, and pin-leh-ke-thit trees, gave the whole scene a charm that is passing description.

Leaving Zimmé, we passed for twelve miles through the cultivation and villages lying to the north of it; then, getting amongst the hills lying to the east of the Meh Ping valley, we descended a few days afterwards to Viang Pa Pow, which lies in the valley of the Meh Low, that empties into the Meh Kong or Cambodia River a few miles south of Kiang Hsen. We were now amongst the wizards and witches. The

Pee Ka, or horse-shaped spirits, that I have before alluded to, attach themselves sometimes to one, and at other times to another, of their descendants, who are supposed to have the power of using them as ministers of ill to their neighbors. The belief in these spirits is universal through the Shan state, and is the cause of a vast amount of cruelty and misery. A man falls ill; his malady baffles the skill of the physician; the spirit doctor is called in, and decides that it is a case of witchcraft. The doctor calls the officer of the village and a few others as witnesses. His first question to the invalid is, 'Whose spirit has bewitched you?' If no reply is given, the sick person is pinched, or beaten with a cane, until he makes the disclosure. The replies are put down to the witch-ghost, uttered through the mouth of his victim. Other questions are then asked; such as, 'How many buffaloes has he?' 'How many pigs?' 'How many chickens?' 'How much money?' The answers to these questions are written down by the scribe. A time is then appointed for meeting at the accused person's house. The same questions are put to him as to his possessions. If his answers agree with those of the sick person, he is condemned, and held responsible for the acts of his ghost. He is ordered to leave the village, has his house unroofed and pulled to pieces, and his garden trees cut down. Witches and wizards, who are thus driven with their families from their homes, are only allowed to resettle in certain places: amongst these are Muang Paow, Muang Ngai, Muang Pai, and Kiang Hsen. There was hardly a village of any size through which we passed that had not one or more houses unroofed, the people of the house having been ousted on this fearful charge. The Pa-pow plain is fast being brought under cultivation by these exiles: it is many miles in length, and of considerable breadth.

After leaving the plain, we continued along the route Capt. McLeod took in 1836, as far as Kiang Hai. Here we had to stay a day or two to procure a relay of elephants. At Kiang Hai we met for the first time Moosurs, called so by the Shans, but La-Hoo by themselves. Their faces were of a decided oval, and their Turki aspect bespeaks them of similar type to the Mohammedans of Yunnan. The high position that is allowed to woman amongst the Indo-Chinese was evidenced throughout my journey. Their power and acknowledged rights are well exemplified by the law of divorce amongst the Moo-sur. These people are monogamists. Either can divorce the other at will, on payment to the divorced party of a sum of forty rupees. The woman takes the house, the daughters, two-thirds of the clothing, one-third of the money, and half of the goods. The sons, together with the remainder of the clothing, money, and goods, go to the man. From Ban Meh Kee, a village of two hundred and thirty houses, near the border, we turned eastward, and, passing the remains of the three ancient cities of Manola, proceeded to Kiang Hsen. The remains of the three cities of Manola, each about half a mile in diameter, consisted of a ditch dug round the bottom of knolls, and heaped up to form high parapets on either side. The top of

the inner ramparts are about forty feet above the bottoms of the ditches, which are about a hundred feet wide. During my various journeys, I passed through, or not far from, and learned the names of, forty-eight such deserted cities. As some of these were upwards of two miles in width, the population of the country at one time must have been large. Many of these cities, however, may have been cities of refuge for the people of the districts in time of invasion, and only partly occupied in times of peace. The Kiang Hsen plain is perhaps the largest and most fertile in the Shan states. It extends for fully a hundred and fifty miles from north to south, and is often many miles in breadth. Teak grows luxuriantly upon the low hills in its neighborhood; and in the forests on the eastern side of the Meh Kong, there are said to be extensive tracts covered by it. The city of Kiang Hsen was re-occupied in 1881. Its former wealth and population must have been great; as there were fifty-three monasteries within its walls, and many very valuable bronze images of Buddha are scattered about the enclosure. We met large bodies of emigrants proceeding to Kiang Hsen during our



RUINS AT KIANG HSEN.

journey to Kiang Hai, and heard from the prince of the place that forty-eight hundred fighting men, with their families and slaves, had been told off from Zimmé, Lakhon, Lapoon or Labong, and Peh, to settle in the plain about Kiang Hsen. Most of these are the descendants of the captives who were removed after its surrender in 1797. Returning to Kiang Hai, we followed the Kiang Hsen plain from the basin of the Meh Low into that of the Meh Ing, and reached the town of Penyow, where small-pox was raging. Here we were detained for some days, waiting for elephants. Leaving the town on the 28th of April, we crossed into the valley of the Meh Ngow, and thence into that of the Meh Wung, on which the important town of Lakhon, which contains about ten thousand inhabitants, is situated. Crossing the hills to Lapoon, we arrived at Zimmé on the 20th of April, six days after the commencement of the rains. My companions and all of our servants were suffering from fever towards the latter end of the journey, and I was glad to get them all safely back into Zimmé on the 24th of May. After stopping a week in the town, I left for Bangkok.